Volume 13 Issue 1
Originally issued as F1

Global Journal of Human Social Sciences
Political Science
Volume 13 Issue 1 Version 1.0 Year 2013
Type: Double Blind Peer Reviewed International Research Journal
Publisher: Global Journals Inc. (USA)
Online ISSN: 2249-460X & Print ISSN: 0975-587X

Feminist Discourse Analysis in Islamic Feminism

By Muhammad Salman, Dr. Arab Naz, Waseem Khan, Umar Daraz, Qaiser Khan & Muhammad Hussain

University of Malakand, Pakistan

Abstract - The discussion in the current debate primarily explores the major areas in Islamic discourses that are criticized by scholars and critics. The current debate aims to investigate and illuminate the true and transparent Islamic picture of the areas (criticized) by the western school of feminism. An attempt has been made to link the debate in the prevailing scholarships to find out the relevant answer to the questions put forward by the mentioned feminists and to develop a paradigm more harmonious and acceptable in the old discourses. Besides, the debate encompasses valuable inputs and provides an argument that leads to mediation between the two poles of controversies.

GJHSS-F Classification : FOR Code: 160699, 220403

FEMINIST DISCOURSE ANALYSIS IN ISLAMIC FEMINISM

Strictly as per the compliance and regulations of:

© 2013. Muhammad Salman, Dr. Arab Naz, Waseem Khan, Umar Daraz, Qaiser Khan & Muhammad Hussain. This is a research/review paper, distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial 3.0 Unported License http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/3.0/), permitting all non-commercial use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

Feminist Discourse Analysis in Islamic Feminism

Muhammad Salman[α], Dr. Arab Naz[σ], Waseem Khan[ρ], Umar Daraz[w], Qaiser Khan[¥] & Muhammad Hussain[§]

I. Justification of the Discourse

The discussion in the current debate primarily explores the major areas in Islamic discourses that are criticized by scholars and critics. The current debate aims to investigate and illuminate the true and transparent Islamic picture of the areas (criticized) by the western school of feminism. An attempt has been made to link the debate in the prevailing scholarships to find out the relevant answer to the questions put forward by the mentioned feminists and to develop a paradigm more harmonious and acceptable in the old discourses. Besides, the debate encompasses valuable inputs and provides an argument that leads to mediation between the two poles of controversies.

II. The Argument of the Current Study

The present study is a qualitative approach based on secondary sources towards the study of feminism and Islamic feminism. The information is collected from books, journals, religious scripts and other related sources within the given framework. The world feminism (women studies) is a very wide subject, which requires a great depth and breadth of scholarship which is surely not possible in the current debate to be studied and discussed. When the term feminism is used internationally it has different type of trajectory but when the term is Islamized and the word Islamic is add to feminism, it takes a different course which is more difficult to define and more strange to assess as compare to White feminism. Because there is a horrible division in the Islamic world and a sizable number of interpretations of the Qur'anic text and the prophetic traditions (the primary sources of Islamic law) which makes the issue more complicated. Further, the exploitation of the meaning of Qur'anic verses for political goals in the Islamic world is another dimension of the phenomenon. In this regard, the current debate is moving to link the issue in the ongoing debate and to clarify the ambiguity in this regard. The discussion is divided in the following main dimensions:

III. Islamic Feminism: An Introduction

This part of the discussion provides some detail about the issue of feminism in Islamic perspective and opens the discussion in a wide range of debate.

IV. Islamic Law Of Evidence

This part of the paper gives details about the laws of evidence which is called as is discriminatory against women and rationale is given from Ayah Number 282 of Surah number, 2 of Quran.

V. The Concept Of Veil Is An Issue For Muslims And Non-Muslims

This part is based on three primary argument; the veil is not exclusively original with Islam as often argued, there is greater need to understand the real essence of the Qur'anic text with regard to veil and the west has made it a more aggravated issue then ever before.

VI. Islamic Feminism And Politics

This section deals with the matter that the women rights or feminist movements are used as an effective instrument in politics.

