

Queer Problems in Judith Butler's Perspective: A Model for Analysing Fitrah in the Islamic Tradition

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Abstract: Queer brings new orders of identity, especially sex and gender, into a space of uncertainty where everyone can play without being trapped in one identity. This theory became one of the theories as the basis for the affirmation of the LGBTQ movement. Since identity is not a fixed thing, its mean can be determined by performative actions. This view had a significant impact on the development of queer theory and has opened up new ways to think about the relationship between language, identity and power. The main strategy is deconstruct the heteronormative norms. This research attempts to examine collective sources with an analytical-descriptive method. For performative theory, the categorisation that society has understood; there are only two sexes does not represent a variety of sexual expressions. So that society calls sexual orientation is only what is naturally known can be deconstructed so that there is no longer a stereotype says orientations that are different from what has been established are deviant sexual orientations. Thus, truth becomes a freedom that can only be subjectively judged by the individual himself, especially causing a chaos of norms and values. Therefore, an Islamic perspective is needed to bind the will to one's nature

Keywords: Queer, Performative, Fitrah.

Introduction

Queer is a discourse that challenges notions of the essence of sexual identity and rejects fixed categories of sexuality.(Jagose, 1990) It is a free floating or unstable sexual identity; always in motion, contingent and subject to change. The use of the term queer suggests a blurring of boundaries between straight and gay sex and legitimises those who have in the past been considered sexual 'criminals'. The term 'queer' has been embraced by some as a way to move beyond the gay/straight divide and move beyond identity politics, where 'queers' play with identity and refuse to be defined or categorised.

This idea is rooted in the problem of LGBT minority communities being seen as bad, deviant and untrue. Queer is claimed to be an image of oppression against the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender/LGBT movement (LGBTQIA Resource

Centre). In 1994, the word queer was presented at the fourth national conference on lesbian and gay studies at Yale University's Centre for Lesbian and Gay Studies.(Butler, 1999, p. xvii) The queer movement continued in the 1970s by entering the socio-political and legal contexts to gain legal rights as citizens. Until 1990, queer symbolically became a place of struggle for those who felt they did not have a biological sexual identity and orientation.(*Introduction to Queer Theory - Philosophy - Library Research Guides at Indiana University*, n.d.)

The idea of queer was further developed through Judith Buttler's performative subversion theory. She is the author of the book *Gender Trouble*, which is considered the foundation of the development of Queer Studies. In her theory, Buttler debates the norms and values that have been firmly established in society which she calls heteronormativity. *There is no gender identity behind the expressions of gender; identity is performatively constituted by the very*

'expressions' that are said to be its result. (Butler, 1999, p. 33) That is, The expressions of gender do not represent gender identity; rather, the very manifestations that are said to be the outcome of gender identity performatively construct identity.

This means that the gender categorisation that has existed in society, for Butler, is not sufficient to accommodate the various sexual expressions of a person, so that a person is then labelled with certain identities such as male, female, transvestite, lesbian, gay, and so on. Whereas gay/lesbian studies, for example, focuses its investigation on the natural and unnatural behaviours associated with homosexual behaviour, queer theory expands its focus to include any kind of sexual activity or identity that falls into categories considered normative and deviant. According to queer theory, there is no such thing as a deviant sexual orientation or a natural sexual orientation, here is the basic thesis. Thus, queer theory is an identity theory devoid of sexuality.

Queer studies brings new orders of identity, especially sex and gender, into a space of uncertainty where everyone can play without being trapped in one identity. This theory became one of the theories that became the basis for the affirmation of the LGBTQ movement. According to Butler, a gender expression is not accompanied by a gender identity. The idea of an identity with a beginning and an end is rejected by queer people. A person can have both masculine and feminine identities simultaneously or sequentially. This idea has an impact on sexual orientation because one's identity is not final.

This view raises epistemological and ethical issues. If sexual identity and orientation are considered entirely fluid, then the criteria for assessing consistency, moral responsibility, and stability of individual identity become blurred. The principle that identity can change at any time also raises critical questions: is a person truly free to determine their sexual identity without limits? Can changes in orientation be considered natural, or do they obscure the foundations of human sexual relations? On the other hand, approaches that reject stable categories have the potential to create value relativism, where truth is no longer understood through social norms or general ethics, but through the subjectivity of each individual.

