

Misogynistic in Women's Cryptography: A Critical Review of Hadith

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DOI: 10.29240/alquds.v9i3.14996

Abstract. Negative stigmas against women are found in ancient Javanese culture, including in the manuscript of *Serat Sandi Wanita*. This paper aims to uncover the histories of misogynistic hadith in the manuscript, assess their quality, and examine how the manuscript's initiators and writers constructed the hadith or history. This paper is a qualitative study with historical and gender analyses, as well as a hadith-critical approach. Furthermore, it was found that there are two narrations in the manuscript that use the figures of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and his family, namely Fatimah r.a. and Ali bin Abi Talib r.a. as role models but contain misogynistic values of Hinduism. Theological syncretism between Islam and Hinduism, as a characteristic of Javanese Islam in the 19th century, has influenced the use of hadith histories in *Serat Sandi Wanita*. These narrations cannot be accepted as arguments because they do not meet the requirements for the validity of the hadith in both sanad and matan. This study emphasizes the importance of reviewing and criticizing hadith in local texts or studies that contain narrations attributed to the Prophet *PBUH*. This research also contributes to enriching the new direction of hadith and gender studies in Indonesia through an interdisciplinary approach to the authority of Islamic texts within local culture, thereby enabling a deeper identification of the root causes of the construction of hadith-based gender injustice.

Keywords: Women's Cryptography, gender studies, Javanese Islam, Criticism of Hadith.

Introduction

In the Javanese intellectual tradition, ancient texts serve as a medium for conveying moral teachings, religious values, and social views that shape how people understand life. One of the interesting texts is *Serat Sandi Wanita*, a 19th-century manuscript that contains teachings about the role and position of women. This manuscript is often used as an object of philological and cultural study because it reflects patriarchal social structures and subordinate views towards women. However, an important aspect that is rarely addressed is the presence of narrations about the Prophet Muhammad and his family (Fatimah r.a. and Ali r.a.) in them, which seem to be treated as hadiths. This phenomenon raises fundamental questions about the religious authority inherent in the text and how the legitimacy of the hadith is used to justify specific gender values.

Several studies on women's moral education in ancient Javanese manuscripts were conducted, including *Serat Wulang Putri*, *Serat Centhini*, *Serat Wara Ratna*, *Serat Piwulang Estri*, and *Serat Sandi Wanita*. However, these studies are generally performed with a philological and gendered approach, without assessing religious texts, especially the hadith they contain. Thus, there is still a research *gap* in examining the relationship between local Javanese texts and hadith authorities, especially in the context of the formation of gender discourse and religious symbolic power. In fact, the latest developments in hadith studies in Indonesia have moved towards living hadith and interdisciplinary studies that examine the social and cultural context of the use of hadith, including in issues of gender equality.

One study closely related to this research is Ibn Muhdir's on *Serat Pwulang Estri*. In his study, it is shown that prophetic history has been used in classical Javanese literary texts as a means of moral da'wah and household education. He researched the quality of hadith utilizing the theory of sanad criticism and comparative methods of matan, in addition to historical and philological methods. In general, Muhdir concluded that the sermon contains authentic and da'if hadiths (he found 12 hadiths with 21 sanad, seven da'if, three hasan, and 11 sahih), and that the author used these hadiths to explain women's behavior in accordance with Islam. Muhdir offered a reinterpretation of these hadiths in light of the principle of *equality*.¹

The findings, in particular, contribute to this study by showing that hadith excerpts appeared in ancient Javanese texts even before the birth of *the Women's Cryptography*. This fact proves that interdisciplinary studies between hadith criticism and the analysis of local manuscripts in the archipelago can be carried out methodologically. However, this study has a different object of study: Muhdir's research, which examines all hadiths on the theme of the household in *Serat Pwulang Estri*, without highlighting the construction of a misogynist discourse. Meanwhile, this research focuses on identifying hadith narratives with misogynistic nuances to trace the roots of their construction in the Javanese cultural and social context of that time. *Misogynistic* means "*Showing feelings of hating women or a belief that men are better than women*".² Misogynism manifests as an idea that degrades, limits, or controls women's behavior, and is often expressed in ancient Javanese texts in the form of religious teachings, social rules, and everyday ethics seen in context.

Interdisciplinary studies of hadith, gender, and ancient texts have not been widely carried out, even though this is important because the value of moral teachings, especially those believed to be sourced in the hadith of the Prophet, can serve as a pattern for gender relations in the aftermath. Therefore, this research seeks to fill this gap by examining the existence, quality, and roots of historical constructions used in *Women's Ciphers*. The objectives of this study are: (1) to identify misogynistic histories related to the Prophet (peace be upon him) in *the Women's Cryptography*; (2) assessing the validity of the sanad and matan of the narration according to the rules of hadith science; and (3) analyze how the construction of history in the manuscript is in the context of Javanese culture.