VII. Islamic Feminism: An Introduction

Whenever we enter in to a feminist debate the first question that we have to answer is that, who are feminist? Those who dare to break the conspiracy of silence about the oppressive, unequal relationship between men and women, and who want to change it (Turtle 1987: 107- 8). The concept of feminism varies from place to place and time to time under the changing circumstances it has different meaning (Moghadam 2002b: 12). The concept came to Muslim world first in Egypt in 1880s and the term 'feminism' first appeared in 1909 when Malak Hifni Nasif published a collection of articles and speeches in a book entitled Al Nisaiyat (meaning something by or about women). Politically, in 1923, Egyptian women first used the term 'feminist' to define themselves and their organization "'Al-Ittihadal Nisa'i al-Misri' (the Egyptian Feminist Union). (Haq and Aslam, 2005) the women in Muslim world hesitantly adopted the term feminism in 1970s but their main stress was to break the myths against the position of women in Islam.

Author α : Lecture, Department of Political Scicnes University of Malakand, Pakistan.
Author σ : Associate Professor and Chairman Department of Sociology and Social Work University of Malakand, Pakistan.
Author ρ ω : Lecturer and PHD Scholar, Department of Sociology and Social Work University of Malakand, Pakistan.
Author ¥ : Assistant Professor Department of English University of Malakand, Pakistan.
Author § : Lecturer and M.Phil Scholar, Department of Sociology and Social Work University of Malakand, Pakistan.

© 2013 Global Journals Inc. (US)

"The term Islamic feminism was used for the first time in Turkey by Nilufer Gole in her edited book The Forbidden Modern (published in Turkish in 1991 and in English in 1996), and in articles by Yesim Arat and Feride Ajar. The South African activist, Shamim Shaikh, applied feminism to Islam, again providing in her writings and speeches evidence of the term being clinched by Muslims "(ibid) as Iam is presented as generally oppressive against women, if we examine the history of Islam we will find the strong position of women in social life for example Khadija (the first wife of the holy Profit PBUH) was a business women. His wife Ayesha was well known and respected as an expert in Hadeeth (in the top ranking interpreters of Hadeeth) and participated in wars also (Saadawi, 1980). This suggests that Islam is not oppressive in the sense it is projected rather Islam presented a very liberal view and provide a new direction. The oppression of women in Islam is conspiracy and the oppression of women is a one sided view based upon false notions. Even, some of the critics of Islam with their westerners' counterparts regard Islam as a hurdle in feminist efforts. There may be two reasons for criticizing Islam. The first is they do not know the real Islamic essence, ideology and teaching of Islam, about women rights and duties while secondly they are criticizing Islam in order to cover their deficiencies and inner enmity. This is not the case with the white feminists only as most of the ignorant Muslims believed that Islam and feminism are mutually exclusive.

Some of the journalists and politicians recklessly write about the oppression of women in an Islamic society without talking to the woman under the veil. They are unable to appraise the respect and protection that a woman enjoys in that very system that was established 14 centuries ago "yet, by writing about cultural issues like child brides, female circumcision, honor killings and forced marriages (and attaching these cultural practices to Islam) they wrongly believe that they are coming from a point of knowledge"(Alisha, 2010). This is true that in most of the Islamic states where the majority of the Muslims have these issues but then there is again the need to enquire (a) weather the problem is caused by religion or the culture of that state?. (b) And the problems of the feminism in any Islamic state in which they arise should be carefully examined and responded keeping in view the context weather that state is really Islamic or it just claims to be?

If feminism is the name of struggle for the equal rights of woman and for a moment we suppose that (all the feminists have agreed on the form of equality that they seek for women in the society) then the Islamic teaching provides the best ground for feminism as Quran says: in relation to God. "For men who submit [to God] and for women who submit [to God], for believing men and believing women, for devout men and devout women, for truthful men and truthful women, for steadfast men and steadfast women, for humble men and humble women, for charitable men and charitable women, for men who fast and women who fast, for men who guard their chastity and women who guard, for men who remember God much and for women who remember - for them God has prepared forgiveness and a mighty reward" (33:35). "Whoever performs good deeds, whether male or female and is a believer, we shall surely make him live a good life and we will certainly reward them for the best of what they did" (16:97).

It is only in relation to each other and society that a difference is made - a difference of role or function. The rights and responsibilities of a woman are equal to those of a man, but they are not necessarily identical with them. Equality and identity are two different things, Islamic traditions maintain - the former desirable, the latter not. Men and women should therefore be complementary to each other in a multi-function organization rather than competitive with each other in a uni-function society.

