

## Reconstructing the Meaning of Hijab: A Hans-Georg Gadamer's Hermeneutical Analysis of Abu Syuqqah's Viewpoint in the Book *Tahrir al-Mar'ah fi 'Ashr al-Risalah*

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### ABSTRACT

This article reexamines the construction of the meaning of hijab in Islam through Abu Syuqqah's perspective in *Tahrir al-Mar'ah fi 'Ashr al-Risalah* using Hans-Georg Gadamer's hermeneutic approach. Unlike interpretations that frame the hijab as a rigid obligation or symbol of restriction, Abu Syuqqah emphasizes its moral and ethical dimensions in social interactions, grounded in a contextual reading of Qur'anic verses al-Ahzāb (33:53, 59) and an-Nūr (24:31). He views the hijab not merely as clothing but as a social tool for preserving dignity while enabling women's public roles. Employing Gadamer's four hermeneutical concepts—historical consciousness, pre-understanding, fusion of horizons, and application—the study shows that Abu Syuqqah's interpretation is shaped by his awareness of tradition, the Prophet's social context, and contemporary challenges faced by women in Muslim societies. The article concludes that his reconstruction offers a form of social spirituality that integrates textual fidelity with contextual relevance, addressing both classical meanings and modern realities.

**Keywords:** *Hijab, Abu Syuqqah, Gadamer's Hermeneutics, Tahrir al-Mar'ah, Contextual Interpretation*

### Introduction

The meaning of the hijab in contemporary Muslim society is fraught with dynamics and complexity. In this era, the hijab is not only understood as a religious symbol, but also as a cultural identity, a personal expression, and even a fashion trend. This phenomenon reflects the diversity of subjective interpretations, arising from individuals and social groups with different needs and orientations (Erika, 2022). As a religious symbol, the hijab is often perceived as an instrument that restricts women's movement, leading to the assumption that women cannot be active in public spaces. This perspective is based on a long history of placing women in the domestic sphere and positioning them as inferior to men. Over time, this perception has given rise to normative interpretations that tend to be repressive towards women's social roles (Ashgar, 2003).

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The Qur'an, as the source of Islamic law, is expected to provide clear guidance on the hijab. However, in reality, the verses on the hijab do not provide concrete details about the form and practice of the hijab as it is currently practiced. Many current practices of wearing the hijab have emerged from cultural customs that have been adopted and legitimized as part of religion by some communities. This situation highlights the importance of reinterpreting the verses on hijab to distinguish between transcendental values and cultural constructs (Muhammad Imarah, 1976). One such reinterpretation effort was undertaken by contemporary thinker Abu Syuqqah in his work *Tahrīr al-Mar'ah fī 'Aṣr al-Risālah*. In this book, he presents an emancipatory interpretation of the verses on the hijab that emphasizes the principles of social ethics and respect for women.

This article highlights two main points: first, how the construction of the meaning of hijab is formulated by Abu Syuqqah; and second, how Gadamer's hermeneutical approach can explain this interpretive process. By linking Abu Syuqqah's historical understanding, pre-understanding, and fusion of horizons to the verses on hijab. This article demonstrates that the interpretation is not solely based on the text but also on the dialogue between the text and social reality. Abu Syuqqah rejects a legalistic and exclusive understanding of the hijab. He argues that the obligation to wear the hijab cannot be uniformly applied to all Muslim women, as the historical context of the verses was specifically directed at the wives of the Prophet Muhammad (Abu Syuqqah, 1999). QS. al-Ahzāb 33: 53, 59 and QS. an-Nūr [24]: 31, according to him, do not regulate absolute standards of dress, but rather convey principles of etiquette in social interaction. Abu Syuqqah's interpretation suggests that the hijab should be understood as a form of social protection that enables women to actively participate in public life. Thus, the hijab is not a barrier but a facilitator for women's involvement in social, economic, and political spheres.