The methodology used is qualitative-descriptive analysis with a critical approach to the hadith of Syuhudi Ismail. Historical and gender analysis to detect forms of marginalization, subordination, stereotypes, violence, and double burdens³ against women in manuscript texts. The *source-credibility theory of Howland, Janis, and Kelly is used to explain the mechanism of religious authority in texts, namely*, how reliance on the figure of the Prophet increases the credibility of the message and strengthens social acceptance of specific teachings. With this approach, this research not only enriches the discourse of Javanese philology and culture but also contributes to the development of hadith and gender studies in Indonesia by showing how religious authorities can interact with local socio-cultural constructions. This study is ultimately expected to open a space for critical dialogue among Islamic texts, local traditions, and gender-equality values in the context of contemporary Islamic Nusantara.

Discussion

Description of Female Cryptography

¹ Ibnu Muhdir, "Hadiths in the Fiber of Pwulang Estri" (Dissertation, UIN Sunan Kalijaga, 2013), ix.

² Ruhama Wazna, *Women in Debate: History and Dynamics of Hadith Study "Misogini" in Indonesia* (TrussmediaGraphics, 2025), 28.

³ Mansour Fakih, *Gender Analysis and Social Transformation* (Student Library, 2013), xii–xiii.

The *Serat Sandi Wanita* manuscript is an ancient Javanese manuscript that is not just a literary work but also a medium of moral education (piwulang), containing teachings on Javanese women's morality. It was written at the initiative of Kanjeng Gusti Pangeran Pakualam II, and the manuscript was copied in 1893 by Raden Mas Jayeng Sutarja. This manuscript was written in Javanese script and Javanese, with a manuscript size of 19.5 x 15 cm. While the text measures 14.4 x 11.5 cm, with 13 lines per page and 254 pages, the teachings are divided into 20 *macapats*. Some are listed with the author's name, and some are anonymous or have an unknown author's name. It is called *the manuscript of Serat Sandi Wanita* because, according to KBBI, it is an essay written by hand that has not been published. Etymologically, manuscripts are also known as *manuscripts* in English; namely, they are derived from the Latin expression *codex manuscriptus* (book written by hand).

Text editing and translation of the ancient Javanese manuscript were carried out as part of the National Library of Indonesia's efforts to preserve the cultural heritage of writing in Indonesia, given the increasing scarcity of people today who can read old manuscripts. The edited and translated book was then titled *Serat Sandi Wanita*, consisting of 3 volumes. The manuscript of *Serat Sandi Wanita* studied in this article is a manuscript from the collection of Hartini (born 1950), a special permanent lecturer in the Postgraduate Indonesian Language and Literature Education Study Program, PGRI University Semarang. Often a resource person for Javanese culture and Javanese women, as well as a translator of old manuscripts from Javanese to Indonesian.⁴

In Hartini's collection book, it begins with a description of the manuscript of *Serat Sandi Wanita*, presenting the concise content of each existing *pupuh*, totaling 20 text summaries in Indonesian. Then it only explains the edits to the text and the translations. In substance, all the summaries of the text show that this manuscript is filled with the moral values of Javanese women, both towards themselves and, especially, towards their husbands. Women are required to be obedient in religion, be humble, be kind and subtle, have weaving and batik skills, be good at makeup, and maintain good health. As for the husband, how to behave to remain obedient, faithful, patient, even in polygamy, good at serving the husband, not underestimating the husband, and not giving pseudo-affection to the husband.⁵

In the book *Serat Sandi Wanita*, several statements are gender-discriminatory, and the evil character of women is also stated in several *pupuh*, such as in the *Kinanthi* *pupuh*, where wives are asked to provide concubines for their husbands. Likewise, in the *Dhandhanggula* text, women should not outperform men even until they are old, and even if the woman is a *priyayi* child of a person of high position.⁶ In *Pupuh Asmarandana*, it is said that women have a character like men, prioritize personal pleasure, like to argue, and like to be close to the devil.⁷ In the *Asmarada* *pupuh*, it is stated that the evil character of a wife is likened to the character of an animal, namely a horse, if a wife, in serving her husband, she lives freely without control, like a horse that is out of control, going and running wherever she likes, no matter who rides it.⁸

In addition to various biased and discriminatory statements against women in the manuscript *Serat Sandi Wanita*, this manuscript also presents several female figures or wives who are recommended to be used as examples because of their patience and loyalty in dealing with their husbands. They are: Fatimah bint Muhammad, Setyawati, wife of King Mandraka, Dewi Srikandi, wife of Arjuna, Dewi Setyawati, wife of Prabu Salya, and Dewi Citrawati, the wife of Arjunigrat. As the title suggests, the

⁴ Hart, *Women's Secret Manuscript; Text Editing and Translation*, (National Library of the Republic of Indonesia, 2018), 104.

⁵ Hart, *Women's Secret Manuscript; Text Editing and Translation*, 1–13.

⁶ Hart, *Women's Secret Manuscript; Text Editing and Translation*, 39.

⁷ Hart, *Women's Secret Manuscript; Text Editing and Translation*, 21.