VIII. Islamic Law Of Evidence Is Discriminatory Against Women

Some critics of Islam are of the view that Islamic law of evidence is discriminatory against women. They base their criticism on one ayah of holy Quran "And call to witness, from among your men, two witnesses. And if two men be not (at hand) then a man and two women, of such as ye approve as witnesses, so that if the one erreth (through forgetfulness) the other will remember. And the witnesses must not refuse when they are summoned. "(282) they (the critics) also put forward a Hadeeth of the holy profit that is, "women are deficient both in prayer (due to menstruation) and in intellect (due to their witness counting for less than a man's)" (Haq and Aslam, 2005: p351). Their argument is sacrificial they do not enter in to the realm of theological debate; they do not feel the need to take in to account that the law can be modified. However the intention here is to make an argument on intellectual ground that no mullah or so called Alim takes the pain to do so. If one ever ask them i.e. *Mullas* and so called *Alims* how we can defend Quran (ayah's number 282) against the claim that Islamic law of evidence (with reference to Ayah 282) is discriminatory against women? All of them will have the same answer" this is the order of God and no argument is required in its favor". This is true for the order of the Devine force, but the need is to take an insight in the mentioned verses and discover the deep rooted wisdomin these ayahs and in the contextual analysis of the verses in which it is revealed.

However, in the debate of the current paper, this is important not to divert the flow of the subject in the ongoing argument which is still the same that those who criticize these laws, how we can argue to defend Islam in this regard? It is to be noted that not only this

© 2013 Global Journals Inc. (US)

Ayah and *Hadeeth* is the soul base of their argument, they (critics) further develop their theory of objection to Islam in the law of inheritance where a male gets double the share of women and thus the status of women in Islam is half to that of a man. The objection certainly they raise with bias and due to lack of knowledge of Islam and Islamic law of evidence. As per Quran, there are two types of people living in this world, one are believers and the other nonbelievers. For those who believe in Allah no argument is necessary and for those who do not believe in Allah no argument is possible. To see the inheritance law in the verses of Quran, one can see that Islam first define the right of a female and then of the male, while the economic activities are certainly the responsibility of male where female if forgiven in this regard. In this context one could see and analyze the verses of the Holy Quran. One angel that is more important is that the Muslims shall make themselves duty bound to present the true picture of Islam to the world fulfilling their duty and obligations so that the maximum people are saved from the chastisement of hell. Being followers of the rational religion, Muslims shall be rational and convincing. They are to be patient and knowledgeable so that they can put across their view point in a rational and convincing manner and with the force of knowledge to make the nonbelievers believe their view point.

The *Ayah* on which they (critics of Islam) have based their criticism pertains to business matter i.e. *Nikah* sail and purchase contract, in other words this ayah deal with those cases which pertains to financial matter or future obligations if reduce to writing, the instrument shall be attested by two men, or one man or two women, so that one may remind the other, if necessary, an evidence shall be led accordingly. In all other matters, the court may accept, or act on, the testimony of one man or one woman, or such other evidence as circumstances of the case may warrant (even in some cases the holy Prophet Muhammad PBUH had accepted the testimony of one (truthful man as sited in the commentaries on Qanunay- Shahadat, Vol,2: p222).

In *Zinah* case four male witnesses are required to prove the case is meant to say that there are different types of cases and for these cases different number of witnesses is required. In the cases specific to women, evidence of only one woman is sufficient to prove the case. To negate their criticism, firstly the *Ayah* requires two male to give evidence. When the male is available then there is no need to produce woman as a witness, but if two men are not available then only one man and two women are required to prove a case pertaining to business matters. It does not mean that the status of woman is reducing to half to that of a man. The wisdom behind this matter is that Islam does not want its women followers to be dragged in to courts to confront all sort of questions put to them. Moreover testimony of one woman along with a man will suffice if she does not forget. Furthermore, it is a concession given to woman to be accompanied by another woman while attending court so that she would feel comfortable where as the concession is not available to man. Imagine how much respectful and caring is Islam towords women in all matters. In *Zinah* case she has not been burdened with giving evidence, only male are require to produce evidence. In the case specific to women, the testimony of one woman is sufficient. For example, in the birth of a child whether a child was born by particular woman, the child was alive or dead at the time of birth etc, *Shahadat* (evidence) of a single woman is sufficient. These critics intentionally hide the true picture of Islam by not bringing in to fourth the wisdom behind the matter in order to mislead the people. Even those so called enlightened moderate would not want their ladies to be available in courts to face the pricking questions put to them by the opposite counsel in the jam-packed court room with the maximum number of males (Qanunay-shahadat, 1984).