Abu Syuqqah's views open up space for re-examining the position of the hijab in contemporary Islamic discourse. He shows that rigid and symbolic interpretations of the hijab need to be replaced with interpretations that take into account the social context and moral purpose of the Qur'anic command. In this regard, his contribution is significant for the narrative of gender justice in Islam (Juhri Jaelani, 2021). Abu Syuqqah's thinking aligns with Hans-Georg Gadamer's hermeneutical approach, which emphasizes the importance of historical consciousness (historically effected consciousness) and dialogue in the process of text interpretation. Understanding a text cannot be separated from its social context, preconceptions, and the fusion between the reader's horizon and the text.

Using Gadamer's hermeneutic approach, this study seeks to explain the construction of meaning of the hijab according to Abu Syuqqah in a more comprehensive manner. The focus is not only on the content of the text, but also on how meaning is formed through the interaction between the interpreter's experiences, social values, and historical context. This study is expected to enrich the contemporary interpretive tradition and contribute to the study of Islam and gender, particularly in understanding the verses on the hijab in a more fair, contextual, and responsive manner to the social reality of Muslims today. The debate over the hijab does not only involve the normative texts in the Qur'an but also touches on historical and sociological dimensions. In the dynamics of contemporary Muslim life, the hijab is often interpreted not merely as a religious instruction but also as a cultural symbol, an identity marker, and even a form of social resistance. Abu Syuqqah, as a contemporary thinker, attempts to reinterpret the meaning of the hijab through a critical and contextual approach. The book *Tahrīr al-Mar'ah fī 'Aṣr al-Risālah* represents an emancipatory interpretation that engages revelation with the conditions of the times.

## Methods

This study uses a qualitative approach with library research. The aim is to analyze the meaning of hijab in Abu Syuqqah's work in depth through reading the text and its social context. This approach allows researchers to explore the dynamics of meaning through interpretive studies

of the text and does not focus on quantitative data. The primary data in this study is the book *Tahrīr al-Mar'ah fī 'Aṣr al-Risālah* by Abu Syuqqah, with a focus on his discussion of QS. al-Ahzāb 33: 53, 59 and QS. an-Nūr 24: 31. This study also examines secondary sources such as classical tafsir books (*al-Ma'ālim al-Tanzīl*, *Jāmi' al-Bayān*, *al-Jāmi' li Ahkām al-Qur'ān*) as well as relevant academic literature on gender tafsir, hijab, and the role of women in Islam.

The analysis technique used is descriptive-analytical with a critical reading of the text content. This process includes identifying themes, narrative analysis, and tracing the historical and sociological contexts that shape Abu Syuqqah's interpretation. This research aims to build a comprehensive understanding of the construction of the meaning of hijab and to reveal the response of interpretation to contemporary issues facing Muslim women.

## Literature Review

Studies on the hijab from an Islamic perspective have been a major subject in religious, gender, and cultural discourse over the past few decades. Among the most frequently discussed topics is the normative interpretation of the hijab, namely within the limits of religious obligations and forms of dress that are in accordance with religious teachings. Most classical and contemporary studies tend to emphasize the legalistic aspects of the hijab, referencing verses such as QS. al-Ahzāb 33: 53, 59 and QS. an-Nūr 24: 31 (Mernissi, 1991; Barlas, 2002). This approach leads to the formation of a single paradigm regarding the obligation of Muslim women to wear the hijab, without allowing room for diversity in interpretation and the social conditions surrounding it.

Meanwhile, in practice, the hijab is often more of a cultural and political symbol than a purely spiritual symbol of faith (Ahmed, 1992; Mahmood, 2005). Leila Ahmed (1992) emphasizes that in modern Islamic history, the hijab has often undergone a transformation in meaning, from a symbol of faith to a symbol of cultural resistance against colonialism and secular modernity. Saba Mahmood (2005) even argues that the wearing of the hijab cannot always be interpreted as a form of patriarchal domination, but also as a form of spiritual agency articulated by Muslim women in their social spaces. Therefore, a new approach is needed that re-examines the meaning of the hijab in a more contextual and relevant manner to the social dynamics of contemporary Muslim societies, while also opening up space for dialogue between interpretations rooted in women's experiences and the diversity of Islamic cultures.