⁸ Hart, *Women's Secret Manuscript; Text Editing and Translation*, 80.

talk about women or wives is more dominant, on the contrary, it talks very little about men or husbands, it is not in the form of statements about the negative disposition and behavior of men or husbands, but in the form of advice for husbands to behave well towards their wives, not to do things that can damage the husband's authority.⁹

The Narration of the Prophet Muhammad, Fatimah, and Ali in the Manuscript

Javanese literature reflects the spread of Islamic theology through the Javanese language and its discourse.¹⁰ In *the Women's Code Fiber*, there are several words related to the Prophet Muhammad (*peace be upon him*), namely: Prophet; Rasul; His Messenger; The Prophet (*peace be upon him*); Hadith evidence; The Last Prophet; Prophet Muhammad (*peace be upon him*); The Prophet (*peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him*) In addition, there are also the surnames of the Prophet (*peace be upon him*) such as Fatimah r.a and Ali r.a.¹¹ Various terms related to hadith and the Prophet (*PBUH*) are most abundant in Pupuh Mijil. In the 6th verse, there is the word hadith, to be precise: "*Dalil khabis ijmak kiyasibi silarjaning kaol, dennya parmaning Ywang pepengete...*" (The evidence of ijmak hadith and qiyas of goodwill, that is a sign of God's grace...). In the 8th stanza, there are the words of the Prophet (*peace and blessings of Allah be upon him*), precisely: "*Wangalehi salam Gusti Nabi Nabi, Rasulullah Kaot...*" (Gusti Prophet Muhammad *Saw.* the famous messenger...). In verse 20, there is the word Gusti Nabi, to be precise: "Kayungyune nadyan Gusti Nabi, tur Mursalin kaot, sayekti mung mangka tuladane..., (Want to be like the Prophet and again very good, really just as an example...). Thus, similar meanings are found in the 21st verse (as said by Gusti Prophet Rasullulohi) and the 25th verse (as told by *the Prophet*).

As for the other pupuh, there are only a few such words listed, including in the pupuh of Dhandhanggula the 3rd stanza, there is a hadith postulate, to be precise: "...*And the only thing that matters is that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) is the only one in the country who is ...* The evidence of the hadith is that the lowest woman is only in good decency...). There are even people who do not include the Prophet's advice at all, nor the Prophet's hadith. The abundance of Islamic theological terms in the fiber indicates that the authority of hadith at the time the ancient Javanese manuscript was written was recognized by the community. Still, attention to and knowledge of the quality of hadith remained superficial. The hadith has not been written in its entirety with the sanitation and matan, let alone to know its exact validity. According to Zuhri, these theological terms, such as Allah, angels, the Qur'an, prophets, and the like, have fixed meanings in the Javanese text. The only differences that arise when switching from Arabic to Javanese and the Pegon script are spelling, pronunciation, and writing. Pribumization serves as a means of transmitting knowledge, while its substance, meaning, and content remain unchanged.¹²

This manuscript contains two misogynistic histories. *First*, the history of the arrival of the Prophet (*peace be upon him*) and Fatimah r.a. to the house of the wife of Seh Akbar. There are at least four pupuh that mention the story of Syeh Akbar and his wife: Pupuh Maskumambang, Pupuh Asmaradana, Pupuh Megatruh, and Pupuh Dhandhanggula. All are anonymous texts without titles. *Second*, the narration of Fatimah r.a. with her husband Ali bin Abi Talib r.a. begins with the pupuh Maskumambang, which introduces the figure of Seh Akbar as a husband who loves his wife very much, and his wife is also very loyal. One day, Seh Akbar will leave to take care of his wife. Seh Akbar

⁹ Hart, *Women's Secret Manuscript; Text Editing and Translation*, 80.

¹⁰ Z Zuhri, "Beyond Syncretism: Evidence of the Vernacularization of Islamic Theological Terms in Javanese Literature in the 19th Century," *Al-Jami'ah: Journal of Islamic Studies* 60, no. 2 (2022): 373–74, <https://doi.org/10.14421/ajis.2022.602.373-398>.

¹¹ Hart, *Women's Secret Manuscript; Text Editing and Translation*, Volumes 1-3.

¹² Zuhri, "Beyond Syncretism," 374.

locks the door and advises his wife not to open it, not even to go out to the house's yard. He sprinkled ashes all over the yard, especially in front of the house.¹³

In the Pupuh Asmaradana, it is continued that not long afterwards the Prophet (peace be upon him) came to the house of Seh Akbar and Fatimah r.a., while telling Fatimah about the values of a wife's obedience to her husband by showing the grass that was sown in the yard. The Prophet also showed the beating tool and water in the beating tool that was there. The husband used the beating tool on the wife if she was wrong, while the wife used the water in the beating tool to wash her husband's feet when he returned from traveling. Furthermore, to prove to Fatimah, the Prophet (*peace be upon him*) tried to call Seh Akbar's wife. She replied from inside the house that she would not open the door because she obeyed her husband's orders. However, the Prophet (*peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him*) called his wife again and again, until the wife of Akbar found out that it was the Prophet (peace be upon him), and the wife of Akbar politely refused to open the door, stating that her husband was not at home, and the Prophet then said goodbye. Among the editors:

<i>Nadis Chooses to Be a Slacker</i>	(even if borrowing a pot or pot)
<i>Sayekti tan aweh ingwang</i>	(I really can't)
<i>Wong wis ana nawalere</i>	(because there is already a ban)
<i>Wong lanangku marang ingwang</i>	(My Husband to Me)
<i>A Return to the Basics</i>	(Prophet Muhammad)
<i>He said he was screaming</i>	(call again)
<i>A Long Time Ago by Akbar</i>	(Long time, Mrs. Akbar)

