

## Woman, Authority and Manifestation of God in The Narrative of Sufism

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### Abstract:

*This study aims to analyze the position of women in Islamic spiritual discourse. During this time, patriarchal culture places women in subordinate men in a variety of situations; politics, economics, culture, education and religion. This study criticizes the results of studies that narrate that women are second class. Through qualitative methods and descriptive analysis, this study relies on primary documents about traces of women in the labyrinth of Sufism. The results of the study indicate that the position of women is so central and a bridge to climb the title of Insan Kamil (perfect human). Many minor, nagging, and wrong views that view women as tempting, wild, bad instinct and as a barrier for the Sufis to reach the highest level. In the context of Sufism, women as seducers are God's elements that manifest on humans. As long as directed, she is the road to the perfection and the maqam of Insan Kamil. The world of Sufism understands women in the corridors of harmony and duality. Women are miniatures of nature. The famous Ibn 'Arabi thesis says that God wants to be known so He creates nature. There is duality in it, Qahar, Luthf, Jamal and also Jalal. To the way of God, it cannot be separated from feminine and masculine aspects. Recognizing women is like recognizing God.*

**Keywords:** *Women, Sufism, Equality, Balance, Duality, Female Sufi*

### INTRODUCTION

Religious interpretation influences views on women and their activities (Walseth and Fasting, 2003: 45-60). On the one hand, the position of women is in front of the religious sector (Nurlaelawati and Salim 2013: 247-278), or the least equal between men and women (Dzuhayatin, 2012: 148; Miswari, 2016: 667-682; Mufidah, 2001 : 100-111). On the other hand, the results of the study show otherwise. The results of research on women in the Islamic tradition still place women at a less important position than men. The Islamic tradition to date is generally patriarchal. The main Islamic basic sources of the Qur'an and Sunnah, literature, hadith, jurisprudence are largely interpreted by Muslim men who are not willing to do the tasks of defining the ontological, theological, sociological and eschatological status of Muslim women (Engineers, 2000: 57).

One of the theological concepts that gives a negative image to women is the assumption that Eve was the cause of the slipping of Adam from Heaven to earth. Because of Eve's seduction, Adam became careless and ate the forbidden fruit. This "original sin" is imposed on Eve and then this assumption is much imprinted on the subconscious of women and they are always volunteering themselves under the authority of men (Umar,

1999: 2). Women are created from ribs, lacking in reason, as a temptation as well as other evidence of a bias towards women (Mukhtar, 2013: 189-208).

According to Fakhri (Fakhri, 1999: 8), the nature of women such as menstruation is considered by many as a dirty person, as well as carrying disease. In this situation, Muslim women generally cannot do the prayer routine, dzikir and other spiritual activities. This also has an impact on the assumption that the value of worship and women's spiritual cannot match and unconsciously women feel their conditions are different during menstruation (Subhan, 1999: 34).

In the spiritual journey (Sufism) there are very few women's roles, except Rabi'ah al-Adawiyah from Basrah (Smith, 1997: 4), who have a major position in the Sufis - even if they are analyzed according to mystical experience (Simuh, 1997: 2) there are many female Sufis such as Maryam al-Bisriyyah, Bahriyya al-Mausuliyah, Rabi'ah al-Syamsiyyah (Nurbakhsh, 1996: 76), and many more, apparently they are not so popular compared to Rabi'ah al-Adawiyah.

In addition, many derogatory statements against women, especially among the zahid and mystics, stem from the fact that the word "soul" in Arabic is a feminine noun (Schimmel, 1997: 20). Nafs, 'soul' or 'self' are feminine nouns that appear three times in the Qur'an with: once as "the soul which incites evil (Qur'an 12: 53), once as "a peaceful soul" (QS 89: 27-28). But the "nafs" usually represents the image of stubbornness, horses or wild camels, dark horses, snakes, mice and deviant women. So to a certain extent the feminine nafs in this role can be seen as a mirror image of the secular "world". But a similar degrading description of the danger of the "Lady of the World" which tempts and engulfs men and children, in a reproachful sense as practiced by Christian theologians in the Middle Ages. Together with them also "Madam of the World" seeks to divert men's attention from their intellectual and religious endeavors, which is another expression of the concerns of male ascetic that are peculiar to women's power (Murata, 1999: 18).