Classical exegetical literature plays a dominant role in shaping the general understanding of the hijab. Al-Baghawi's exegesis in *Ma'ālim al-Tanzīl* interprets the verses on the hijab as instruments for preserving women's honor and protecting them from slander. The main emphasis is on the prohibition of exposing the aurat and the boundaries of interaction between men and women. Similarly, al-Ṭabarī in *Jāmi' al-Bayān* emphasizes the importance of the hijab as a visual barrier and a symbol of respect for women, especially the wives of the Prophet. Al-Qurṭubī in *al-Jāmi' li Ahkām al-Qur'ān* even links the hijab to principles of social etiquette and ethics of interaction. However, all of these interpretations were developed in the context of a patriarchal medieval society, so the emphasis was largely on protecting women from the gaze of men, rather than on women's autonomy in choosing how to express themselves. The historical context of these interpretations is important to critique so that they are not used as an absolute precedent in addressing contemporary issues.

On the other hand, contemporary studies have begun to offer a more progressive approach to the meaning of the hijab. Thinkers such as Amina Wadud, Asma Barlas, and Nasaruddin Umar have developed new interpretations using feminist hermeneutics and gender justice approaches. They challenge the dominance of male interpretations in religious discourse and offer a reinterpretation of the verses on the hijab based on women's experiences. Wadud, for example, emphasizes the importance of interpreting the Qur'an from an egalitarian perspective to free the hijab from the patriarchal burden it has inherited. Similarly, Asma Barlas argues that

the Qur'an does not actually support the subordination of women, but has been interpreted in a sexist manner by many classical scholars. These studies open up critical space for normative interpretations and encourage the formation of a more ethical, spiritual, and contextual meaning of the hijab.

However, most contemporary studies are still limited to debates about the form of hijab that is valid according to Islamic law or about the role of hijab in shaping Muslim women's identity. Some studies are also caught up in the polemic between liberalism and conservatism in Islamic discourse. As a result, many of the narratives that have developed are reactive rather than reflective. On one hand, there are apologetic narratives that defend the hijab as an unquestionable symbol of Islamic identity. On the other hand, there are deconstructive narratives that view the hijab as a form of repression against women. Both often fail to present interpretations that bridge the gap between Islamic spiritual values and the social needs of women today. Therefore, a new approach is needed that does not only focus on the outward form of the hijab but also on the ethical and sociological values underlying it.

In this context, Abu Syuqqah's work becomes relevant for further study. Unlike classical interpretations and some feminist approaches, Abu Syuqqah offers a more balanced narrative based on historical analysis. Through *Tahrīr al-Mar'ah fī 'Aṣr al-Risālah*, he explores the meaning of the hijab based on the social practices of women during the time of the Prophet Muhammad without imposing a specific, absolute form. He seeks to restore the function of the hijab to its essence as a principle of social ethics and protection, rather than as an instrument that limits women's roles. Abu Syuqqah also criticizes traditional interpretations that he believes have disproportionately limited women's roles, and offers an interpretation that allows women to be active in public spaces without losing their religious identity. This approach makes an important contribution to the development of adaptive, responsive, and contextual interpretations in line with the times.

## Result and Discussion

### ***Abu Syuqqah's Interpretation of QS. al-Ahzāb [33]: 53***

QS. al-Ahzāb 33: 53 is one of the verses used by classical exegetes as a basis for formulating the obligation of hijab. However, Abu Syuqqah interprets it contextually by examining the social relationships between Prophet Muhammad, his wives, and his companions. According to Abu Syuqqah, this verse is specifically aimed at regulating the etiquette of interaction between the companions and the Prophet's wives, particularly in matters of household privacy. The command to speak from behind the hijab is not a universal instruction for all Muslim women, but rather a preventive measure to protect the honor of the Prophet's family as highly respected public figures in the society of Medina. This shows that historical context is an important part of understanding the normative direction of the text.