This narration is then continued by the pupuh of Megatruh, who states the return of Seh Akbar, bringing many souvenirs for his wife. Still, in the yard, he saw footprints in the ashes he had sprinkled. He was also very angry with his wife. His wife explained that the one who came earlier was the Prophet *Saw*, with Fatimah, but Seh Akbar became even more furious because he thought his wife had lied.¹⁴ This story continues in the pupuh Dhandhanggula, that Seh Akbar, who was very angry, hit his wife with the base of a bamboo stick until she died. Until his neighbor arrived, he explained to Seh Akbar that the Prophet and Fatimah had indeed come earlier. So immediately Seh Akbar regretted his actions.¹⁵

The next misogynistic history is the story of Fatimah r.a. with her husband Ali bin Abi Talib r.a., that Fatimah once waited for her husband Ali, who was fast asleep, fanning, stroking, and guarding him from insect disturbances, because the time for the zuhr prayer was almost over, Fatimah went to pray. But shortly afterwards, Ali woke up and asked about Fatimah's whereabouts. Fatimah replied that she had just finished praying, so Ali was furious, and Fatimah was scared, apologizing repeatedly to her husband, Ali, until Ali forgave her.¹⁶ Among the editors:

<i>A Prayer to the Goddess</i>	(Goddess Fatimah immediately went to prayer)
<i>Tan dangu kang raka wungu nulya</i>	(soon her husband woke up immediately)
<i>Apepungun dangu alon</i>	(then asked quietly)
<i>Where's My Wife</i>	(where is my wife)
<i>Kang dinangu umatur gipih</i>	(the asked answered immediately)
<i>A Prayer for the Wife</i>	(your wife just prayed recently)
<i>Stay tuned for the next installment</i>	(When he heard, he was furious)
<i>At the time of his death, Myers was distraught</i>	
<i>Gepah-gepah gusti Fatimah mare king</i>	(Fatimah rushed closer)
<i>Ngarsanira kang raka.</i>	(in front of her husband)
<i>Asru nuwun apunten ing laki</i>	(very sorry to the husband)

¹³ Hart, *Women's Secret Manuscript; Text Editing and Translation*, Volume 3, 70–72.

¹⁴ Hart, *Women's Secret Manuscript; Text Editing and Translation*, 73–83.

¹⁵ Hart, *Women's Secret Manuscript; Text Editing and Translation*, Volume 3, 83–87.

¹⁶ Hart, *Women's Secret Manuscript; Text Editing and Translation*, Volume 3, 88–91.

<i>Ingkang raka pangandikanira</i>	(said her husband)
<i>A Friend of the Prisoners</i>	(exaggerated you)
<i>Wong wadon dhasar ayu</i>	(you are a beautiful woman)
<i>Prayer Is More Important Than A Man</i>	(Praying more diligently than a husband)
<i>What do you think we don't understand?</i>	(don't know)
<i>Be aware</i>	(then informed)
<i>Squirming When You Need It</i>	(during circumcision during obligation)
<i>When I Need It</i>	(There is a time when the obligation is served)
<i>In other words, it is a good idea</i>	(then there is authority)

The Rules of Hadith Criticism Against Misogyny Narration

The two histories of misogyny in the manuscript of *Serat Sandi Wanita* will be studied through the lens of sanad and matan criticism. The majority of hadith scholars agree that the meaning of a valid hadith is that which is continuous in sanad, narrated by *those who are* 'and *dhabith*, and avoid irregularities (*syuzuz*) and defects (*'illat*). This definition includes sanad and matan, the connection of sanad and rawi that *are fair* and *dhabith* are the criteria for the validity of sanad, while avoiding irregularities and defects is the criterion for the validity of matan.¹⁷ Sanad research takes precedence over matan research. Based on the opinion of several hadith scholars, the rule of continuous sanad must meet the elements of *muttasil* and *marfu*. In the rule of *'fair* narration, there must be elements of Islam, mukallaf, implementing the provisions of Islam, and maintaining muru'ah. Furthermore, in the regulations of *dhabith* narration, there must be an element of memorization of the hadith that he narrates, and he must be able to convey the hadith that he has memorized to others without error. Then, in the rule of avoiding *syuzuz*, there must be an element of the history of a *tsiqat* narrator that does not contradict the history of other *tsiqat* narrators. Finally, in the rule of avoiding *'illat*, there must be an element of non-occurrence of narration that is not *tsiqat* considered *tsiqat*, and sanad is cut off, considered continuous.¹⁸

In the aspect of the connection of sanad, the narration about the arrival of the Prophet (*peace be upon him*) and Fatimah r.a. to the house of the wife of Sheh Akbar is unfounded, as well as the second narration, namely about the story of Fatimah r.a. with her husband Ali bin Abi Talib r.a. In the manuscript of *Serat Sandi Wanita*, the two narrations are stated immediately without mentioning any of the narrators, so it lacks a sanad path. The editorial history with Arabic text is also not stated, let alone the quality of the hadith. In fact, the texts of the two histories are both anonymous, so the author is unknown; what is known is only that the initiator of *Serat Sandi Wanita* was Pakualam II. Thus, it is clear that the two narrations do not meet the rules of connection of sanad, and by not knowing who the narrator is in the two narrations, of course, the rules of narration that *are just* and *dhabith* in sanad cannot be done, let alone the rules of *syuzuz* and *'illat* in sanad.¹⁹ So it can be concluded that the two narrations, from the point of view of sanad criticism, can be categorized as unfounded narrations, not found in various hadith books, and, from the aspect of sanad, do not meet the valid criteria.

