

## THE CONSTRUCTION OF GENDER JUSTICE WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF PANCASILA AND THE QUR'AN

An Analysis of the Thoughts of Musdah Mulia and Husein  
Muhammad

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### Abstract

This study explores gender justice within the framework of *Pancasila* and the Qur'an through the thoughts of Musdah Mulia and Husein Muhammad. The analysis reveals harmony between the values of humanity, brotherhood, and justice, affirming the equal status, rights, and responsibilities of women and men in social, political, and religious life. *Pancasila*, with its five principles, and the Qur'an, through its emphasis on monotheism and humanity, both reject gender discrimination and encourage a just society. This position contrasts with classical commentators such as Ibn Kaşir, whose literal-patriarchal interpretations often subordinated women. Musdah Mulia's feminist-humanist reading affirms gender equality as a divine imperative, while Husein Muhammad's contextual interpretation critiques patriarchal culture and promotes women's rights through progressive-traditional arguments. The study identifies persistent patriarchy, biased religious interpretations, and unresponsive policies as key challenges, but highlights the potential of contextual reinterpretation of *Pancasila* and the Qur'an to develop inclusive, gender-just policies. Employing library research, this study applies qualitative descriptive analysis, thematic interpretation, and critical hermeneutics.

**Keywords:** Gender justice, *Pancasila*, Qur'an, Musdah Mulia, Husein Muhammad

***Konstruksi Keadilan Gender dalam Bingkai Pancasila dan Al-Qur'an: Analisis Pemikiran Musdah Mulia dan Husein Muhammad***

***Abstrak***

*Kajian ini mengeksplorasi keadilan gender dalam bingkai Pancasila dan Al-Qur'an melalui pemikiran Musdah Mulia dan Husein Muhammad. Analisis menunjukkan adanya harmoni antara nilai kemanusiaan, persaudaraan, dan keadilan yang menegaskan kesetaraan kedudukan, hak, dan tanggung jawab laki-laki serta perempuan dalam kehidupan sosial, politik, dan keagamaan. Pancasila dengan lima silanya, serta Al-Qur'an dengan penekanannya pada tauhid dan kemanusiaan, sama-sama menolak diskriminasi gender dan mendorong terwujudnya masyarakat yang adil. Posisi ini berbeda dengan para mufasir klasik seperti Ibnu Kaşır yang cenderung menafsirkan ayat secara literal-patriarkal sehingga menempatkan perempuan pada posisi subordinat. Pemikiran Musdah Mulia melalui tafsir feminis-humanis menegaskan kesetaraan gender sebagai imperatif ilahi, sementara Husein Muhammad melalui pendekatan kontekstual mengkritik budaya patriarkal dan mengadvokasi hak-hak perempuan dengan argumen tradisional-progresif. Studi ini mengidentifikasi patriarki yang mengakar, tafsir keagamaan yang bias, dan kebijakan publik yang kurang responsif sebagai tantangan utama, namun juga menyoroti potensi reinterpretasi kontekstual Pancasila dan Al-Qur'an untuk merumuskan kebijakan yang inklusif dan berkeadilan gender. Penelitian ini menggunakan studi pustaka dengan pendekatan kualitatif, analisis deskriptif, tafsir tematik, dan hermeneutika kritis.*

***Kata Kunci:*** Keadilan gender, Pancasila, Al-Qur'an, Musdah Mulia, Husein Muhammad

## Introduction

The values of the Qur'anic teachings consistently prioritize the principles of justice, upholding human dignity and well-being. The Qur'an consistently promotes the principles of equality, compassion, and social welfare, without regard to status or gender. Throughout the Qur'anic verses, it emphasizes the importance of eradicating all forms of oppression, exclusion, and other forms of discrimination. The rights of every human being, including the rights of vulnerable groups and minorities, are central to its teachings. Therefore, the Qur'an is a valuable resource for addressing ongoing issues of discrimination (Nuruddin 1996, 211).

Gender, in its truest sense, is a social construct inherent in the roles of men and women as dictated by society and enacted by each individual (Wiasti 2017, 33). However, in reality, women often bear the brunt of this social burden. Women, in particular in social views, are often considered second-class creatures compared to men (Fakhyadi et al. 2025, 2). Therefore, both the object and subject of gender here can be interpreted as women. This is because women currently face a great deal of social discrimination. However, it's important to emphasize that the object and subject of gender are not absolute. A man can also become a gender object or subject if social circumstances ultimately marginalize men (Febriani 2018, 132).

The role of religion and the state is essential for protecting women. Patriarchal politics is one example of the influence of state and religious policies that harm women. Negative stereotypes or labeling of women by society have been deeply embedded over time (Ratnasari, Panggabean, and Marta 2021, 43). Religion is often the excuse for groups to oppress women. This is due to a lack of understanding of religious texts, which leads to incorrect practices that ultimately become entrenched in society (Mulia 2013, 43). Therefore, awareness of the important role of religion, especially the Qur'an, as the legal basis and guidance for Muslims, as a source of values and ethics that can provide guidance and direction in achieving human justice, is crucial (Idris, Arief, and Saihu 2023, 73). The relevance of the Qur'an in addressing gender issues is crucial, taking into account the values of justice contained within the Qur'an.