A literal reading of this verse often ignores the context in which the revelation was revealed. He criticizes the classical interpretive approach that generalizes the command to the Prophet's wife into a general legal provision for all women. However, when examined from the perspective of *sabab al-nuzūl* and the structure of society at that time, the command to wear the hijab in this verse was a response to specific social practices that required special ethical regulations. Abu Syuqqah emphasizes that there is no explicit indication in this verse requiring Muslim women in general to wear the hijab as a fixed rule. Instead, this verse is more temporary and specific to the Prophet's household. In his analysis, Abu Syuqqah highlights the importance of the Prophet's household as a place for education, consultation, and social activities. Therefore, regulations governing the etiquette of entering and exiting the Prophet's household were necessary to prevent disturbances that would hinder the functions of the household. This verse serves as a reaffirmation of the boundaries of appropriate interaction between men and women within the

private sphere of Prophet Muhammad. Abu Syuqqah argues that restricting interaction through a curtain or hijab in this context was a solution aligned with the social needs of that time, not a permanent religious law. Thus, the hijab in this context is a social mechanism, not a theological symbol.

This interpretation differs sharply from the understanding of the majority of classical scholars who stipulate that the hijab is a textual obligation for all Muslim women. Abu Syuqqah argues that understanding the verse textually without considering the historical context risks creating a discriminatory doctrine. He asserts that the use of the hijab by the Prophet's wives cannot be used as a universal model because their position as *'umm al-mu'minin'* has unique social and spiritual consequences. Therefore, the interpretation of this verse should not be used as the basis for creating laws that bind all Muslim women throughout time. Abu Syuqqah also discusses the linguistic aspects of the word 'hijab' in this verse. Linguistically, hijab means a cover or barrier. In the context of this verse, hijab refers to the curtain separating the men's and women's quarters in the Prophet's house. Abu Syuqqah rejects the interpretation of hijab as a specific garment, as there are no semantic cues in the verse indicating the form or style of clothing. Therefore, he concludes that the hijab here is a spatial device, not a garment. This strengthens his argument that this verse cannot be used to establish a normative form of women's attire.

In the same vein, Abu Syuqqah's approach to this verse is in line with the principle of *maqāṣid al-syarī'ah*, which emphasizes the objectives of Islamic law, including the preservation of human dignity and honor. He points out that the protection of women in this verse is an ethical objective, not a dress code. Thus, Abu Syuqqah does not deny the importance of ethical interaction between men and women, but rejects interpretations that lead to restrictions on women's public space based on verses that are not socially and contextually relevant. His interpretation allows for a more inclusive role for women in modern society. In a contemporary context, Abu Syuqqah's interpretation opens a new discourse on the relationship between text and social reality. He invites readers to see that not all commands in the Qur'an are absolute and transhistorical. Some are temporary and situational, including the hijab verse in QS. al-Ahzāb 33: 53. Therefore, Muslims need to engage in *ijtihad* in understanding religious texts to avoid being trapped in formalism that disregards social justice values. Abu Syuqqah's thoughts are relevant in encouraging a re-reading of religious texts with a contextual approach, especially on issues concerning women.

### ***Abu Syuqqah's Interpretation of QS. al-Ahzāb [33]: 59***

QS. al-Ahzāb 33: 59 is conventionally understood as a direct command for Muslim women to wear the hijab to protect themselves from harassment. Abu Syuqqah argues that this interpretation needs to be revised in light of the social realities of the Prophet's time. He emphasizes that this verse emerged in a social context where women often faced harassment or verbal abuse in public spaces. Therefore, the instruction for women to extend their hijab is better understood as a form of contextual protection and a social identification strategy, rather than a universal religious obligation. In his explanation, Abu Syuqqah states that the function of the hijab in this verse is to distinguish free women from female slaves, who at that time were targets of harassment due to their social status. Thus, the use of the hijab becomes a social instrument to demonstrate honor and protect dignity, not as a form of ritual obedience. This perspective dismantles the traditional paradigm that views the hijab as an absolute symbol of women's piety and instead restores the meaning of the hijab to its socio-historical reality.

Abu Syuqqah also highlighted the phrase *'yudnīna 'alayhinna min jalābī bihinna,'* which means 'to extend their headscarves over their entire bodies.' In his view, this phrase does not provide specific details regarding the shape, color, or length of the hijab that must be worn. Since there are no normative guidelines, he argues that it is illogical to use this verse as a rigid legal basis. Instead, he suggests that the hijab should be adapted to the culture and needs of the times, provided it still upholds the principles of modesty and protection. This interpretation

has important implications in the legal and social spheres. Abu Syuqqah opens the door for women to reflect on clothing styles that align with contextual modesty values, without being constrained by symbolic rules that limit their participation in public spaces. He strongly opposes interpretations that portray the hijab as an obstacle to women's involvement in the workforce, education, and leadership. Within his framework, the hijab is a tool for emancipation, not an instrument of subordination.