Based on the search in *Maktabah Shamilah*, the narration of the arrival of the Prophet *Muhammad* (*peace be upon him*) and Fatimah to the house of Sheh Akbar is not found in authoritative classical Islamic sources. So it can be said that the narration is not a hadith but only a local religious literature text. Still, unfortunately the unfounded narration is relied on the Prophet (*saw*) and Fatimah r.a. so that it can be said to be a false hadith or narration (*mandhu*), because what is meant by hadith according to hadith scholars in general is all words, deeds, taqirir, and matters that are relied upon by

¹⁷ M.Syuhudi Ismail, *The Rules of Authenticity of Sanad Hadith; Critical Studies and Reviews with a Historical Science Approach* (Bulan Bintang, 1988), 130.

¹⁸ Ismail, *The Rules of Authenticity of Sanad Hadith; Critical Studies and Reviews with a Historical Science Approach*, 157.

¹⁹ Ismail, *The Rules of Authenticity of Sanad Hadith; Critical Studies and Reviews with a Historical Science Approach*, 177.

the companions of the Prophet or *tabi'in*.²⁰ Subhi Ash Shalih called it a fabricated hadith that the counterfeiters attributed to the Prophet (peace be upon him), and the number of them could not be counted.²¹

The criticism of *Matan* and Shalahuddin al-Adhabi corroborates this statement.²² As quoted by Shuhudi Ismail, in this *matan* research, four things are a benchmark, namely: It does not contradict the Qur'an; It is not contrary to the hadiths that are stronger and higher in rank; It does not contradict human reason and its history; The structure of his statement is a clue from the prophetic word.²³ The following are two histories in *the manuscript of Serat Sandi Wanita* when using these various benchmarks:

First, the narration of the arrival of the Prophet (*peace be upon him*) and his daughter Fatimah r.a. to the house of Seh Akbar's wife; The sentence *Seh Akbar* in the fiber may be referred to as *al-Shaykh al-Akbar* (The most excellent Teacher). The title did not exist in the time of the Prophet but only appeared centuries later, among them the title for Ibn' Arabi (1165–1240 AD), which his disciples first gave him. R.W.J. Austin stated:

*"The title by which Ibn 'Arabi is best known among the Sufis is la 'al-Shaykh al-Akbar' ('the Greatest Shaykh'). This is probably because he was the first man to express in writing that vast range of doctrine and learning which had ded so generous an exposition of their teachings and insights."*²⁴

("The title of Ibn' Arabi that is very famous among the Sufis is *al-Shaykh al-Akbar*, probably because he was the first to express in writing the breadth of the scope of teachings and knowledge by giving such a thorough explanation of their various teachings and insights.

So it is clear that there is confusion in the narration; the Prophet (*peace be upon him*) is said to have visited the house of Seh Akbar. This title did not exist in the time of the Prophet; even if what Seh Akbar meant by the writer of the manuscript was a husband or even a friend in that time, it should still be specified who the figure in question was. This narration is also contrary to the hadith, in *Serat Sandi Wanita* it is said that the Prophet (*peace be upon him*). And for a long time, repeatedly calling Seh Akbar's wife to leave her house was contrary to QS. An-Nūr verse 28 ("... If it is said to you, 'Return!' then return; it is more sacred to you. Allah is Aware of what you do."). A stronger hadith states that the Prophet (*peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him*) taught that the etiquette of greeting a guest is to knock on the door no more than three times. The Prophet (*peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him*) said: *إِذَا سَأَلْتَ ثَلَاثًا، فَإِنْ أُذِنَ لَكَ وَإِلَّا فَارْجِعْ* ("Ask for permission three times, if it is allowed, then enter; if not, then go home.")²⁵

Moreover, in the narration, it is stated that the Prophet suspected that Seh Akbar was with his wife in the house, but what is strange is why the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) did not call Seh Akbar, but Seh Akbar's wife. This attitude is very contrary to the Prophet's person. Ibn al-Jauzi stated that any hadith that is contrary to reason or contrary to the main provisions of religion, then know that it is a false hadith.²⁶ Hadith critics first pay attention to the weaknesses/irregularities of the meaning before paying attention to the weaknesses of the pronunciation. This is because the destruction of meaning more clearly points to falsification. Al-Hafidh Ibn Hajar said: "The focus of weakness is on the weakness of the meaning, while there is a

²⁰ Ismail, *The Rules of Authenticity of Sanad Hadith; Critical Studies and Reviews with a Historical Science Approach*, 27.

²¹ Subhi ash-Shalih, *Ulum al-Hadith wa Musthalabuhu* (Daar al-Ilm lil Malayin, 1977).

²² Salah ad-Din Ibn Ahmad al-Adlabi, *Manhaj al-Naqd al-Matn 'Inda 'Ulama al-Hadis an- Nabawi* (Dar al-Afaq al-Jadidah, 1983), 238.