Protection of women's freedom also requires protection from constitutional institutions. State involvement plays a crucial role in human's freedom and empowerment (Rozikin et al. 2025, 123), especially women. The state is the highest institution in a society. Women's freedom and rights must be supported by systems and regulations established by the state. *Pancasila*, Indonesia's state ideology, is an essential element in the creation of government policies that support women's empowerment. Implementing the values contained in *Pancasila* will have a significant impact on realizing fair rules for all citizens, both women and men.

Musdah Mulia is a prominent human rights activist and advocate for gender equality. She is vocal about women's rights and criticizes policies and cultures deemed discriminatory against women. One of her arguments revolves around the meaning of *tauḥīd* (Divine Unity). She believes that properly implementing the concept of *tauḥīd* will bring about equality among humans. Husein Muhammad, a feminist cleric from the archipelago, is a prominent gender figure actively promoting gender equality through his contextual approach, incorporating traditional arguments. In his efforts to achieve gender equality, Husein Muhammad provides a new perspective on traditional religions, explaining that patriarchal culture is not solely driven by a misreading of classical religious texts, but also by individuals' inability to relate religious texts to contemporary societal problems.

Gender issues are a problem that has emerged in the contemporary era (Fathurrosyid, Fairuzah, and Nadhiroh 2024, 117). Therefore, this research is expected to have a significant impact on the field of Qur'anic interpretation. Through this research, by examining social problems that occur around us, especially within the national sphere, the aim is to prove the actualized values of the Qur'an. The Qur'an consistently provides solutions to problems from classical to contemporary times. Furthermore, the role of *Pancasila*, Indonesia's state ideology, is very appropriate when harmonized with the values of the Qur'an, which is a religious ideology.

## Methods

This study adopts a qualitative methodology grounded in library research (Baidan 2015, 25), employing descriptive analysis, thematic interpretation, and critical hermeneutics. The primary concern of the research is to examine gender justice within the harmonization of *Pancasila* and the Qur'an, as articulated through the feminist-humanist interpretation of Musdah Mulia and the contextual feminist interpretation of Husein Muhammad. The methodological orientation reflects an interpretive approach that seeks to uncover how religious and philosophical values are recontextualized in response to contemporary challenges of gender inequality in Indonesia.

Data were collected from both primary and secondary sources. Primary data include the text of *Pancasila*, selected Qur'anic verses (An-Nisā' [4]: 124, An-Naḥl [16]: 97, Al-Hujurāt [49]: 13), Musdah Mulia's *Ensiklopedia Muslimah Reformis* (2020), and Husein Muhammad's *Perempuan, Islam, dan Negara* (2016). Secondary data consist of scholarly works, journal articles, and previous studies relevant to the themes of gender justice, Qur'anic interpretation, and Indonesian socio-political discourse.

For the analytical framework, this study integrates Musdah Mulia's feminist-humanist hermeneutics and Husein Muhammad's contextualist approach with the

broader interpretive tools of thematic exegesis and critical hermeneutics. The method of analysis involves a close reading of textual sources, followed by contextual and thematic interpretation aimed at illuminating the ethical and social dimensions of justice, particularly in relation to entrenched patriarchal structures. This process operates on the premise that both *Pancasila* and the Qur'an embody inclusive and universal principles that reject gender discrimination and can thus serve as a normative foundation for the formulation of gender-just policies in Indonesia.

### **The Philosophical Basis of *Pancasila* and the Qur'an as a Foundation for Gender Justice in Indonesia**

*Pancasila* is not merely the name and symbol of Indonesia's state ideology. Rather, it holds a profound meaning that reflects the culture and character of the Indonesian nation. Ideology is essentially the operationalization of a state philosophical system. Likewise, the *Pancasila* ideology is the implementation of the Indonesian national philosophy (Wulandari and Wijayanto 2022, 7). Ideology, which also serves as the framework for the state's ideals, serves as the legal framework for the implementation of the state system for the survival of the nation and state. A philosophical foundation with a solid ontological, epistemological, and axiological foundation, if properly internalized and consistently implemented, will create a complete nation. The values of *Pancasila* also embody the principles of multicultural development that can integrate the diversity of the Indonesian people.

From an ontological perspective, *Pancasila* is intrinsic, meaning all of its basic values are systematic and rational. This is because *Pancasila* is philosophical. *Pancasila*'s rationality stems from its being the result of a system of human thought in conceptualizing the reality of the nation, state, humanity, nature, and the Creator. *Pancasila* is also extrinsic because it is a philosophy of life that embodies the values, truths, and teachings of Indonesian life (Latif 2011, 39). Its philosophical teachings significantly influence the mindset of the Indonesian people in their national life. *Pancasila* is firmly believed to be the fundamental value and guideline that inspires and strengthens the nation's character.