Abu Syuqqah criticizes classical fiqh narratives, which place too much emphasis on the *aurat* (modesty) of women without considering social changes and the position of women in modern society. He believes that a legalistic discourse on the hijab actually distances Muslims from the main spirit of sharia, which is public interest and justice. Referring to QS. al-Ahzāb 33: 59, he offers an interpretation that is not only humanistic but also dynamic, so that women do not become victims of normative interpretations that are no longer relevant in the current context. Within the framework of *maqāṣid al-syarī'ah*, Abu Syuqqah makes the protection of women's dignity and safety the main objective of this verse.

Abu Syuqqah's interpretation makes an important contribution to the discourse on gender interpretation in Islam. It demonstrates that a historical- contextual approach can offer a relevant, empathetic, and socially just reinterpretation. In this case, the hijab is not merely an instrument of personal piety, but also a symbol of women's negotiation with a social system that is often gender biased. Abu Syuqqah sees the need to build a religious discourse that is not repressive towards women, but empowers them through fair and contextual interpretation.

### ***Abu Syuqqah's Interpretation of QS. an-Nūr [24]: 31***

QS. an-Nūr 24: 31 is one of the key verses in the discourse on Muslim women's modesty and hijab. In this verse, believing women are commanded to guard their gaze, preserve their modesty, and cover their chests with a *khimār* (headscarf). Abu Syuqqah emphasizes that this verse places greater emphasis on moral values and social decency than on technical specifications regarding clothing. He argues that the command to cover the *aurat* here is oriented toward respect and ethics, not the restriction of women. Furthermore, this verse cannot serve as the sole normative basis for determining the mandatory clothing style that women must wear throughout history. For Abu Syuqqah, the term '*khimār*' does not refer to a specific type of clothing that must be worn, but rather a form of headscarf that was already culturally recognized among pre-Islamic Arab society. This interpretation shows that the Qur'an does not create a new form of women's clothing, but rather corrects its use to make it more ethical and functional. Thus, the use of the *khimār* covering the chest in this verse is a correction of the customs of the time, not the creation of new rigid rules about the hijab. He believes that the moral meaning contained in the practice of dressing is far more important than the outward form alone.

In another context, Abu Syuqqah highlights the exceptions in the verse regarding those who are permitted to see certain parts of a woman's body. According to him, this list of exceptions shows that the Qur'an understands social needs and family relationships realistically. This verse also shows that the social context greatly determines how *aurat* is understood and applied. Thus, he rejects the generalization that the entire body of a woman is *aurat* that must not be seen at all, except in emergency situations or with mahram. Such an interpretation opens up space for a contextual reinterpretation of the law of *aurat*. Abu Syuqqah also strongly criticizes the use of this verse to limit the social role of women. According to him, Islamic teachings through this verse actually provide space for women to be active in the public sphere as long as it is done with modesty and honor. He notes that the Prophet's wives also had active roles in education and public consultation and were not confined by clothing rules that restricted them socially. In his view, a literal understanding of this verse obscures the inclusive values of Islam that emphasize women's contributions to society.

Within the framework of hermeneutics, Abu Syuqqah understands this verse through a historical contextual approach. He combines the literal meaning of the text with the ethical goals that Sharia law seeks to achieve. He believes that the fusion of the horizon between the context of revelation and contemporary social reality must be the basis for interpreting legal verses. This verse must be seen in the spirit of liberation, not restriction. This is a direct criticism of the traditional approach, which is too rigid in understanding religious texts. Abu Syuqqah's interpretation of QS. an-Nūr 24: 31 makes an important contribution to the progressive reading of religious texts. He not only emphasizes the linguistic and historical meaning of the verse but also the social and psychological impact of the interpretation. For him, an interpretation that overly burdens women will create alienation from Islamic values themselves. Therefore, a reinterpretation with a more fair and relevant approach is essential in building a gender-just society.