These stereotypes have actually been rejected in Islam, especially in Surat al-Hujurat: 13, which states that in fact someone's glory is not seen whether he is male or female but what is preferred is his piety. The statement indicates that God created men and women equally, therefore if there is inequality between men and women in all Islamic societies means it is not God's creation and is inherently unfair as expressed by Fatima Mernissi (Marnissi and Hasan, 2000: 35) God remains just and merciful, treating each other fairly and love regardless of gender, beliefs or skin color.

Besides, in Sufism, the concept of the relationship between Sufis and their God does not provide a space of difference between men and women. In the spiritual context, men and women are not important. This title of Sufis will be achieved by following the path of God, to unite with Him, and those who can achieve it will get a high degree and spiritual life in the world.

According to the Sufis, the reason of the fall of a man from heaven was due to the temptation of Satan. Sufis interpret Satan as the level of cells of humans, not something outside of humans (Wilcox, 2001: 58). Adam means all humans. In Sufi symbolism, Adam is a pure soul in man, and Eve is a physical manifestation. God gives everyone a garden of heaven and trees, and Satan always tempts humans at all times.

It would be surprising if Islam is considered a religion that blatantly opposes women as Prophet Muhammad himself stated in one of his frequently quoted statements "Allah has made me love from your world of women and fragrances, and happiness for my eyes is when praying."

Besides, Islam knows that life cannot exist without the main priority of men and women. According to Sachiko Murata, Yin and Yang can be understood as the principles of existence that are active and repressive or as a male and female. Yin and Yang embrace each other in harmony and fusion, both of which produce ten thousand things, everything that exists (Schimmel, 1999: 28).

As Aththar quoted from Margaret Smith's dissertation that the title of Sufis was given to both men and women, and if Islam does not have caste as the clergy, then there is no more obstacle for women to achieve high positions in religion in the hierarchy of people - saints (Schimmel, 1999: 28). We can see this on the spiritual journey of famous female Sufi which is Rabi'ah Al-Adawiyyah from Basrah. As a female Sufi, she was the first to introduce the element of absolute love from God into truly ascetic Sufism in the eighth century (Smith, 1997: 4).

From the above explanation, it is interesting to discuss about the role of women in Sufism which epistemologically shows its feminine aspects, given the position of women which sometimes lack of attention in Islam, especially in Sufism. In fact, woman has a significant role in Sufism. For this reason, the discussion will focus on male relations in Sufism, and evidence that women have an important role in Sufism discourse.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Equality between Women and Men in Sufism**

The Qur'an is not only a foundation of Islam, but also a book for every woman who believes in spiritual values and who believes in Allah. Also, the Qur'an contains a message for every woman anywhere and anytime. The Qur'an also views the legitimacy of spirituality, values, glory, abilities, strengths and potential of all women, without a doubt (Wilcox, 2001: 11), regardless of their religious or cultural background. Even if the position of women has been involved in various fields since the time of the Prophet the woman still plays a very important role in Islamic spirituality (Schimmel, 1998: 68).

A reality that is closely related to the divine reality of finding the beauty of God is through duality. That is, when speaking the names of God is always connected with creation, expressing the incomparability of God is confronted with His perfection. However, almost all wisdom seeks to find its balance (Murata, 1999: 103). This shows that in Islam the principle of unity which divides itself into duality, and then becomes plurality, is the main thing. God is noble, most gracious and most merciful. God also has the nature of *jalal*, *jamal*, aspects of extraordinary glory and goodness, and that these two things become His *kamal* (perfection).