*Pancasila* is not merely an ideological element but also an epistemological foundation expected to enable us to interpret and understand the dynamics of transformative socio-political relations. *Pancasila*, as a national epistemology, can develop an integrative and contextual paradigm of thinking, thereby transforming traditionalist and individualistic perspectives. This is because *Pancasila* can synergize tradition and modernity, one of its efforts being to open up space for dialogue between paradigms.

The actualization of *Pancasila* as a philosophy by the Indonesian people will be able to guide humanity in efforts to solve and filter problems. This is because philosophy broadens human awareness to think more critically and logically (Wartoyo 2020, 12). *Pancasila* philosophy, as a philosophical reflection, serves as the foundation for national and state life. In facing the challenges of globalization, political dynamics, social inequality, and digitalization, the principles of *Pancasila* remain highly relevant as the state ideology.

In the first principle, the essence of divinity lies in the belief that God is the primary essence of human life. This therefore gives rise to freedom and a sense of responsibility for each person. The second principle, the essence of humanity, namely the monopluralist nature of humans, making humans autonomous beings, social beings, and creatures of God. It reminds us that humans have no authority over other humans. The third principle, the essence of brotherhood, emphasizes the spirit of nationalism, creating a nation that loves its homeland and upholds the bonds of brotherhood in protecting it. The fourth principle, the essence of democracy, which prioritizes the principle of deliberation and consensus, rather than simply affirming the opinion of the majority. The fifth principle, the essence of justice for all Indonesian citizens, eliminates efforts to create inequality and discrimination against the weak. Here, the state actively participates in creating justice for its people.

The impact of the decline in the practice of *Pancasila* has resulted in a loss of empathy for others, especially women. This is because women ultimately become second choice in several aspects of national life. Yet, the issue of gender justice is a fundamental concept embedded in the philosophy of *Pancasila*, particularly in the principles of humanity and justice. Etymologically, this concept should integrate the philosophical concepts of equality and justice that transcend biological boundaries and social constructs.

*Pancasila* positions gender justice not only on a technical scale but also as a spiritual and ethical dimension integrated into national and state life. This philosophy offers a holistic perspective that does not simply view humans based on their gender, but rather places them in equal rights, potential, dignity, and opportunities. Gender justice is also not merely a theoretical concept but a practice of respecting human nature and dignity. It eliminates discrimination and recognizes that every human being has potential without being limited by social constructs. The mapping of gender functions in society is due to the strong cultural influence and the strong influence of the social environment in which humans grow and develop. Therefore, gender is essentially not natural but rather a social construct (Mulia 2011, 64).

State ideology plays a crucial role in shaping a country's direction and policies, including those related to gender equality. As a value system that underpins national and state life, ideology determines how a country views and treats women, both in law, culture, and public policy. Globally, countries that integrate the principles of equality and humanity into their ideologies tend to be more successful in creating safe and just spaces for women.

The Qur'an's understanding of gender justice is a complex topic and has been debated in both classical and contemporary exegetical discourse. The emergence of the Qur'an in the early 7th century is closely linked to the social and cultural conditions of the time. The interaction of the major religions on the Arabian Peninsula influenced the early development of Islam and the Qur'anic text (Pink 2021, 3). At that time, discrimination, particularly against women, was still widespread, including slavery, rape, inheritance injustice, and several other forms (Najwah et al. 2022, 11). The Qur'an, as a message from Allah through Muhammad, presents a solution to eliminate all forms of discrimination and an effort to elevate women's status.

However, understandings of gender justice in the Qur'an are often influenced by the social, cultural, and historical contexts of the time of revelation and interpretation. Classical commentators generally interpreted Qur'anic verses from a patriarchal perspective, which sometimes resulted in unequal readings of women's roles and rights. Gender justice in the Qur'an concerns not only formal equality but also substantive equality, namely the equal recognition of the rights, responsibilities, and potential of men and women. The challenge is how to interpret Qur'anic texts contextually and ethically, so that the values of gender justice are truly reflected in the lives of contemporary Muslims (Barlas 2002, 10).

In understanding the concept of gender justice in the Qur'an, we have to understand that the Qur'an initiated the concept of equality between men and women.

#### *Men and Women Are Created from the Same Element*

The discourse on humans as special creatures naturally raises questions about their origins and origins. The Qur'an explains the origins and substance of human creation, including the origins of the first human and the origins of human reproduction. These two things are, of course, distinct substances. According to many sources, the first human was Adam. Several sources differ in their explanations of Adam's creation. Adam, the first human, is a biological species that originated from land and water (Departemen Agama RI 2008, 236).

In the surah An-Nisā' (4): 1, Musdah Mulia interprets this verse using her humanist approach, stating that the Qur'an, as the holy book of Islam, essentially upholds the value of equality as mentioned in the verse above. Specifically, the phrase *min nafs*

*wāhidah* (the phrase "God created men and women from the same element"). This verse elaborates on humanitarian values, demonstrating a sincere recognition of human equality and unity (Mulia 2014, 31).