While to see the context of Ayah, 282 this is to be noted that another objection is raised by the liberal forces against the Hadood ordinance in Pakistan and again there is a conspiracy of misuse against them. We can count hundreds of cases in which the women are being discriminated under these laws but that problem is separate from this matter that is (one male and two female witnesses as mentioned by Quran reduces the status of women to half as compare to that of a man). The advise to all those feminists (western as well as Islamic) who criticize Islam on the basis of Ayah Number, 282 of Surah Number Two of Quran that they should not stress on one ayah as mentioned above, rather they should first, read the Ayah in revelation context and second, they should read the whole Quran to understand the message in its universality and application and if it is not possible then at least they should study all those ayahs revealed to describe the relations of women in society. Again it is necessary for *Mullas* or the so called *Alims* to broaden their sphere of knowledge and prepare them to face the challenges of modernity and further, they should not look towards west or any other side for the solutions of their problems. This change in the attitude of *Mullas* is also necessary to save the common man from the embarrassment of the criticism that his or her religion has no rational grounds to defend it teaching.

IX. The Controversy Veil (Hijab/Purdah)

Another major criticism on Islam is that it restricts the independence of women by imposing veil as an obligation on her. Many of the critics go too far in their bias towards Islam when they carelessly attach the origin of veil exclusively to Islam. This is just because of their stubborn attitude to words Islam that they try to manipulate this phenomenon in a negative direction for

© 2013 Global Journals Inc. (US)

the defamation of Islam. This to realize in first instance that the veil is not originated with Islam (as commonly perceived). The earliest text regarding veiling is an Assyrian legal text of the thirteenth century B.C. It restricts veiling to respectable, women specifically prohibiting it from prostitutes and even the women of lower casts (Keddie, 1990). If someone argues that the complete veiling is imposed by Islam, the argument is wrong because it is not acceptable in a sense that the first visual depiction of top-to-toe veiling comes from bas-reliefs in Palmyra, Syria, in the first century CJE. (The people identified were northern Arabs, but they had no -direct connection with the first' Muslims (Keddie, 1990). Further, not only veiling but the avoidance of male contact is also a pre-Islamic phenomenon that dates back to first century AD and the study of history makes it clear that the early Muslims adopted these practices from the peoples who lived near them and whom they conquered. It is also an important point that in the pre-Islamic Arab the veil was used to differentiate between the free women (who whore the veil) from the slaves (Keddie1990).

The veil and its misconception by the many feminists have been misconceived as such people have no deeper understanding of the holy Quran and Hadeeth. The text of the Quran is either not understood rightly or it is more often misinterpreted while this is to say that the (ayahs) that according to jurists are specific to the wives of the profit in the matter of veil. In this regard to quote one of the four ayahs (regarding veil in Quran) that is sufficient to support the argument. "And tell the believing women to lower their gaze and be modest, and to display of their adornment only that which is apparent, and to draw their veils over their bosoms, and not to reveal their adornment save to their own husbands or fathers or husbands fathers, or their sons or their husbands' sons, or their brothers or their brothers' sons or sisters sons, or their women, or their slaves, or male attendants who lack vigor, or children who know naught of women's nakedness. And let them not stamp their feet so as to reveal what they hide of their adornment. And turn unto Allah together, O believers, in order that ye may succeed (Surat-un-Nur 24:30-31).

The ayah contains many other things as stated below:

1. A Muslim woman is ordered not to display her beauty and adornment (*Zeenah*) except for 'that which must ordinarily appear of it': (Ma *Dhahara Minha*), or 'that which is apparent.' The word *Zeenah* has two related meanings in this context. As Mawdudi writes that (a) natural or bodily beauty, and; b) acquired adornment such as a ring, bracelets, and clothes. The part of *Zeenah*, exempted from the above injunction, was interpreted in two ways: a. the face and the hands. This is the interpretation of the majority of the jurists, past and Present.