The aspect of duality can also illustrate parallels between men and women who can discover God's aesthetic reality. Most phenomenologists state that the *jalal* aspect is identified with masculine character, or according to Sachiko Murata as the "Yang" or often referred to as a male; whereas *jamal* is feminine or called "Ying", the aspect of love, beauty and tenderness. The duality of this aspect can also be identified with heaven and earth.

In the past, Sufis interpreted the divine command in creation with the word "kun", which in Arabic consists of two letters kaf and nun, pointing to "two-color threads" that envelop like a cloth, also showing the multiple manifestations of the One (Schimmel, 1999 : 150). The dual manifestations of the One can also be shown in the heartbeat and breath, sun and rain, health and disease, and day and night.

Maulanan Jalaluddin Rumi specifically describes the state of constant influence between the two aspects of life through his famous prose, *Fihi ma Fihi*, and mentions this

in so many lyrical versions, Diwan and Matsnawi. The mystical interpretation of the first letters of the Arabic alphabet, which is lean and upright, alif, with one numerical value, as the first manifestation of the oneness of God, and the second letter ba with two numerical values are the beginning of the creation of the universe, because the second letter of the Qur'an is ba in the word bismillah, "in the name of Allah" (Murata, 1999: 16). Given the general tendency in Islam that all creation is based on two aspects, the masculine and feminine side are equally important, as can be expressed in one of the following verses.

*From dualism I exchanged myself and I saw nature only One /  
 From the One I looked for, with one I knew /  
 To the One I saw, and for the One I called for /  
 By the cup of love I drunk and the nature was mortal from my understanding /  
 Enjoying a drink and talking with Him is my busy life. "*  
 (Jalil, 2000: 126).

The interpretation is to dismiss the assumption that women are seducer, identical to jewelry, love of wealth, hedonism, and close to the devils that lead women away from God. As reported by Yusuf and Zulaikha in the Qur'an, Zulaikha as the appellant is identical to the nafs, the "soul", in the sense of bi al-su'i "the soul who incites evil" (QS.12:53). The negative image of feminine gender is a recognized aspect in all religious movements, including Christian theology and Buddhist teachings. The ascetic fears of the syahwah or desire have created the idea that the presence of women will undermine the root of life.

A common misconception about women in Islam is that it is unreasonable that by looking at the words of Allah in the Qur'an such as muslimun wa muslimat, mu'minun wa mu'minat which have been paralleled have proved that women have equal status in their religion. Even the presence of women as the Prophet Muhammad himself revealed that "God has made me love from your world, women, and fragrance, and the happiness for my death is prayer.

### **Women as God's Manifestation**

The Ibn 'Arabi statement very well describes an understanding of God. According to him, God cannot be seen from the material, and he is seen in a more perfect way in human material than in other places, and in a more perfect way in women than in men. Therefore when God contemplates God in himself given the fact that women are produced from men, he contemplates God in the aspects of agents. If a man does not pay attention to the creation of a woman from himself, he reflects on God in the aspect of the sufferings because of being God's creatures, he is absolutely a sufferer in relation to God, but when he reflects on God in women, he contemplates Him as agent and as sufferer. The God who manifests in the form of women is an agent or a sufferer. God manifested in the form of women is an agent in the sense of exercising full control over the soul of men, and causing men to be obedient and surrendered to him. She is also a victim because she has been performing in the form of women. He is under the control of man and obeys his commands. So seeing God in women means seeing Him in these two aspects, and this kind of vision is more perfect than seeing Him in all forms in which He manifests Himself (Schimmel, 2000: 550).