#### *Women and Men Have the Same Rights and Obligations*

The Qur'an upholds justice and equality for men and women, both in the form of legal justice and rewards for them as well as related to their obligations as human beings regardless of their gender in surah Al-Ḥujūrāt (49): 13. God created humans with diverse genders, characteristics, tribes, ethnicities, countries, and cultures. God made these differences a blessing of diversity for which we should be grateful. God created diversity so that all of us could know, love, and respect one another. We could spread love and respect for one another. This respect is in the name of humanity, because its essence is respecting humans as God's creatures, and it is also a form of respect for God (Mulia 2014, 33). The diversity of humankind that Allah created does not mean that one of them lacks good capacity, because both have the same potential to become ideal servants (*muttaqūn*). As in the verse above, after emphasizing that human differences are intended to get to know one another, what differentiates them is the nobility of their piety. Everyone has the opportunity to attain a noble status from Allah (Umar 2023, 223).

#### **Gender Justice in the Views of Musdah Mulia and Husein Muhammad**

##### *Biography of Musdah Mulia and Her Humanist-Feminist Interpretation*

In the dynamics of gender debate, especially in Indonesia, the name Musdah Mulia is a familiar and frequently heard figure. Musdah Mulia is a controversial figure among conservative religious leaders. Her vocal opinions on gender justice issues, particularly those concerning women, are still considered taboo and liberal. For them, the concept of gender justice is considered to violate the nature and law of religion (Mulia 2013, 111). Musdah Mulia refutes the opinions of these conservative groups, stating that their views on women are unfounded, merely assumptions and short-sighted judgments without understanding the conditions women experience.

The founder of the Indonesian Conference on Religion and Peace (ICRP), Musdah was a vocal advocate for women's rights in both the domestic and public spheres. She co-founded the ICRP with former President Abdurrahman Wahid, and it was officially inaugurated on July 12, 2000. Musdah also founded the Mulia Raya Foundation with her husband, Prof. Dr. KH. Ahmad Thib Raya, in 2015. The foundation will be active and focused on community education, especially for young people, namely religious literacy, culture, nationality, and others. Not only training, the Mulia Raya Foundation or Mulia Raya Foundation is also active as a forum for community discussion, especially



for young people or humanitarian activists. In the international arena, he was invited as a speaker in Afghanistan at a training activity on Reproductive Health and Rights and also the Regional Conference on Family Planning held by the Afghan Ministry of Public Health with the support of the United Nations managed by UNFPA in February 2012 (Mulia 2023, 5).

*The Encyclopedia of Reformist Muslim Women* is a phenomenal work by Musdah Mulia, widely recognized. According to her, reformist Muslim women do not merely focus on women in religious symbols that have become commodities for capitalist groups or formal legal matters of religion, but rather as a form of effort to introduce determination and work in humanitarian work that can benefit and bring blessings to all creatures in the universe. According to her, the characteristics of reformist Muslim women can be seen in their practice of understanding *tauḥīd*. Because the true practice of *tauḥīd* will make humans free-spirited, autonomous, free from the shackles of creatures (Himmah et al. 2025, 117).

The feminist humanist interpretation method proposed by Musdah Mulia has three distinctive emphases. *First*, it addresses religious texts deemed misogynistic, particularly those addressing women. An example is the interpretation of female leadership. *Second*, it critiques patriarchal values within the Qur'an and Hadith to develop a theological perspective, or what is ultimately referred to as a liberation perspective. *Third*, it examines the stories and histories of ancient and modern women within religious texts that are deeply rooted in patriarchal culture (Mulia 2020, 636). The concept of feminist humanist interpretation essentially examines religious texts with approaches that emphasize values of justice, equality, and contextuality.

In her feminist humanist interpretation, Musdah positions women as full subjects in religious life, not merely objects of laws interpreted by men. History demonstrates that theological views developed in the past have neglected women's perspectives and experiences in theological reflection (Mulia 2020, 635). Yet, women's experiences are crucial to study, as they can uncover the masculinist bias hidden behind pre-existing gender-biased interpretations that have disadvantaged women. She rereads Qur'anic verses often used to justify inequality, reluctantly considering the historical and social contexts and the universal moral goals of Islamic law. For her, justice is not synonymous with absolute equality but encompasses the full recognition of women's rights and dignity. Musdah also uses the *maqāṣid syāri'ah* approach as her primary analytical tool in reading religious texts. She believes that Islamic law should aim to realize the common good, safeguard human dignity, and prevent all forms of harm and injustice, including against women. If a law or religious practice oppresses or demeans women, then the interpretation of that law deserves to be reconsidered.

Musdah Mulia's humanist feminist interpretation is an approach to interpreting the Qur'an that emphasizes the values of justice, gender equality, and universal humanity. It is based on the concept of *tauḥīd*, which is not only theological but also represents a rejection of all forms of discrimination, including gender inequality. Musdah critiques classical interpretations that are patriarchal in nature, born from a culture that marginalizes women. Through a contextual approach and the *maqāṣid syāri'ah*, she distinguishes between universal Islamic teachings and temporary cultural products.