With this approach, Abu Syuqqah offers a new framework for understanding the hijab as an ethical instrument, not merely a physical symbol. QS. an-Nūr 24: 31 is used as a starting point to reevaluate the entire religious discourse concerning the relationship between women, the body, and public space. He proposes an alternative discourse that emphasizes the importance of modest dress as part of moral conduct, not merely legal compliance. Through this, he urges Muslims to explore the moral essence of Islamic teachings and free them from the shackles of formalism that are no longer relevant in modern life.

### ***Abu Syuqqah's Criticism of Classical Interpretations***

Abu Syuqqah critically positions himself within the classical interpretation tradition, which tends to be literal and normative. He observes that many interpretations of verses on hijab tend to establish fixed laws without considering the social and historical context. Such interpretations, he argues, perpetuate repressive interpretations of women and overlook the ethical and humanistic dimensions of the Qur'anic text. His criticism of classical exegesis is not a rejection of the authority of earlier scholars, but an effort to reformulate meanings to make them more contextual and in line with contemporary realities. In al-Ṭabarī's interpretation, for example, Abu Syuqqah highlights the dominant linguistic-historical approach, which does not allow room for contemporary understanding. Al-Ṭabarī often uses the accounts of the companions and followers who lived in the early days of Islam, whose social context was very different from modern society. Abu Syuqqah considers this approach to be limited to the textual dimension and does not pay sufficient attention to the moral messages and *maqāṣid* that should be drawn from the text.

Meanwhile, al-Baghawī's interpretation, with its thematic and legal approach, reinforces the hijab as a permanent obligation in Sharia law. Abu Syuqqah criticizes this because it does not take into account the social and political dimensions of women in a constantly changing society. He argues that Sharia commands should not be frozen in the context of the past, but rather reinterpreted dynamically. Abu Syuqqah also criticizes al-Qurtubī's highly legalistic interpretation of the verses on hijab. According to him, Qurtubī is too focused on strictly regulating women's *aurat*, to the point of neglecting the social and ethical dimensions of Islamic teachings. Abu Syuqqah believes that such an approach actually limits women's mobility in society and contradicts the spirit of Islam, which honors humanity.

Abu Syuqqah's criticism is not only directed at the content of the interpretation, but also at the methodology used. He proposes a historical-contextual approach that is more responsive to modern realities. For him, classical interpretation methodology tends to be one-sided and does not allow for dialogue between text and context. Therefore, he encourages epistemological reconstruction in the study of interpretation to respond to the challenges of the times. One of the key points of Abu Syuqqah's criticism is the tendency of classical exegesis to equate the cultural norms of 7th-century Arabia with universal sharia law. He emphasizes that not all social practices from the time of the Prophet should be regarded as permanent standards. Thus, the

interpretation of the hijab, which emerged from past social practices, must be distinguished from ethical principles that are transhistorical in nature.

### ***Gadamer's Hermeneutical Analysis of Abū Syuqqah's Interpretation of the Verses on the Hijab***

Abū Syuqqah's interpretation of the verses on the hijab (QS. al-Ahzāb 33: 53, 59 and QS. an-Nūr 24: 31) reflects a distinctive hermeneutical approach within the corpus of modern Islamic exegesis. He does not read these verses within a legalistic or textual framework alone, but places them within the social and historical landscape of Arab society during the time of the Prophet. This approach marks a methodological distance between him and the classical model of exegesis, which often emphasizes the authority of schools of thought and rigid legal constructs. In *Tahrīr al-Mar'ah fī 'Aṣr al-Risālah*, Abū Syuqqah demonstrates that exegesis is never free from its contemporary context, and that every reading of the text contains political, social, and cultural dimensions that shape its horizon of meaning.