The statement illustrates that the value of God is more easily known in the figure than the essence of the woman, given that women contain the divine aesthetic value. This

understanding actually illustrates the development of Ibn'Arabi's *wahdatul wujud* (Simuh, 1997: 139). Thus, this realm is a manifestation of the nature of God's tajalli to which God looks at His self-image in a limited form. God is finally able to see the perfect and complete self-image of a man in who perfectly reflects God's names and attributes (Ali, 1997: 55). Without hesitation, Ibn 'Arabi believed that there was a possibility that women would be among abdal, forty or seven in hierarchy of saints who possessed God's character perfectly.

Ibn'Arabi's contemporary peer, Egyptian poet Ibn al-Farid, used the type of women in his mystical orders when calling Divine love. The names of his characters like Layla, Salma and many more in his poems are symbols of Divine beauty and perfection.

Symbolism in women is also seen as a metaphor pointing to the feminine element of God. Women can be used as the emblem of the highest ambition that one expects and longs for, and the symbolic meaning of the Ka'bah. One example in this is contained in the Jami version of the story of Layla and Majnun. When the sick Majnun was in love with the pilgrimage approaching the black-covered Ka'bah and finally standing before him, he was no longer sure what he saw was a heavenly lover or Layla (Schimmel, 2000: 551).

Symbolism in the Ka'bah also describes the friendly woman he encounters as he walks around the Ka'bah is the angels walking round the throne. According to Ibn'Arabi, these friendly girls are a form of divine wisdom. Beautiful women can be the names and attributes of God who help, while the charming women are understood as divine ideas. This is the portrayal of Ibn'Arabi after his encounter with the beautiful Persian women, Nizam in Mecca.

Ibn'Arabi understands the main role in explaining feminine elements with definitions that can measure the ever-increasing depth. He not only regarded the general action of looking at "nafs" as a feminine element, but he really developed his opinion to cover the essence as the "divine essence". He reinforces the position of women with the expression that the feminine aspect is a form in which God is most easily recognizable.

Jalaluddin Rumi even portrays women in her first book *Matsnawi*, as someone who deserves to be called "the creator". He saw a mother in every place. In general, everything in the cosmos is like a mother who gave something higher than her, whether it is a flint that spawned a spark that produces fire when placed in a good heat conveyor; or the earth being nourished by the clouds, produces vegetation as a result of plants as hieros gamos, a sacred marriage.

Symbolically, the mother is a human whose body is submissive to the soul, fully resigned to the Divine and is able to accept the sentence of God, therefore she is able to conceive Divine children, which is the gift of God. Symbolically, the mother refers to the maintenance so that the child can develop and be born (Wilcox, 2001: 139).

From the side of women's role in mystical practice, we can see that most spiritual leaders receive their first religious inspiration from virtuous mothers so relevant when the apostle states that "Heaven is under the feet of the mother".

### **Women in God's Spirit**

The feminine aspect in revealing spirituality can be reflected in the highly honored position of the mother because of her relationship with Rahim (womb). Rahim originated from the same root of compassion (rahmah). The dictionary defines the womb as part of the stomach in which the baby comes from. That word also means blood bond, brotherhood, and close relationship. Rahmah is defined as compassion, love, tenderness,

tendency to help someone. It is the mother's nature of the baby in her womb (Schimmel, 1999: 285). The relationship between compassion and the womb is evident in the form and meaning of the words. In addition to the four words of the prophet, *rahim* (*rahmah*) is associated with the Most Beneficent and His throne.

The adoration towards women has placed men in positions flanked between physically and ideal women. The man above the woman is his superiority, but a man lies under the ideal woman's paradise. Men and women can be attributed to God through ideal women or creative women (Eccel, 1981: 209). The position of women is so noble, in this case Ibn 'Arabi perceives that the spirituality of women has manifested as the most perfect mediator to obtain aesthetic understanding and unity with God. (Eccel, 1981: 217).