#### *Biography Husein Muhammad and His Feminist Interpretation*

Husein Muhammad, was labeled by conservative groups as a liberalist, despite his success in gaining popularity among Islamic feminists. His progressive thinking and courage in advocating for gender justice, despite his education in a traditional education system known for its conservative or textualist thinking and figures, were. Husein Muhammad was born into a family of Islamic scholars. He is widely known as an important figure in the Islamic and gender justice movements in Indonesia.

From childhood, Husein studied the Qur'an and religious knowledge with his grandfather. After completing his formal education in Arjawinangun, Husein continued his education at the Lirboyo Islamic Boarding School in Kediri from 1970 to 1973. Husein Muhammad's interest in Qur'anic studies did not end with his Islamic boarding school experience. His intellectual passion continued to grow, leading him to pursue higher education at the PTIQ Institute (*Perguruan Tinggi Ilmu Al-Qur'an*). After completing his undergraduate studies at PTIQ in 1980, his enthusiasm for learning persisted. He then pursued a higher education at Al-Azhar University in Cairo, Egypt, in a specialized study program (*dirāsah khāṣṣah*) from 1980 to 1983. There, he deepened his understanding of classical Islamic literature while broadening his horizons to contemporary Islamic issues. This academic and cultural experience in Egypt was crucial in shaping his scholarly character and critical thinking.

Husein Muhammad also founded the Cirebon Interfaith Forum (*Forum Sabtuan*) and is a key figure in the Rahima Foundation. Together with Sinta Nuriyah, Mansour Faqih, and Muhammad Sobari, they founded the Puan Amal Hayati Women's Empowerment Islamic Boarding School in Jakarta in 2000. At the national and international levels, she was involved as a board member and expert team member in a number of important institutions such as the International Center for Islam and Pluralism (ICIP), the National Commission on Violence Against Women (2007–2009 and 2010–2014) and a member of the Ethics Council of the same institution until 2020. She also founded the Fahmina Islamic College (ISIF) in 2008 and became a member of the *Mustasyar* of Nahdlatul Ulama (PBNU) for the 2022–2027 term.

Husein Muhammad views the Qur'an not merely as a holy book containing guidance for personal worship, but as a book of life encompassing all dimensions of humanity. The Qur'an is God's revelation sent down to guide humanity on the straight path and to liberate them from oppression, injustice, and all forms of oppression. The Qur'an serves as a symbol of human freedom. It must be positioned as a source of universal norms and values.

Husein Muhammad is known for his approach to interpretation, namely feminist interpretation. This idea arose from his concern about the two sides, both for and against interpretations deemed gender-unfair. According to him, his feminist interpretation represents a middle ground that he hopes will unify the direction of justice in Islam, particularly within the context of feminism. Feminist interpretation certainly has a methodology or working method that differs from the various interpretation methodologies we are familiar with.

Feminist interpretation does not interpret verses piecemeal (not fragmented), but rather seeks to present the complete meaning of the verses within their overall context (Zulaiha 2018, 5). This is crucial to prevent the message being distorted or exploited to justify social inequalities such as the subordination of women. This approach also prioritizes shared understanding, namely constructing an inclusive interpretation, not only from the perspective of male scholars, but also involving the experiences, perspectives, and voices of women. The process of understanding verses is not carried out in an authoritarian and unilateral manner, but rather as a collective process to discover deeper, more humane, and more relevant meanings for the lives of the people. In interpreting the verses of the Qur'an, Husein Muhammad adhered to principles of interpretation. One of these is his clear distinction between *tafsir* and *ta'wil*. Of course, some people interpret them the same way. Husein prefers to use *ta'wil* rather than *tafsir* in understanding the verses of the Qur'an (Zulaiha 2018, 5).

### **Harmony between *Pancasila* and Qur'anic Values in Upholding Gender Justice**

#### *Similarities in Values and Principles in Pancasila and the Qur'an*

The values embodied in the Qur'an and *Pancasila* fundamentally converge in the spirit of justice and welfare. These two value systems, although born from different sources religion and the state constitution both embody universal principles of humanity, justice, unity, and social responsibility. In the Indonesian context, this harmony is crucial for maintaining social cohesion amidst religious and cultural diversity. *Pancasila*, as the foundation of the Indonesian state, consists of five principles that reflect the nation's noble values. These principles not only have political relevance but also spiritual and moral values that align with religious teachings, particularly Islam.

The Qur'an, as the holy book of Muslims, is replete with values that can serve as guidelines for building a just, inclusive, and dignified social life.

As an ideology, *Pancasila* is open and adaptive, meaning it is able to respond to the dynamics of the times and ongoing social change. This ideology is designed to be flexible without losing the substance of its values, thus reflecting the reality of Indonesian society, which is very diverse in terms of culture, religion, ethnicity, language, and skin color. This principle of openness aligns with the Indonesian motto, *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* ("Unity in Diversity"), which emphasizes that despite differences in many aspects, all elements of the nation remain united in one national identity.