This interpretation is confirmed by *Ijma* (consensus) that a Muslim woman is allowed by Islam to uncover her face and hands during pilgrimage and even during the prayers, while the rest of her body is regarded as 'awrah (that which should be covered)". Some (Islamic scholars) criticize this interpretation despite the fact that this interpretation is based on the authority of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), especially the well-known tradition narrated by Ayesha (one of the most accurate transmitters of the traditions of the profit) in which the profit Muhammad says: "If a woman reaches the age of puberty, no part of her body should be seen but this' – and he pointed to his face and hands."

The second argument put forward by Mawdudi in this context (what appears out of necessity) "Whatever appears of the woman's body owing to uncontrollable factors such as blowing of the wind, or out of necessity such as the bracelet's or even the outer clothes themselves" (Mawdudi). However, in the current scenario and for the purpose of the current study the concern in this section is precisely the veil (hijab) and the debates related to it, because if we draw on the lines of Mawdudi which (under this subject) along with the veil cover the subject of *libas* (dress) the argument will become very complicated. The veil has been made a problem in the feminist debates in the Muslim world, as it is an established notion that the veil was stressed for the identity of Muslim women (which is a major problem for the west nowadays) a hot debate has been underway that the unveiling of Muslim women is a struggle against their beliefs as Muslim? Or it is the subversion of their identity? The tide of imposing ban on veil in the west (France, Belgium, Italy and Germany) has generated a hot debate whether one cannot practice his or (her) religions according to her beliefs? Or is it not something ridiculous that a Christian, Jew or an atheist would teach a Muslim how to practice his or her religion? Or the most important question that, the western believes of democratic pluralism is under threat after making such prejudicial legislations that target specific religion.

Even in the west there are some voices that stress on the confinement of women to the boundaries of the house for example, "when the Italian nominee to the European Commission in October 2004, Rocco Buttiglione, declared that he thought woman's place was in the home under the protection of her husband, he spoke like many conservative Muslims" (Olivier Roy, 2007). If such voices are present in the west then why Islam is targeted only.

However this is not the real subject here and it is important to find out the essential objectives of the veil as pointed out by Mawdudi in the light of the tradition of the holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) that the veil does not mean full-face, veil means modesty in dress and to hide everything except what appears out of necessity

© 2013 Global Journals Inc. (US)

(hands and the face) according to the tradition of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). If we notice the Taliban' ideology and examine it in the light of the interpretation of Mawdudi, we will find that, their concept of veil is more strict than that which is taught by the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) as they along with the full face veil stress on stockings and gloves to be use by women for veil (Purdah) these two concepts of veil one traditional (having its roots in the verse of Quran and the tradition of the holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and the second one (as stated in Qutb and use it for my own interpretation) that is stressing on Quran but is not based on it but upon *jahiliyah* (ignorance).

We as Muslims ever tried to find out the detail about the order of veil in Quran and Sunna'h? The answer of 99% would be a big no when they will ask the question from their selves. If this is the case then how we expect that we will know the true concept of veil (in the light of the teachings of Quran and Sunna'h) and its origin (as a mark of identity or as a tool of confinement of women in the Muslim society). How we can claim that we can satisfy the questions of those Western visitors to the Muslim world who are usually been struck by the phenomenon of the veil, with which so many Muslim women in towns cover their faces and bodies. As it is pointed out that the veil is not exclusively original with Islam and Arab women of the Prophet's time did not veil their faces and while the Quran stressed the desirability of sex-modesty and discouraged Promiscuity, the veil is not mentioned. It is said therein that when women appear in public, they should bring their scarves down to their bosoms and that they should not make a display of their charms (Rahman, 1980). On one occasion, when women were teased in the evening by the "Hypocrites" at Medina, Muslim women were asked to "draw their outer cloaks close to them so that they will be known and not hurt" and the "Hypocrites" were told that if they persisted in teasing women, they would be expelled from Medina. It is certain, however, that as used in Muslim society the veil had the dual and allied function of status symbol and an exaggerated expression of modesty. The veil was not worn by the lower classes in towns; it was also absent from the countryside. (Rahman, 1980).