These issues show that queer theory, despite its significant contribution to the discourse on identity freedom, harbours serious problems that need to be examined in depth. Philosophical criticism is needed to weigh the consistency of the arguments, their social implications, and their epistemological impact on the concept of human identity. Therefore, this study attempts to critically analyse how queer studies and Butler's performativity shape the definition of identity, as well as the theoretical consequences of rejecting stable categories of gender and sexual orientation.

Materials and Methods

This study tries to examine the collections of various literary genres. Several primary and secondary sources were used in this study to elaborate on the data gathered. Primary sources are those that are the results of original study. The papers contain relevant reporting, scientific analysis, and empirical research. The secondary articles that are provided can help to draw attention to the key components contained in encyclopaedias, publications, and journals. This study is qualitative since it looks at a range of library books and different story elements. (John Wiley & Son, 2012)

Analytical and descriptive thinking were also utilised in this piece. The goal of this study is to investigate the subjects mentioned and acquire data from the references used. (Hardani, 2020) The most crucial tool for collecting, cataloguing, and extracting data from the established resources is the researcher. (Mayring, 2014) In each section, the researchers employ a descriptive model. (Mayring, 2014) The researchers make an effort to identify, choose, and create pertinent, constructive narratives to support each idea that is expressed. (Tracy, 2013) The researchers then conducted a content analysis deductively from the reference material using the provided variables, categories, and content tabulations

Results and Discussion

Judith Butler's Attention to Queer

American philosopher Judith Butler, who wrote the 1990 book *Gender Trouble*, was born in Cleveland, Ohio, in 1956. (Salih, 2019) She was captivated by the genesis and nature of ideas in the study of ethics and philosophy and attended a Jewish school till the age of 18. She came out as a lesbian when she was 16 years old.

Butler attended Bennington College (a private place of learning in the state of Vermont) and then did her doctorate in philosophy at Yale University, where she became a prominent member of the lesbian community and a political activist. She received her doctorate in 1984 and now teaches at the University of California, Berkeley, and in Switzerland.

She has authored more than a dozen books and is actively involved in discussions ranging from lesbian, homosexual, bisexual, and transgender rights to Middle Eastern politics as a feminist and participant in the cultural, political, and theoretical currents surrounding women's rights advocacy. She works on identity issues and prejudice against minorities because she has firsthand knowledge of both. Butler has encountered discrimination as a lesbian and her mother lost her Hungarian-American family as a result of the Nazi Holocaust during World War II. She has discussed the challenges of growing up as a lesbian and the wounds her sexuality left her with. Butler's thinking about the urge to fit in with society in acceptable ways was also influenced by the fact that her uncle was confined to a hospital due to his anatomically deformed body.

One of Butler's greatest contributions to queer theory is the development of the concept of gender performativity. (Wicaksana et al., 2008) She argues that gender is not something we "have" or "carry" from birth, but rather something we "do" through everyday actions. In this view, one's gender identity is the result of actions that are repeated and performed in society. This opens up space to challenge and change existing gender norms. In addition, Butler also criticises the view of gender (male versus female) and sexuality (heterosexual versus homosexual). She emphasises that this view

ignores individual gender identity and sexuality. The concept of queer breaks the boundaries imposed by society.

Butler argues that gender identity and sexuality are unstable and always in the process of change. (Wicaksana et al., 2008, p. 7) This means that individuals can identify themselves in a variety of ways that do not always conform to existing social norms. The concept of queer emphasises that we don't have to force ourselves into the boxes of identity that have been set by society. In addition, Butler highlights the importance of rebellion against the gender and sexuality norms that dominate society. She assumes that social change and a more inclusive understanding of gender and sexuality is only possible through acts of rebellion and changes in how we understand ourselves and others. (Chambers & Carver, 2008, p. 3)

Judith Butler's attention to queer has been an important contribution to gender and sexuality theory, paving the way for broader discussions of identity, existence, and social norms. With the development of the concept of gender performativity and the emphasis on the importance of fragility and brokenness in identity, Butler has influenced many fields of study, including psychology, sociology, and gender studies.

Definition of Queer

The etymological definition of "queer" has been used since the 16th century to mean "strange, peculiar, eccentric, or unconventional." (*Queer - Advanced Search Results in Entries | Oxford English Dictionary*, n.d.) It has also been used as a derogatory term for homosexuals since the late 19th century. (Butler, 1993) In recent decades, the term has been reclaimed and redefined by some LGBTQ+ communities as a positive and inclusive term for non-normative sexual and gender identities.