The spirituality contains in the feminine aspect can also be expressed in the God's attributes *Jamal* and *Lathif / Luthf*. This statement can be seen in the nature of women who have beauty and tenderness. In this case Ibn 'Arabi also points out that the nature or attributes of God are divided into two; all connected with his beauty (*Jamal*) and his greatness (*Jalal*). The nature of beauty (*al-sifat al-jamaliyyah*) relates to the nature of his greatness (*al-sifat al-jalaliyyah*). Thus, a number of God's attributes including love, *jamal* and *luthf* show the essence of his existence in a woman's nature. As paradise, women are also a privilege of God.

Night (*al-lail*) as a feminine aspect associated with the daytime (*al-nahar*) as a masculine aspect that demonstrates duality in the unity. The beauty of God is more enjoyable in the night (*al-lail*) of the feminine aspect because humans enjoy Him with rest and *qiyam al-lail* as the embodiment of calm and resignation to the All-Mighty.

God can also be found in the idea of the mystery of marriage, as in the work of Kasani (W.1543) a mystic who called on Farghana, and Sufi Kasymir Ya'kub Sarfi (W.1594). Physical union between Adam and Eve, or Husband and Wife, expresses his thoughts about sexual love in an explicit sense, which can be interpreted as an embodiment of ecstasy and is the ultimate pleasure after having sex. At the time of ecstasy the spirit is so visible with the Divine manifestation that it loses all its manifestations with its physical manifestation. The only way to restore this corpse-like body to normal life is to do a large bath (Schimmel, 1999: 152). This idea shows that Eve was created so that Adam could find peace with him (Surah 7: 189), because Eve is a divine gift given to accompany him in loneliness, she is the embodiment of the Divine Ocean that he has abandoned, and that means His majesty.

### **Sufi Women in Muslim Civilization**

The Qur'an views the legitimacy of spirituality, the value of glory, ability, strength and potential of all women undoubtedly. In Sufism, as explained above the position of women plays an important role. Even the main role falls on the shoulders of women. This can be proven by the emergence of Sufi women in the Islamic world, as follows.

Rabi'ah Al-Adawiyyah (717-801 M). The name Rabi'ah Al-Adawiyyah or Rabi'ah (Smith, 1997: 8-10) from Basrah marks the real mystical movement in the early history of Sufism. She is the first to introduce the element of absolute love from God to Sufism. There are countless anecdotes about Rabi'ah, a slave girl who has been freed from Basrah. Incidentally Basrah was also the center of many other ascetics in the early years. Legends even linked the clever and pious preacher, Hasan al-Basri (w.728) with Rabi'ah. The great biographers of the Islamic world have presented their work to Rabi'ah. On her human occasion she is clearly superior to many men, and that is why she is also called the "Crown of Men" (Schimmel, 1999: 69).

Rabi'ah is also believed to have countless miracles. The tips of her fingers were glowing like lights at night and the Ka'bah came to him when he performed the Hajj. She rejected all worldly ties including marriage. She also hovered in the sky on her prayer mat. She lived in his room on a beautiful spring day and this prompted her servant girl to urge her to go out and admired God's great creation. Rabi'ah answered that the beauty of God is in the heart (Schimmel, 1999: 70).

Umam Haram. She is believed to have participated enthusiastically in the first Muslim expedition against Cyprus. It was told that she had died on the battlefield as a "martyr" in the holy war that occurred on the 27th of H / 649 AD (Schimmel, 1999: 72). She also spent her life getting closer to God by spending every afternoon with contemplating and fasting, and every night with praying.

Maryam al-Bahriyyah. She lived in the same age as Rabi'ah and was also his contemporary, who died in ecstasy. The woman of contemporary Turkish poet Lale Muldur, as quoted by Annemarie Schimmel, has presented a gentle poem to her. Maryam from Basra / Is the girl of the Rabi'ah's Slave / Didn't have time to understand the love of God / She was immersed in ecstasy / In a meeting of dhikr / Suddenly she died of love / God has many devout lovers who are like rain / If they fall to earth, it turns great / If they fall into the sea, they turn into pearls.