This idea is consistent with the principles of Hans-Georg Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics, which rejects the assumption that understanding can be objective and free from history. According to Gadamer, understanding is always a product of *wirkungsgeschichtliches Bewußtsein*—that is, consciousness shaped by historical influences (Gadamer, 2004, p. 300). Abū Syuqqah's interpretation, in this case, cannot be separated from his involvement as a contemporary intellectual who criticizes the dominance of patriarchal interpretation, while also striving to present a holistic and emancipatory Islam. An analysis of his interpretation through Gadamer's four principles—historically effected consciousness, preunderstanding, fusion of horizons, and application—enables us to understand how interpretation serves as a bridge between revelation and the reality of the community.

In Historical Awareness and Contextual Reconstruction. Abū Syuqqah practices the principle of historically effected consciousness by consciously placing himself in the flow of living historical interpretation. He does not interpret the hijab verse as a normative text standing alone, but as part of the revelation's response to the social conditions of Medina at that time. For example, QS. al-Ahzāb 33: 53 is interpreted as a form of regulating social interaction within the Prophet's household, not as a universal rule for all women. QS. al-Ahzāb 33: 59 is understood as a strategy to protect women from potential harassment, and QS. an-Nūr 24: 31 as an ethical recommendation that shapes the personal modesty of Muslim women.

By emphasizing the historical aspect of the text, Abū Syuqqah shifts the focus of interpretation from the legalistic dimension to the social and ethical dimensions. This is in line with Gadamer's statement that understanding a text is not merely about uncovering its original meaning, but rather placing that meaning in the context of the present day (Grondin, 2003; Palmer, 1969). In Abū Syuqqah's interpretation, history is not an obstacle, but rather an interpretive resource that allows the text to remain alive and engage in dialogue with ever-changing social needs.

The principle of preunderstanding acknowledges that interpreters bring their own values and experiences to the interpretation process. In this context, Abū Syuqqah approaches the text with a preunderstanding rooted in the spirit of gender justice, openness of public space for women, and the importance of liberating Islamic law from patriarchal bias. He does not position preunderstanding as a threat to the objectivity of the text, but as an unavoidable epistemological condition. In his interpretation, Abū Syuqqah explicitly rejects approaches that view the hijab as a tool for the domestication of women. He criticizes legal interpretations rooted in classical patriarchal structures, which often render women as passive subjects within the social system. His view is in line with the idea of engaged hermeneutics developed by Amina Wadud and Asma Barlas, which emphasizes the importance of ethical perspectives and women's experiences in interpretation (Wadud, 1999; Barlas, 2002). In Indonesia, a similar spirit can be found in the thinking of Nasaruddin Umar and Nasr Hamid Abu Zayd, who suggest that interpretation should not only be understood as a reflection of past culture, but also as a dialectical field that is open to

critical reinterpretation (Abu Zayd, 2003; Umar, 2006).

The concept of fusion of horizons in Abū Syuqqah's interpretation is realized in his ability to bring together the historical horizon of the text with the social horizon of modern Muslim women. He does not simply shift the meaning of the text, but opens a dialogue between the meaning of the text during the time of the Prophet and the spiritual and social needs of women today. In this process, interpretation becomes a space where old meanings are questioned and renewed, without losing their normative legitimacy. Abū Syuqqah avoids the dichotomous trap between secular liberalism and legal orthodoxy. He presents the hijab as a symbol of open religiosity, not as an instrument of exclusivism. This perspective reinforces the thinking of Indonesian Muslim figures such as Musdah Mulia and Siti Ruhaini Dzuhayatin, who see that a transformative approach to the text can only be done if the interpreter acknowledges the importance of women's experiential horizons as a source of interpretation (Mulia, 2007; Dzuhayatin, 2010). At this point, Gadamer's hermeneutical approach becomes a methodological tool for making the text a participatory space, not a hegemonic one.