²³ M.Syuhudi Ismail, *Methodology of Hadith Research of the Prophet* (Bulan Bintang, 2007), 120.

²⁴ R.W.J Austin, *Sufis of Andalusia* (New York: Routledge, 2008), 19.

²⁵ Abi al-Husain Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj ibn Muslim al-Qusyairy an-Naisaburiy, *Sahih Muslim*, 2nd ed. no. 2153, (Riyadh : Daar as-Salaam, 2000), 958.

²⁶ Ibn al-Jauzi, *Kitab al-Muadu'at* (Dar al-Fikr, 1983), jilid 1, 106.

weakness in the meaning, it points to falsification, even if the irregularity of the pronunciation does not accompany it.²⁷

Second, the narration of Fatimah r.a. with her husband Ali bin Abi Talib r.a.; This narration is contrary to hadith, history, and common sense, because Ali in this narration is described as a husband who is angry with his wife, and does not prioritize obligatory prayers. In fact, various hadith collections and historical records describe Ali's morals as those of a husband who loved Fatimah very much and was very obedient, so that it was impossible for Ali to be very angry with his wife just because she performed the obligatory prayer. Even if they disagreed, Ali chose to remain silent and leave rather than get angry by yelling and saying words that would hurt his wife's heart. Especially in this case, Fatimah performed the zuhur prayer; of course, she should have received support from Ali, not the other way around, scolding her wife. In a hadith narrated by Bukhari, it is described that Ali r.a., when he was angry with his wife, chose to be alone and stay away from Fatimah temporarily, not by scolding or reprimanding her."

عَنْ سَهْلِ بْنِ سَعْدٍ، قَالَ: جَاءَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ بَيْتَ فَاطِمَةَ فَلَمْ يَجِدْ عَلِيًّا فِي الْبَيْتِ، فَقَالَ: «أَيْنَ ابْنُ عَمِّكَ؟» قَالَتْ: كَانَ بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَهُ شَيْءٌ، فَعَاَصَبَنِي، فَخَرَجَ، فَلَمْ يَقُلْ عِنْدِي فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ لِلنَّسَاءِ: «انْظُرُوا أَيْنَ هُوَ؟» فَجَاءَ فَقَالَ: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ، هُوَ فِي الْمَسْجِدِ رَاقِدٌ...

From Sahl bin Sa'd said: The Messenger of Allah (*peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him*) came to Fatimah's house, but 'Ali was not at home. Then he asked, "Where is your uncle's son?" Fatimah replied: "Something happened between me and me until he got angry with me, then he went away and didn't take a nap at home." So the Messenger of Allah (*peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him*) said to someone: "Look for him, where he is!" Then the man returned and said: "O Messenger of Allah, he is in the mosque sleeping..."

Thus, the two narrations in the *Serat Sandi Wanita* exhibit an irregularity in meaning, failing to meet the rules of matan validity. Ibn Jauzi emphasized that if one finds a hadith that is contrary to reason, or violates the recitation (of the Qur'an and authentic hadith), or contradicts the main books, then it is a *maudhu' hadith*.²⁸

The Construction of Misogyny History in Manuscripts

In Islam, hadith holds a special position, serving as the second source of teachings and laws after the Qur'an. Hadith is considered capable of shaping behavior, including that of Javanese women regarding marriage. Still, unfortunately, sometimes hadith is also used as the basis for misogynistic arguments wrapped in moral advice for wives against their husbands. Hadith in the 19th century has been used in ancient manuscripts in Java, in a simple form without any quality information. So someone can include *da'if* (weak) and false hadiths as a reinforcement of his argument. There are histories of misogyny written in the script of *Serat Sandi Wanita*, which are constructed in the social, political, and cultural context of the time. Several factors also influence the emergence of a history of misogyny in *Women's Cryptography*, namely:

1. The influence of syncretism in Islamic and Hindu theology

Islam in Java has a unique character and expression of religiosity, because Islam in Java is more dominant in the form of acculturation. Islam came to Java at a time when non-Islamic

²⁷ Subhi ash-Shalih, *Ulum al-Hadith wa Musthalabuhu*, (Beirut: Daar al-Ilm lil Malayin, 1977).

²⁸ ash-Shalih, *Ulum al-Hadith wa Musthalabuhu*, 240.

cultures and traditions, especially Hinduism and Buddhism, had taken deep root in Javanese society, and syncretism became a characteristic of Javanese Islam. The emergence of Islam in Java is motivated by animism and Hinduism, so it is logical that the Islam that developed there also reflects these traditions.²⁹ In the 19th century, the relationship between Islam and Javanese culture fluctuated. Still, the acculturative face of Javanese Islam dominated almost every expression of the religious diversity of the Muslim community in this region, so that syncretism and religious tolerance became cultural characteristics typical of Javanese Islam.³⁰ The pattern of Javanese Islamization, which is accommodating and absorbs local traditions and dynamism, is reflected in various literary works and fibers of this era. Pakualam II can be categorized as priyayi with a syncretic piety pattern typical of Javanese Islam.