*Pancasila* is not only derived from the political and social thinking of the nation's founders, but also reflects the spiritual and religious values that have long been present in Indonesian society, particularly the moral values derived from Islam, the majority religion. Therefore, each principle in *Pancasila* represents an ethical and faith dimension that aligns with the basic principles of religious teachings, thus establishing a foundation that does not contradict, but rather aligns with, the religious beliefs of the Indonesian people.

The harmony between the teachings of *Pancasila* and the Qur'an can be seen directly in the first principle of *Pancasila*, "Belief in the One and Only God," which reflects a crucial spiritual foundation for national and state life. From an Islamic perspective, this principle embodies the value of *tauḥīd*, the absolute oneness of God, who is without any resemblance to His creatures. God cannot be likened to either male or female and is not subject to any biological category.

The first principle, "Belief in the One and Only God," aligns with the teachings of *tauḥīd* in Islam. Surah Al-Ikhlāṣ in the Qur'an is the most essential representation of the concept of divinity in Islam. Its verses affirm the oneness of God, the purity of faith, and the rejection of all forms of association. This aligns with the spirit of the first principle, which places belief in God as the primary foundation of national life. Surah Al-Ikhlāṣ states that Allah is the One and Only God, upon whom all things depend, begetting no son or being begotten, and that there is no equal to Him. This teaching forms a solid spiritual foundation for Muslims and can also strengthen the religious spirit in the practice of *Pancasila*. The values of *tauḥīd* in this surah also teach the importance of integrity, sincerity, and unity of heart in building a civilized society.

Musdah Mulia (Mulia 2020, 40) interprets surah Al-Ikhlāṣ as a theological foundation containing important values in establishing the principles of equality and social justice. The first verse, *Qul huwallāhu aḥad*, affirms the oneness of Allah as the pure principle of Tawhid. In her view, *tauḥīd* encompasses not only aspects of faith but also prohibits all forms of worship of anyone other than Allah. This includes the worship

of power, material things, or other human beings. This belief serves as the basis for rejecting all forms of oppression and the cult of fellow human beings.

Furthermore, the principle that Allah is the One Who Depends on Him teaches that humans should not be absolutely dependent on one another. Relationships between humans are built not on hierarchical dependence, but on solidarity and mutual support. In a social context, this understanding leads to an egalitarian society, where no one is superior or inferior simply because of status, wealth, or gender. Absolute dependence solely on God creates space for equal and respectful relationships between humans.

The value of *tauḥīd* in surah Al-Ikhlās is interpreted as the starting point for all dynamics of human thought. This principle affirms that there is no powerful entity and no sole owner of the universe other than Allah, the One God. This interpretation of *tauḥīd* embodies the idea of human liberation from all forms of discrimination and injustice (Muhammad 2013). The correct practice of *tauḥīd* will create a civilized, respectful society free from oppression, discrimination, and all forms of injustice. This is because their foundation is based on mutual respect.

The first principle of Pancasila also contains the spirit of religious tolerance and pluralism as stated in the Qur'an, which explains the recommendation to be moderate in surah Al-Baqarah (2): 143, Quraish Shihab (Shihab 2022) explains in his commentary that Allah has created Muslims as a moderate and exemplary community (*ummātan wasaṭan*). This middle ground allows humans to be impartial to the left or the right, which leads to fairness and wisdom. Moderation prevents intolerance and claims of a single truth by rejecting theological extremism, violence, and narrow political affiliations. Moderation does not emerge spontaneously but grows through interactions within a pluralistic society open to differences. That is why the principle of the first principle is a form of the state recognizing religious diversity in Indonesia and prohibiting any citizen from harassing or forcing others to follow their religion (Nugroho, Rabitha, and Ismail 2023, 255). In line with this, the Qur'an speaks in surah Al-Baqarah (2): 135

وَقَالُوا كُونُوا هُودًا أَوْ نَصَارَى تَهْتَدُوا قُلْ بَلْ مِلَّةَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ حَنِيفًا وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ

*They say, "Be Jews or Christians [so] you will be guided." Say, "Rather, [we follow] the religion of Abraham, inclining toward truth, and he was not of the polytheists."*

Indonesia, as a multicultural nation, recognizes the existence of various religions practiced by its citizens. Pancasila does not demand a uniform concept of divinity, but rather guarantees the freedom of every citizen to worship and believe in God according to their respective religions. Historically, the formulation of the first principle

represents a national consensus recognizing the plurality of beliefs within Indonesian society. This demonstrates that the Indonesian people do not narrowly deify a particular entity, but rather recognize the value of the One God across a broad spectrum of religious diversity. In this context, the first principle serves as a foundation for respecting and upholding differences, whether based on religion, gender, culture, or other identities. Practicing this principle demands a just, civilized, and non-discriminatory attitude.

The second principle, "Just and Civilized Humanity," affirms the equal dignity of men and women, as well as individuals of different social or cultural statuses. From an Islamic perspective, this value is highly relevant to surah Al-Hujurāt (49), verse 13, which emphasizes the equality of all human beings before God. The differences between men and women are merely biological, and God created them so that they could understand each other and strive together to achieve the common good in this world. This is stated in surah Al-Hujurāt(49): 13.