Queer is a term that emerged in the late 1980s and early 1990s as a way to challenge the limitations of identity categories such as gay and lesbian. It is a non-specific term that defies the exclusionary tendencies of more specific identity categories. While there is no one agreed definition of queer, it is generally understood as a way of thinking about sexuality and gender that emphasises the fluidity

and contingency of identity categories. (Jagose, 1990, pp. 80; T2, 75–76; 158)

In Butler's thinking, the term queer is used to refer to a range of non-normative sexual and gender identities and practices that challenge dominant cultural norms and categories. Butler argues that the category of queer is not a fixed or stable identity. (Butler, 1999, p. 7) She suggests that the term queer can be used to describe a range of practices and identities that challenge dominant cultural norms, including same-sex desire, non-binary gender identities, and other non-normative forms of sexual and gender expression. (Butler, 1999, p. 8) For Butler, the concept of queer is closely linked to the idea of performativity, which suggests that gender and sexuality are not fixed or essential categories, but are produced through social and cultural practices. By embracing queer categories, Butler argues, individuals and communities can challenge dominant cultural norms and create new possibilities for sexual and gender expression. (Butler, 1999, p. 10)

Butler's thinking resonates with that of Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick who is known for her work on queer performativity. Her theory builds on Butler's idea to suggest that queerness is not just a matter of sexual desire, but also a way of performing and subverting dominant norms and values. She also emphasises the importance of affect and emotion in queer experience and identity. Thus, for her, the subversion of norms of sexuality and gender identity is of paramount importance. (Sedgwick, 1990) As he puts it in his work, *Epistemology of the Closet*, which discusses the ways in which sexual identity is expressed and hidden in literature and culture.

In *The History of Sexuality*, another figure, Michel Foucault, influenced the development of queer thought by describing how to organise and control the sexuality of individual communities. His work further explains the role of power and knowledge that can influence queer development. In this book, he argues that power is not only repressive or negative, but also productive and generative. (Foucault, 1978) She also emphasises the importance of historical and cultural context in shaping the ways in which sexuality and gender are understood and regulated.

These figures have contributed to the development of Queer Theory by challenging dominant assumptions about sexuality and gender, and by providing new ways of thinking about identity, power, and social change. Queer theory emerged in the context of post-structuralism, which rejects essentialist and universalist understandings of identity and emphasises the ways in which power operates through discourses of identity.

As such, queer is a term used in the context of gender and sexuality studies to refer to approaches or perspectives that challenge or contest traditional norms around gender identity, sexuality, and gender roles in society. This includes views that emphasise the density of gender identity and sexuality, as well as critiques of binary views of gender and sexuality (e.g., male versus female, heterosexual versus homosexual).

Elements of Butler's Thought

Butler's thinking emphasises three main elements; *Language, Power and Performativity*. (Kirby, 2006) Butler uses and builds on theories and writings from the psychoanalytic tradition, including Freud, Lacan and Kristeva. In addition, she references structuralist and post-structuralist theories, using Derrida's theory of deconstruction, which is a type of literary analysis, and Foucault's concept of how power is structured. There are several feminist theorists, including Kristeva, that she also references, such as Wittig and Irigaray.

Before the 1990s the feminist movement was largely based on essentialism, which is the idea that people are assigned a gender because of inherent biology and that a person's sex and gender are not only deeply connected, but also the same. Later, was the theory of constructivism, that sex and gender are separate, and that gender is something that is constructed and performed through culture, not inherent to biology. Judith Butler took constructivist theory further and through her influence on other thinkers, brought constructivism into the mainstream, and influenced the way we think about gender today.

Her main question throughout *Gender Trouble* is whether women should be considered a category, a collective whole to be used for feminist rhetoric. (Brooks, 2011) She asks if woman is a universal term. It's a question about the relationship

between sex and gender. Sex is the anatomical parts of the body that a person has - such as the penis and vagina. Gender is the socially constructed appearance that makes a person look male or female that can be recognised by the general public.(Butler, 1999)

Gender characteristics, such as what is visible in long hair and skirts and the more subtle behaviours of how one carries oneself and how one interacts with others, are determined by cultural structures. This performance is not an active choice that one makes. One does not wake up every morning and choose to appear as a woman. Instead, gender performance is an effect or product of the world we live in and assimilate into, which is why it is largely unconscious. Gender is anticipation, repetition and ritual. Butler uses this idea and goes further, showing that sex is also socially constructed.