The teaching that wives should prioritize devotion to their husbands over personal ritual worship (as in the story of Fatimah r.a. and Ali r.a. in the text) seems to align with classical Hindu teachings on *Stridharma* (women's duties).³¹ In the ancient Hindu holy book, the Manusmriti 5:154-155, it is said: "For women there is no sacrificial ceremony (*yajña*), no separate fasting or ritual; By serving her husband faithfully, she will gain heaven."³² This book is often criticized for its sexist, patriarchal, and misogynistic values against women.³³

This verse shows that women's personal ritual worship is not a priority compared to devotion to their husbands. Wives are not forbidden to worship, but if there is a conflict between personal rituals and obligations to the husband, the latter is prioritized, because he is considered the medium of worship itself. This is different from the Islamic teaching that obedience to Allah takes precedence over obedience to creatures, as in Q.S. an-Nisā' verse 59: "O you who have believed, obey Allah and obey His Messenger, and (obey) ulil amri among you..." Likewise, performing prayers (as Fatimah prayed zuhr because she was worried that the prayer time would end), Q.S.an-Nisā' verse 103: "... Indeed, prayer is an obligation that is timed for the believers." So, syncretism in Java may occur in theology. This also refutes Zuhri's claim that syncretism may happen in the cultural realm but not in a theological context.³⁴

In the book *The Religion of Java*, Geertz describes the phenomenon of Javanese religion, with three typologies: abangan, santri, and priyayi. Santri are those who have a religious commitment. During the writing of *the Women's Cryptography* Manuscript in the 19th century, there was a conflict between normative Islam (santri) and priyayi. So the fibers written or initiated by the priyayi at that time represent the ideology of the priyayi, who are mostly affiliated with animism and Hinduism.³⁵ This certainly limited the students' role in studying the writing of literary works (fibers) at that time, including Serat Sandi Wanita, in terms of histories related to the Prophet *Saw*. This means that the supervision of the students regarding Islamic nuances in the Women's Code Fiber is not intense. Clifford Geertz stated that Islam was never really embraced in Java except among the merchant community and almost none of the nobles (palaces).³⁶

²⁹ Sumbulah, "Javanese Islam and Cultural Acculturation," 52-53.

³⁰ Umami Sumbulah, "Javanese Islam and Cultural Acculturation: characteristics, variations and expressive obedience," *EL-HARAKAH*, advance online publication, December 1, 2012, 51, <https://doi.org/10.18860/el.v0i0.2191>.

³¹ Sri Swami Sivananda, *All About Hinduism* (India: The Divine Life Society, 1999), 26.

³² Patrick Olivelle, *Manu's Code of Law: A Critical Edition and Translation* (Oxford University Press, 2005), 123-24.

³³ Moly Kuruvilla, *The Sexual Politics of the Manusmriti: A Critical Analysis with Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights Perspectives*, 23 (2022).

³⁴ Zuhri, "Beyond Syncretism," 374.

³⁵ Sumbulah, "Javanese Islam and Cultural Acculturation," 52-59.

³⁶ Mark R Woodward, *Islam in Java: Normative Piety and Mysticism*, Terj. Hairus Salim "Javanese Islam: Normative Piety versus Spirituality" (Yogyakarta: LKis, 1999), 2.

2. *European Cultural Influence in Java*

The first educational text for women in the Pakualam duchy was *Serat Piwulang Estri*, which inspired subsequent writings on education for women, including *Serat Sandi Wanita*. The *manuscript of Serat Piwulang Estri* is a teaching from Paku Alam I (1764-1829) to his son Pakualam II. During the writing period of these two manuscripts, there was an intersection of ancient Javanese and European cultures. The relationship between the palace nobility and England is quite close; the Pakualaman family is related to the English family because the Duchy of Pakualaman was established through a political contract between the British government and Pakualam I.

The existence of this good relationship allows women, especially the wives of Javanese nobles, to be influenced by the European cultural household pattern, where wives have considerable rights and roles. This cultural intersection is one of the factors that causes the wives or concubines of Javanese nobles to be considered by men to have bad habits and to be no longer obedient to their husbands, as often mentioned by pupuh writers in the manuscripts *Serat Sandi Wanita* and *Serat Piwulang Estri*. So, with the writing of the manuscript, which became an educational guide for women among the Javanese nobility at that time, it was hoped that women would recognize and return to *obeying* their husbands as before. Pakualam II asked that his teachings on this fiber be appreciated so that women have self-respect.³⁷

3. *The influence of the interests of the ruler*

Fibers are generally built in the context of palaces, feudalism, and patriarchal culture. The writing of the text is done directly by the king or through senior royal officials who are in charge of writing it on the king's orders. Historically, the writing of *Serat Sandi Wanita* was initiated by Kanjeng Gusti Pangeran Adipati Suryaningrat (Pakualam II), who carried it out at Gedhong Kapanjen Adikart, a palace complex in Javanese culture, and was copied by Raden Mas Jayeng Sutarja. That is, *the Women's Cryptography* was initiated and copied by Javanese male nobles. Functionally, the texts on fiber have a legitimative nature, namely, strengthening the authority and policies of the ruler in social and political contexts. At that time, diplomatic relations between kingdoms were often realized through political marriages, such as between the Sultanate of Yogyakarta, the Surakarta Sultanate, and the Duchy of Pakualaman. In this tradition, Javanese princes sometimes married their daughters to nobles from other kingdoms to maintain political stability, even though their future husbands were already married.³⁸

Java's intercession with Europe also encouraged diplomatic relations between kingdoms through marriage alliances. Colonialism has transformed gender relations in Java into a complex system. Through marriage, women are placed to promote the strategic political harmonization of kingdoms. The ³⁹ Moral advice contained in the fiber requires wives to be obedient to their husbands and accept whatever good or bad treatment the husband receives, even though he is hurt. It is loaded with socio-political interests, because if the household is in trouble, it certainly affects diplomatic relations between kingdoms.