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا ۚ إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ  
أَتْقَىٰكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ

*O mankind, indeed We have created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you. Indeed, Allah is Knowing and Acquainted.*

This verse emphasizes the principle of universal equality, stating that all humans, both men and women, have equal standing before God. There is no fundamental difference in human value between men and women, or between one ethnic group and another. The differences in God's creation are intended to broaden horizons and build relationships among humans through mutual understanding and recognition. Islam clearly demonstrates its view through the above verse regarding the existence of humans as equal beings. Consequently, the consequences of this principle require all humans to respect each other's existence and strive together to uphold goodness and justice (Muhammad 2016, 110).

The third principle, "The Unity of Indonesia," implies that this nation must be united in its diversity. In Islamic teachings, surah Al-Hujurat (49): 10 states that believers are brothers, so unity is a moral and social necessity.

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ فَأَصْلَحُوا بَيْنَ أَخَوَيْكُمْ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ

*The believers are but brothers, so make settlement between your brothers. And fear Allah that you may receive mercy.*

This verse emphasizes that Muslims are essentially brothers, and brotherhood will lead to peace. As brothers, Allah commands us to love, protect, and unite one another. Unity does not mean uniformity, but rather recognition of equality and respect for differences. This is a crucial foundation for building an inclusive and gender-just nation, free from discrimination based on ethnicity, religion, race, or gender.

The fourth principle, "Democracy guided by the wisdom of deliberation/representation," emphasizes the importance of the principle of deliberation. In Islam, this aligns with surah Ali 'Imran (3): 159, which teaches the importance of public consultation in decision-making.

فَبِمَا رَحْمَةٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ لِنْتَ لَهُمْ وَلَوْ كُنْتَ فَظًّا غَلِيظَ الْقَلْبِ لَانْفَضُّوا مِنْ حَوْلِكَ فَاعْفُ عَنْهُمْ  
وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ وَشَاوِرْهُمْ فِي الْأَمْرِ فَإِذَا عَزَمْتَ فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَوَكِّلِينَ

*So by mercy from Allah, [O Muhammad], you were lenient with them. And if you had been rude [in speech] and harsh in heart, they would have disbanded from about you. So pardon them and ask forgiveness for them and consult them in the matter. And when you have decided, then rely upon Allah. Indeed, Allah loves those who rely [upon Him].*

The principle of deliberation, as reflected in these two verses, is very much in line with the fourth principle of Pancasila, namely, "Democracy guided by the Wisdom of Deliberation/Representation." In both the concept of shura and Pancasila, deliberation is understood as a deliberative process that respects the dignity and contribution of each individual in determining a shared direction. Therefore, the integration of Islamic values and Pancasila in this case is not contradictory, but rather mutually reinforcing in building a just and civilized socio-political order. Deliberation requires the participation of all parties, including minority groups and women. This emphasizes that democracy does not only mean general elections, but also the active involvement of all levels of society in policy formulation.

The fifth principle, "Social justice for all Indonesian people," emphasizes the importance of justice in all areas of life: economic, political, and social. Islam explicitly commands justice, as stated in surah Al-Maidah (5): 8

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُونُوا قَوَّامِينَ لِلَّهِ شُهَدَاءَ بِالْقِسْطِ وَلَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ شَنَاٰنُ قَوْمٍ عَلَىٰ أَلَّا تَعْدِلُوا إِيْدِلُوا هُوَ أَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوَىٰ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ

*O you who have believed, be persistently standing firm for Allah, witnesses in justice, and do not let the hatred of a people prevent you from being just. Be just; that is nearer to righteousness. And fear Allah; indeed, Allah is Acquainted with what you do.*

The above verse reinforces the value of the objectivity of justice by emphasizing that hatred toward a group should not prevent someone from acting justly. This verse reads: "And let not your hatred of a people lead you to be unjust. Be just, for that is closer to piety." In this context, the Qur'an not only establishes justice as positive law but also as a path to piety. This moral message parallels the principles of Pancasila, which upholds justice not based on prejudice or discrimination, but through a rational, proportional, and ethical approach to all elements of the nation.

Ultimately, there is no conflict between the teachings of the Qur'an and Pancasila. Instead, they reinforce each other in creating a just, faithful, and civilized Indonesian society. An understanding of this harmony is crucial and must be continuously instilled, especially in education and public spaces, so that the nation's next generation can live in harmony between religious and national values, in a complete and balanced way.

#### *Analysis of Musdah Mulia and Husein Muhammad's Thoughts on Gender Issues in Indonesia*

##### *Family Planning (Keluarga Berencana)*

The Family Planning (*Keluarga Berencana*) program in Indonesia is part of the national development strategy aimed at controlling population growth and improving the quality of life. This program was first initiated during the New Order era through the establishment of the National Family Planning Coordinating Board (BKKBN) in 1970, and since then has become a key agenda item in Indonesian population policy (Muhammad 2014). The implementation of the family planning is considered an effort to create small, happy, and prosperous families through conscious and voluntary child birth control. This success has also received international recognition as an effective model for population control in developing countries. However, in the last decade, the family planning program has faced new challenges such as declining community participation, cultural and religious resistance, and unequal access to the family planning services between urban and rural areas.