Here, Butler uses some key Derridian theories. Binaries, such as male and female, are constructed because our language is made up of using oppositions to give meaning to things. We know what love means because it is not hate, but this means we don't really know what love is. Under the structure of language, culture and ideas, there is no natural inner truth. Butler says that sex is also just an invented category with no inherent inner truth. Sex is always already gendered because of the heterosexual matrix, which is a naturalised subset of body, gender, and desire, meaning that the audience viewing a person knows that person's sex, gender, and sexuality. The problem with the heterosexual matrix is that it only allows for a certain number of identities and everything else is outside of it and erased or ignored.

There is no way to overcome the heterosexual matrix individually, alone; instead, Butler suggests that sexual minorities and people with excluded identities need to join forces to transcend existing identity categories. Ideally, there would be no categories.

For poststructuralists like Butler, there are no pre-discursive identities, as all aspects associated with gender, including subject, agency, gender norms, and even biological sex, are always produced by and through discourse.(Butler, 2013) On the assumption of gender, including the body, as the discursive on which it relies Butler claims that

gender is performative. As she emphasises, "the body that is signified as prior to signification is the effect of signification, for this act of signification constrains and shapes the body that it then claims to locate prior to any and all significance".(Butler, 2017, p. 233) According to Butler, gender, or sex, is always "something that is something but can never be something-that is, gender itself is a kind of embodiment or activity."(Butler, 1999, p. 143)

This process of being gendered or gendered activity consists of gender performances, which can never fully perform gender as it is settled in a place. As Butler explains, gender should not be understood as a noun or a substantial thing or a static cultural marker, but rather as a persistent and recurring action.(Butler, 2013) This incessant and repetitive action is what Butler calls gender performance. To be more specific, acts of gender performance are always understood from a discursive point of view: gendered behaviours, such as actions, gestures, and demonstrations, "are performative in the sense that the essence or identity they are supposed to express is produced and maintained through corporeal signs and other discursive means."Butler, 173.

Performative has three meanings in Butler's theory: the theatrical meaning of acting, dramatising; its linguistic meaning is derived from the verbs "perform" in speech act theory, which is similar to "enact" "embody" and "do" and its expanded meaning of "citation" "signification" and "reiteration" with poststructuralist modifications. Butler begins with the double meaning of "performative" theatre ("ritualised social drama") and gendered speech acts (performative acts) are forms of authoritative speech: instances of statements that in their utterance also perform certain actions and exercise binding power, but ultimately land at the discursive level of "resignation" and "repetition".(Butler, 2017, p. 171)

So far, Butler has emphasised that gender is not only discursively but also performatively constituted, i.e. gender does not only consist in discourse, but in certain types of performative discourse. Butler further revises speech act theory by using poststructuralist notions of citation and repetition of laws, or gender norms in the case of gender. Butler's thinking is affirmed by LGBTQ

people as a justification for choices that are different from those of people they consider heteronormative. Her theory opens up the possibility of the freedom to create new rules for bodies that live out the experience of each individual. The gendered body is performative, that is, it has no ontological status apart from the various actions that constitute its reality. (Butler, 1999, p. 173) So for Butler, gender diversity is the result of manifestations that are performed through cultural constructions, desires and individual experiences.

Queer As An Expression of One's Sexual Freedom

Butler argues that the term queer can be used as an expression of sexual freedom because it challenges and subverts traditional categories of gender and sexuality. By using the term queer, individuals can challenge the boundaries of heteronormative culture and create new possibilities for sexual and gender expression. Butler writes, "*Queer is a site of tension, of contestation, rather than a positivistic location. It is the site where the very legitimacy of the heterosexual matrix is put into question.*" (Butler, 1999, p. 12) In other words, by identifying as queer, individuals can challenge dominant cultural norms that dictate what is considered normal or natural in terms of gender and sexuality.

The term queer is considered to be not only about individual freedom, but also about collective resistance to oppression. (Butler, 2017) By identifying as queer, these individuals align themselves with the broader movement for social justice and equality. They reject the idea that some people are inherently better or more normal than others based on their sexual or gender identity. Furthermore, the term queer is also about political action. It is a way to challenge the status quo and advocate for a more just and equal society. By using the term queer, individuals join a broader movement for social change, one that seeks to dismantle systems of oppression that have historically marginalised LGBTQ+ people.