Bahriyya al-Mausuliyah. A person who wants to see the divine lover was crying incessantly to the point of blindness. This is mainly because what is believed to be later in the eye is no longer the veil between the person who sees and what is seen. She lived in the late 8th century in Syria (Schimmel, 2000: 544).

Rihana al-Waliha. A person who lives in ecstasy continuously even she is taken to a crazy house because of her love that encourages her to ignore the rules of general appropriateness. (Schimmel, 2000: 544).

Rabi'ah ash-Syamsiyah. She is a Syrian woman from Syria who greatly admired Rabi'ah al-Adawiyyah. He often sings songs like those sung by Rabi'ah al-Adawiyah. Her life is full of love for Allah. Her suffering and sadness were unremitting because she loved the great creator (Schimmel, 2000: 73).

Sya'wana. She is an interesting Sufi at the beginning of ascetics. She is also famous for her unbroken lamentations. Even the great ascetic Fudayl bin 'Iyad (w.803) is believed to have asked her to pray for him. Al-Ghozali relates how Sya'wana appeared in the dreams of one of his friends after she (Sya'wana) died and was highly respected by the inhabitants of heaven. She gave the following advice to the woman who dreamed, "Let your heart be very sad and let your love for God dominate your desires. Then nothing will harm you until the day you die." (Schimmel, 2000: 74).

Mu'adza al-Adawiyah is a Sufi woman during the early ascetic period from Basrah. His life was spent wailing because of her love for God. She keeps away from rest because the thought of long sleep in the tomb itself is enough to keep her awaken (Smith, 1997: 164).

Fatimah from Nishapur. She was fifty years younger than Rabi'ah al-Adawiyyah (d. 854). She married the famous ascetic, Ahmad Khidruya (w.854), and it has been said that she often guided her husband along the mystical path. A legend tells us that she was associated with the great mystical leaders of her time and truly believed to have been associated with teachers in Egypt namely Dzun Nun (d. 859) and Bayazid al-Bistami. When the teacher refused the gift sent to him because it was from a woman, Fatimah replied with

a strong rebuke "How can he see the secondary cause and not the true giver, God?". (Schimmel, 2000: 544).

Rabi'ah binti Ismail. She was a female Sufi from Syrian wife of Sufi Ahmad bin Abi al-Hawari (d. 851). She also included a female ascetic who was very in love with God. As a widow, she wanted to use the money inherited from her and what she had collected herself. Therefore she offered herself to marry the Sufi. She spent her time praying and fasting, besides that she took care of and supported Ahmad and his other wives. She explained to the man, "I do not love you as a husband, but as a man" (Smith, 1997: 160). Next is Uyaina, a Sufi grandmother Abul Khair al-Tinani al-Aqta', who had five hundred students, both men and women. She worshipped diligently. This Sufi woman comes from Heart India.

Ummu Fadhl al-Harmatsiyah (d. 1084M). She is an educated, pious woman from Heart. She is famous for conveying the Prophet's hadiths. She died at Heart in 1084 AD. In addition to Ummad Fadhl, Karima al-Marwaziyah is one of the great deliverers of female hadith from Mecca (d. 463/1070). She is an ascetic and celibate, as said by Massignon, related to Futuwah (Schimmel, 1999: 80), of women, according to estimates, were founded by Khadijah al-Jahriyyah (d. 461/1067).

Ummu Muhammad Aisyah and Fatima bint Taj al-Din. Two women from Damascus and Baghdad, are referred to as hadith teachers and had pious and ascetic life (Schimmel, 1999: 80). Kira Khatun, Rumi's second wife (from a Christian family), praised by biographers as "the second Rabi'ah who is similar to Maryam", some of her successors were also involved in wider expansion of Mevlevi.