Now for a moment leaves it to the sisterhood of Islam whether they want to choose to wear the veil or they want to go unveil in the streets. Why we are obsessed with the thing that is exclusively a personal issue or this is the narrow mindedness of the westerners who cannot see the Muslim values that pushes their values in to the realm of insignificance. Why, as Muslim we are unable to see there are many daring issues to be addressed than *hijab* which is not that much a big problem. Similarly, the leaders of the west are interfering in the personal life's of the Muslim women then how they claim that they are respecting the universal charter of human rights as they have declare hijab as a crises point on the basis of false arguments. Even to quote hear Yvonne Ridlly who very elegantly defend *hijab* in Britain and ridicule the criticism on hijab when she says" And yet in Britain we have had the former Foreign Secretary Jack Straw describing the *niqab* the face veil revealing only the eyes - as an unwelcome barrier. When, oh when, will men learn to keep their mouths shut over a woman's wardrobe?" We also had Government Ministers Gordon Brown and John Reid express disparaging remarks about the *nikab* - both these men come from over the Scottish Borders where men wear skirts!!

In this context, a series of other parliamentarians enter the fray describing the *nikab* as a barrier for communication. If this was the case, can anyone explain why cell phones, landlines, email; text messaging and fax machines are in daily use? Who listens to the radio? No one switches off the wireless because they cannot see the face of the presenter."(Ridley, 2006) "There may be 1,001 Muslim feminist critiques on the European *burqa* ban and its attendant jokes and jibes, insults, and ridiculousness, but what should remain clear is that we Muslim feminists are not just about the *hijab*" (Alisha, 2010). There are many daring issues as pointed out earlier which are more significant and demand prior attention not only of the Muslim feminists but also of the *olimas.* "At the moment, the Muslim feminist agenda (even if there was a hazy idea of one) is limited both by the media's obsessive preoccupation with the hijab and small scope of issues we can tackle from a Muslim feminist perspective" (Alisha, 2010).

The main construct throughout this discussion on veil from different (traditional, radical, modernist Muslim and western) perspectives is that (a) the *hijab* is not a big issue of concern as there are many other issues of serious nature i.e. economic crises etc (b) the question of *hijab* should be left solely to sisterhood of Islam so that it can be dealt in a smooth manner and (c) that whenever the issue is suppressed it became more eminent and it is used as an issue for misleading the masses as it is evident that Raza Shah used all the government potential to unveil women but the trend surfaced in the university with increasing numbers of veils. In Afghanistan, in sixties the unveiling of women was attempted by the government and initially it gained some support from almost all the strata's of women but gradually the trend began to reverse and finally the Taliban government introduced even a more restricted phenomenon of veil. This is the tragedy of *Ummah* that it does not attempt to question the traditions set by the myth making *mullas* and who ever try to do so he or she is labeled as Kafir or Murtad (apostate).

X. Islamic Feminism and Politics

Unlike other subjects of the social sciences "orthodox political science has been slow to incorporate

© 2013 Global Journals Inc. (US)

a gendered perspective into its approach "(Silverberg 1990: sited in waylen1996). This is difficult for the discipline of politics and "The traditional subject matter of the discipline - 'high politics — treaties, wars, power politics as it is played out in the top echelons of the public sphere, not to mention the institutional politics of parties, executives and legislatures, is typically-male dominated"(Waylen, 1996). The purpose of borrowing this argument for the discussion on Islamic feminism (which is used in the context of the third-world in general) is to make it clear that the politics is clearly male dominated and the feminism or its related movements are politicized one way or the other. Here we will randomly present some glimpses of the politics of feminism in different Islamic states to support the argument that feminism in the Islamic world is politicized and the women rights (their provision or denial) or (their support or opposition) is subject to a specific political interest of the most Islamic political parties.