According to Husein Muhammad (Muhammad 2024, 166), the family planning program is a classic issue that has actually been resolved. Its dynamics have been thoroughly debated, and the majority of scholars have concluded that it not only approves of it but also advocates it. The family planning program is not essentially a form of birth control (*tahdīd an-nasl*), but rather a human effort to regulate births (*tanzīm al-usrah*) within the framework of reproduction, better education, and family welfare. This perspective clearly demonstrates that the family planning program grants humans the right to have as many children as they desire. This perspective has also become the basis for state policy in implementing the family planning program. The arguments and criticisms from groups opposing the family planning program seem



unfounded and lack a clear understanding of the realities of society. Some accuse the family planning program of being a foreign, Jewish, or Western agenda to weaken Muslims. This argument is certainly too far-fetched and represents a form of suspicion unfounded, merely an accusation. Even the Chinese government is implementing a similar program, albeit in an extreme form.

According to Musdah Mulia (Mulia 2020, 112), the concept of family planning is to create a peaceful and happy family life. One indication is the limited number of children, but the quality of their lives. This view is closely related to the issue of population growth, high poverty rates, and limited natural resources. As creatures blessed by God with reason, humans should plan their family life as well as possible to avoid adding to the complexity of life on this earth. She explained the importance of implementing family planning programs, arguing that it is one way to protect women's reproductive health rights. Data shows that maternal mortality rates continue to rise annually. These deaths are caused by many factors, including poor health and nutritional status, young marriage age, and others. The low quality of life for women drives the need for women's empowerment efforts, as the pain and suffering experienced by mothers in childbirth are not shared by men.

### Polygamy

Polygamy is a marriage practice that allows a man to marry more than one woman simultaneously, and in the context of Islamic law is known as a form of conditional marital relationship. In Indonesia, as a country with a Muslim majority, the practice of polygamy still occurs despite being restricted by state regulations. The existence of the Marriage Law No. 1 of 1974 states that the principle of marriage in Indonesia is monogamy, but provides leniency in certain conditions for polygamy to occur, such as infertility, prolonged illness, and the wife's inability to fulfill her duties as a wife. Even in the *Marriage Property Act* (MPA) Bill, one article states that polygamy is permitted with written permission from the wife (Mulia 2020, 585). This provision indicates a dualism between state legal norms and religious legal norms that exist side by side, but often give rise to ethical and social tensions.

Furthermore, there is the issue of religious interpretation used to legitimize the practice of polygamy. A frequently cited verse of the Qur'an is surah An-Nisā' (4): 3. In social reality, this verse is often interpreted and used as a justification for the gender-inequality practice of polygamy (Begum et al. 2024). Yet, the verse clearly addresses the case of orphans who have lost their parents and are left with an inheritance. In essence, they still need financial protection and care, which, in the context of the time when the verse was revealed, was the responsibility of men. The care of orphans requires good and fair treatment. Guardians, in this case, men, are not permitted to manipulate their

wealth. If a guardian is unable to act justly, it is recommended to marry women (Negara and Hannah 2023, 167). In this case, the women referred to are women who will become the mothers of the orphans and assist the guardian in caring for them. Therefore, the mission of this verse is clearly to protect vulnerable individuals (Muhammad 2024, 143).

The label of *sunnah* for the practice of polygamy is based on an understanding of the history of the Prophet who practiced polygamy. In fact, the Prophet Muhammad practiced polygamy after the death of his first wife, Khadijah, and was a widower for two years. He was monogamous for 28 years. Essentially, he married other women, mostly elderly widows, in an effort to protect them from neglect and the pressure of his polytheistic family. It's also worth noting that although the Prophet married more than one woman, he disapproved of his daughter Fatimah's polygamy. He would be furious and condemn his daughter-in-law. We must strongly oppose any justification for the practice of polygamy (Mulia 2020, 153).

### Conclusion

The construction of gender justice within the framework of *Pancasila* and the Qur'an, as analyzed through the thoughts of Musdah Mulia and Husein Muhammad, demonstrates the harmony of humanitarian values, justice, and equality that reject gender discrimination and support the realization of an inclusive society. *Pancasila* with its five principles and the Qur'an with its emphasis on monotheism and humanity can both serve as ethical-philosophical foundations for formulating policies that support equality. Musdah Mulia, through a feminist-humanist interpretation, emphasizes gender equality as a divine imperative, while Husein Muhammad, through a contextual approach, critiques patriarchal culture and offers a progressive-traditional reading of religious texts. Although challenges such as entrenched patriarchy, gender-biased interpretations, and unresponsive public policies remain dominant, a contextual reinterpretation of *Pancasila* and the Qur'an opens up opportunities for the birth of a socio-political paradigm that is more just, egalitarian, and oriented towards respect for human dignity.

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