Fatimah bint al-Mutsannah is a woman from Seville who lives in extreme poverty. She was one of the women Ibn 'Arabi met when he was young, who was described as "a spiritual mother". She became an entertainer of hearts for the inhabitants of the earth. The words are spoken by an Andalusian teacher to describe the woman and record them about her strange miracles. Surat al-Fatihah in the Qur'an, fulfills all her wishes. She even returned a husband who was not loyal to his wife, who came to the Sufis to ask for help. (Schimmel, 1999: 81).

Syams is another Sufi woman who met Ibn 'Arabi in Sevilla. She was eighty years old. The mother of the poor was her nickname, depicted as a high-level mystical expert with extraordinary intuition. However, she used to cover her high spiritual position. (Schimmel, 1999: 82).

Nizam is the ascetic woman found Ibn 'Arabi in Mecca. She is the daughter of Imam Ibrahim in the holy place. The woman met her while she was walking in the Ka'bah. Nizam is an inspiration for Ibn 'Arabi because of her stopover in the city of Mecca made a preparation for the work of Futuh al-Makiyyah, "Mecca revelation" (Schimmel, 1999: 82).

Zainab al-Qal'iyyah. Another person whom Ibn 'Arabi met in Mecca. This woman was previously famous for her beauty and her fortune. She returned to the holy city where she was known as a great ascetic. Ibn'Arabi admired her carefulness in carrying out the duties of worship. Another female sufi is Sayyida Nafisa (Smith, 1997: 169). The descendants of the woman Rosul Sayyida Nafisa (m.824), looming for her piety and her virtue. Her tomb in Cairo was visited by believers (Schimmel, 2000: 543). Next, Sifa al-Safwa binti al-Jauzi is one of the mystical women who lived in the early period of Islam. Her total life devoted to God (Eccel, 1981: 209). Besides Sifa, the Sufi woman is Hasna al-Abida, a mystical woman in the early period of living alone as a celibate (unmarried). She

comes from Basrah whose life is always praying and fasting and always withholding sexual appetite (Eccel, 1981: 210).

Ufira al-Abida is a Sufi woman from Basrah who is blind because of continuous tears. When a person asks about her difficulties in blindness, she answers that hidden from God is more difficult than the blindness of the heart to understand God (Eccel, 1981: 211). Fakhr al-Nisa binti Rustam is Nizam's mother who has undoubtedly spiritual views. He is known for his ability to see events in distant places and the power to hear voices from others' ideas (Eccel, 1981: 215).

## CONCLUSION

Referring from the above exposure, it can be summarized as follows. Islam is the religion of rahmatan lil'alamin, religion for all mankind. Islam also does not distinguish race and caste. Islam also do not differentiate between men and women, all of which are equal in the sight of Allah. The difference is seen by their piety. All male and female are each entitled to a high level of spiritual maturity, becoming the world caliph. The equality exists since this human being began to be created, and if it were not equivalent then it was not an Islamic teaching, but because of humanity.

The position of women in sufism (islamic spiritual) is equal to men. Even the presence of God will be more easily known through women with her feminine elements. In terms of roles, women in sufism are also found Sufi women who become spiritual teachers, to intermediate a Sufi to the highest maqam. The dual aspect in the Lord will create perfection, as well as in the microcosm. The aspect of jalal as masculinity is always balanced with the aspect of jamal as a feminine aspect. They all lead to the balance that supports the role of women as an important element. Without women, it is unlikely to achieve a high spiritual maturity, so it is not true if the woman is synonymous with nafs (souls) who are just as seducers. The soul that is in man if directed will reach Insan Kamil (perfect human).

Evidence that women have an equal position in sufism is the emergence of female sufis not only Rabi'ah al-Adawiyah but also Ummu Haram, Maryam al-Bahriyyah, Bahriyya al-Maushuliyah, Rihana al-Waliya, Rabi'ah al-Syamsiyyah, Sya'wana, Muadza al-Adawiyah, Fatimah binti Abdu Rahman and many others have proved that in sufism the position of women is equal to men.

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