According to *the source of credibility theory*, it is easier to convince someone when the source is reliable; a *high-credibility source is more effective at changing a person's opinion than a low-credibility one*.⁴⁰ So the use of terms

³⁷ Hart, *Women's Secret Manuscript; Text Editing and Translation*, Volume I, 17.

³⁸ Yusro Edy Nugroho et al., "The Concept of Women's Happiness in *Serat Wulang Putri*," conference paper presented at the International Conference on Science and Education and Technology (ISET 2019), Semarang City, Indonesia, *Proceedings of the International Conference on Science and Education and Technology (ISET 2019)*, Atlantis Press, 2020, 382, <https://doi.org/10.2991/assehr.k.200620.074>.

³⁹ Yusro Edy Nugroho dkk., "Patriarchal Hegemony of Javanese Kings Power in *Teaching the Princess' Text*," *Cogent Arts & Humanities* 11, no. 1 (2024): 1, <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311983.2024.2335778>.

⁴⁰ Hovland dkk., *Communication and Persuasion ; Psychological Studies Of Opinion Change*.

related to the Prophet *Sam*. and her family in *the Serat* will open up more opportunities for the reader's acceptance of the message they want to convey, because of the great credibility of the personalities of the Prophet *Sam*., Ali r.a and Fatimah r.a., in this case the acceptance of women, especially those in the palace environment, to the misogynistic views made by the initiators and writers of *Serat Sandi Wanita*. Thus, the histories of misogyny in *the Fiber* may have arisen because of the interests of the initiator and the author. Especially in the context of Java, the palace is a representation of the mystical path of Sufism and the Islamic cosmos, so that the sultan is considered a guardian, a human figure endowed with a pile of glory.⁴¹ As well as the view of Pakualam II as the initiator of the manuscript.

Conclusion

Hadith has been found in Javanese literary works from the 19th century, but attention to and knowledge of the quality of hadith remain superficial. The hadith has not been written in its entirety with the redaction of the sanad and the matan, let alone to include its quality, so that it is possible to include *the hadith of da'if* and even *maudhu'*. Among them is *Serat Sandi Wanita* which contains the teachings of Javanese women's morality which is loaded with various misogynistic ideas, including the history of the arrival of the Prophet (peace be upon him) with Fatimah r.a to the house of Seh Akbar's wife and the narration of Ali bin Abi Talib r.a. to his wife Fatimah r.a for leaving her for the zuhur prayer. These two narrations have no basis in sanad, and, from the point of view, they are contrary to the Qur'an, the hadith, history, and common sense. The existence of misogynistic histories in *the Women's Cipher Fiber* may have been constructed in the social, political, and cultural context of the time.

The influence of 19th-century syncretism between Islamic and Hindu theology is reflected in the era's literary works. The terms of Islamic theology are used in fiber but mixed with Hindu misogynistic values. The teaching that wives should prioritize devotion to their husbands over personal ritual worship seems to align with the classical Hindu teaching known as *Stridharma*. Hinduism has been criticized for its sexist, patriarchal, and misogynistic values against women. In addition, the intersection of European cultures in Java may also affect the idea of writing a history of misogyny, because it examines the reality of Javanese noblewomen who, at that time, began to demand gender justice, as well as the patterns of European women's households. So to overcome it, it is felt necessary to subjugate Javanese women again with theological arguments using the figure of the Prophet *Sam*. In addition, *the Women's Password Fiber, initiated and written in the palace ruler's environment*, may be of great importance. Diplomatic relations between kingdoms through political marriage must be maintained to ensure the permanence of their households, because they will undoubtedly affect diplomatic harmony. Therefore, as wives, women need to be equipped with teachings to be steadfast in the household, regardless of the husband's treatment, in the name of religious teachings.

This study contributes to a broader discourse on the hadith or history of misogyny attributed to the Prophet *in* Javanese literature. The findings show that hadith or gender-related histories in local literary works still need to be reviewed using hadith criticism to explore their authenticity. Thus, efforts to critique hadith on gender against ancient local texts can be considered essential because they reveal the root cause of the construction of gender injustice rooted in hadith from early writings in the archipelago. This study is limited to the form of hadith criticism, so it focuses only on assessing the quality of the history of misogyny in the manuscript of *Serat Sandi Wanita*, along with a gender analysis to identify factors that may shape the creation of that history. Therefore, research using a hadith-

⁴¹ Sumbulah, "Javanese Islam and Cultural Acculturation," 57.

criticism approach to other ancient texts in the archipelago is recommended to more comprehensively reveal the roots of the hadith-based misogynistic perspective.

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