Understanding is incomplete without actualization. This is what Gadamer emphasizes in his principle of application. Interpretation is not only about what is understood, but what is done with that understanding. Abū Syuqqah embodies his interpretation in the form of social advocacy through narratives of women's liberation as outlined in *Tahrīr al-Mar'ah fī 'Aṣr al-Risālah*. The hijab, in his thinking, is no longer a symbol of domestication, but an instrument of agency that gives women space to play a role in the public sphere with a complete spiritual identity. This line of thinking is in line with the *maqāṣid al-syarī'ah* approach developed by progressive Indonesian Islamic thinkers such as Muhammad Amin Abdullah. He emphasizes the importance of an interdisciplinary approach in understanding religious texts, so that interpretations are not merely legal-formal but also reflect the value of public interest (Abdullah, 2006). In line with this, Nur Rofiah and Lies Marcoes emphasize that sacred texts must be read with a bias toward women's real experiences and human potential (Rofiah, 2020; Marcoes, 2017). With this approach, interpretation is not merely a reflection of the text, but a social transformation that touches the lives of the people in concrete ways.

An analysis of Abū Syuqqah's thought using Gadamer's hermeneutical approach shows that the interpretation of religious texts is not limited to linguistic or legal meanings. Interpretation is a living process that involves history, values, and the courage to open oneself to change. Abū Syuqqah's interpretation of the verses on the hijab serves as an example that a hermeneutical approach not only allows for a more equitable reading of women but also provides space for Islam to remain relevant amid modern social dynamics. Through historical awareness, reflective pre- understanding, the meeting of horizons, and the actualization of meaning in social practice, Abū Syuqqah has built an interpretive paradigm that is not only liberating but also rooted in the ethics of revelation. In the context of contemporary Islamic discourse, such a model is crucial for bridging the tension between text and reality, between divine values and human needs.

## Conclusion

This study concludes that Abu Syuqqah offers a new paradigm in understanding the verses on hijab contained in QS. al-Ahzāb 33: 53, 59 and an-Nūr [24]: 31. He does not interpret these verses literally and normatively, as in classical fiqh approaches, but rather through a historical-contextual approach focused on ethical and social values. Abu Syuqqah views the commandment of hijab not merely as a rigid dress code, but as a response to the social conditions of the Prophet's time, particularly regarding the protection of women's dignity and safety. Abu Syuqqah rejects interpretations of hijab rooted in patriarchal domination that reduce women to subordinate objects. Instead, he sees the hijab as an emancipatory medium that encourages women's active participation in the public sphere. Thus, his interpretation of the hijab does not focus solely on

the outward form of clothing, but on its social function and protection. This opens up space for the reinterpretation of religious texts to be in line with the values of gender justice.

Through a historical-contextual approach, Abu Syuqqah asserts that the form of clothing in the Qur'an is not intended as an absolute standard, but as a representation of the values of modesty and honor in a particular society. Therefore, the form of the hijab may vary depending on the context of the time, as long as the substance of its ethical values is maintained. This perspective demonstrates Islam's flexibility in adapting its teachings to social and cultural dynamics. In his analysis of Quranic verse 33:53, Abu Syuqqah interprets the command for the Prophet's wives to wear the hijab as a form of respect for their social status, not as a universal legal basis for clothing. He emphasizes that this verse serves to limit interaction in order to maintain decorum and is not intended to be applied universally to all Muslim women. This interpretation is important for dismantling normative interpretations that use this verse to justify the limitations on women's roles.

In QS. al-Ahzāb 33: 59, Abu Syuqqah interprets the command to wear the hijab as a response to the social situation at that time, where women were often victims of harassment in public spaces. He emphasizes that the function of the hijab is protection and social identification, not as a symbol of narrow morality. This interpretation positions women as active subjects in the social sphere, who can determine how to dress according to their needs and contextual values of modesty. Abu Syuqqah interprets QS. an-Nūr 24: 31 as a verse rich in social ethics, not merely a law on modesty. He rejects textual interpretations that restrict women through rigid dress codes. In his interpretation, Abu Syuqqah emphasizes the spirit of modesty and respect as universal values that must be upheld across cultures and eras. This suggests that the hijab should not be seen solely as a symbol of obedience but as an expression of ethical values and women's autonomy.

Thus, the main contribution of this research lies in the reinterpretation of religious texts using a contextual and humanistic approach. Abu Syuqqah's ideas enrich the discourse of contemporary interpretation that favors justice and gender equality. This research serves as an important foundation in affirming that religious interpretation must continue to evolve with the times, so that Islamic values remain relevant and applicable in modern life, particularly in advocating for the rights and roles of women in public spaces.

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