Let us first start from Pakistan, in this very country there are a number of religious political parties with countless ridiculous twists with regard to the rights of women according to their changing interests. These orthodox have ever resented against the participation of women in the political life. In Pakistan, the story has started since 1949 with the protest over the presence of two women parliamentarians in the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan, which was a move for even minimal rights for women and has encountered opposition from these forces. In 1965 presidential elections, it was a shock for the people that fundamentalist J-I (Jamat-Islami, which had a clear-cut stance in 1951to53 that women cannot become the head of the state) supported the candidacy of women (Fatima Jinnah) against Ayub Khan. After the dissolution of the assemblies in August 1990, it sat with Syeda Abida Hussain, an independent woman politician and a federal minister, as part of the combined opposition, in the same year in general elections; it again sought to acquire the support of PPP on some seats. The shocking twist in the story is that, in the same year its representative walked out of the TV program because it was hosted by a lady. There are countless stories about their (Islamic political parties) on-and-off swings in their stances on the question of different aspects of women's rights for political gains, like Fazlur Rahman is reported to have stance that" women cannot participate in the election" but when he was made the chairman of the committee for women affairs he said that" the participation of women is not that much a big issue"(Khan, 2009).

In the case of Iran the use of feminist slogans for political uses is more eminent domestically as well as internationally. If we recall the story of the efforts of the Shah with the full use of government authority for unveiling campaign, and those who had supported the veil supported the revolutionaries. Again after the revolution and government enforced veil and also removed the top judges from their post, the feminists struggled against the new government, but these movements were soon politicized (began to be used for political purposes).

We should not ignore the propaganda campaign of the western media against Iran and it's continues stimulation of the sentiments of women against their government. It is true on the other hand that the women had or denied of their rights in some respects in Iran but we should ask the question that, the western media is doing this solely for rights of women of Iran? And the answer will be certainly no. This makes the argument clear that women rights or the feminism or its related movements are misused for political purposes in the Muslim as well as against the Muslim world.

XI. Conclusion

The paper thus concludes to summarize an extensive debate which was surely a stupendous task for us because of lacking the authority on the interpretation of Quran and Hadeeth. Certainly, it is not easy to conclude the debate with accuracy as what is concluded is

(a) All the Muslim feminists should try to read the ayahs of Quran in their complete context.
(b) The common man should also have at least some knowledge of the Quran or if not then he or she should not try to inter in to these complicated debates.
(c) We should not completely rely on Westerners for the concepts of the rights because, we have a guide or a code to these rights and the only need is to modify or inline it with the modern day usage.
(d) And lastly it is true (as some of Muslim feminists criticize that the interpretations of the text and the traditions is from the male perspective) they should remember that men cannot be feminists they can only be the supporters of feminism, or women rights. At the end of the day they (women should struggle for their rights not only in the field but also in academics.

References Références Referencias

1. Alicia, (2010). Is Muslim feminism More Than Just a Hijab Defense?. Muslim Media Watch (MMW) October 28th.
2. Kathy G, G. (1996). Women's Movement, Feminism and the National Struggle in Palestine. Rutledge: London, 1996.
3. Commentary on Qanunay Shahadat 1984: Volume One.
4. Haq. R and Aslam R. (2005). Feminism and Islam. Rawalpindi: Alpha Sky Printers.
5. Rahman. F (1980). A Survey of Modernization of Muslim Family Law. International Journal of Middle

© 2013 Global Journals Inc. (US)

East study, Vol. 11, (4), July. Cambridge University Press.
6. Waylen G (1996). Analyzing Women in the Polities of the Third World.PP 7-21. 1996.
7. Khan H (2009). Political and Institutional Development in Pakistan. Pakistan: Oxford Press.
8. Keddie. R.N (1990). Mark of Honour, Modesty and Respectability for a Woman to Veil. Journal of World History: PP77-108.
9. Moghadam, V.M. (2002). Islamic Feminism 'and its discontents: Towards a Resolution of the Debate. Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society, 27(4), 1135. Retrieved January 6, 2003. http://web2.infotrac.glegrlup.com
10. Roy O. (2007). Secularism confronts Islam. Translated by George Holoch. Columbia University Press.
11. Saadawi. N. (1980). The Hidden Face of Eve. London: Zed Books.
12. Tuttle, L. (1987). Encyclopedia of Feminism. London: Arrow Books.
13. Ridley, Y (2006). How I Came To Love The Veil. Tuesday, 31 October.

© 2013 Global Journals Inc. (US)

This page is intentionally left blank

© 2013 Global Journals Inc. (US)