Furthermore, queer is not just about challenging dominant norms and categories, but also about creating new possibilities for action and thought. By refusing to conform to dominant norms and categories, Queer opens up new possibilities for exploring and expressing one's desires and identity. (Butler, 1999, p. 3) While this is the case, it

is also important to recognise the ways in which social inequalities and power relations shape these possibilities. In this way, queer becomes a symbol of liberation and empowerment, allowing individuals to embrace their sexual freedom and reject the limitations imposed by societal norms and expectations. (Hughes, 2000) It encourages the celebration of the diversity of sexualities and promotes inclusivity, acceptance, and self-expression.

The term Queer is also not only an expression of sexual freedom, but has also been used by others as a way to critique the limitations of identity politics and challenge the boundaries of normative categories. (Boucher, 2006) Butler has emphasised the performative nature of gender and sexuality, arguing that these categories are not fixed or essential, but are produced through repeated acts of performance. Queer can be seen as an expression of one's sexual freedom, as it allows individuals to break free from the confines of societal norms and expectations and embrace their unique sexuality in their own way. (Spargo, 1999)

The elements above are the fact that Butler's theory can be easily actualised through various broadcasts. Unfortunately, it is massively disseminated through the media and affirmed through a series of theories. Moreover, it is corroborated by scientific journals that indirectly affirm that the materiality of the body is the main marker of the subject's existence that divides it into two binaries, namely male and female. (Asep Wawan Jatnika, Tri Sulistianingtyas, 2015) Therefore, there is a need for a related critique that emphasises the diversity and fluidity of gender and sexuality, and seeks to challenge the normative categories that want to be upheld, one of which is the concept of gender and sexuality *essential biologism* from a western perspective, as well as the concept of *fitrah* from an Islamic perspective.

A Critique of Judith Butler's Queer and Performative Implications

One important implication of Butler's work is that gender and sexuality are not fixed or essential categories, but rather socially constructed and performative. (Butler, 1993) In other words, our identities and experiences are shaped by cultural norms and expectations, and one performs gender

and sexuality in ways that are influenced by these norms. This perspective challenges traditional notions of gender and sexuality as natural or innate, and opens up new possibilities for understanding and expressing non-normative identities and desires.

Another implication of Butler's work is that the struggle for LGBTQ+ rights and recognition is not only about gaining acceptance within existing social structures, but also about fundamentally challenging and changing those structures. By exposing the ways in which gender and sexuality are constructed and regulated by social norms, Butler's work creates new forms of activism and resistance that seek to disrupt and subvert those norms. Overall, the implications of the term queer and Butler's work are complex and varied, and have been the subject of ongoing debate and discussion within the fields of queer theory and LGBTQ+ studies.

In addition to her work on gender and sexuality, Butler has also been influential in the development of queer theory more broadly. As she writes in *Undoing Gender*, "queer theory is not about a particular set of sexual practices, but about the ways in which normative categories of sex, gender, and desire are produced and sustained." (Boucher, 2006) This means that queer theory is not only concerned with the experiences of LGBTQ individuals, but also with the wider social and cultural norms that shape our understanding of sexuality and gender.

Overall, Butler's thinking has had a significant impact on the development of queer theory and has opened up new avenues for thinking about the relationship between language, identity, and power. As she writes in *Gender Trouble*, "the task is not to find ways to contain identities in categories that serve to exclude and repress them, but to engage in a radical disarticulation of identity categories." (Boucher, 2006) This means that the aim of queer theory is not just to expand the boundaries of existing identity categories, but to challenge the idea of fixed and stable identities.

Additionally, Boucher argues that Butler's approach ignores the importance of material conditions and the structural determinants of social inequality. (Boucher, 2006) She argues that this is a major limitation of Butler's work, as it fails to

account for the ways in which social structures and power relations shape the possibilities of gender and sexual expression. In addition to Boucher, several other researchers have also criticised Butler's approach for ignoring the material conditions and structural determinants of social inequality. For example, Wendy Brown argues that Butler's emphasis on performativity can lead to a neglect of the material conditions of social life, and this can limit the possibilities for political action and social change. (Brown, 1955)

Not only ignoring material conditions, Butler's performativity theory is the basis of LGBTQ actualisation through *queer studies*. The main strategy is the deconstruction of norms that they perceive as heteronormative that have been in place. One of Derrida's main contributions in this field is his concept of "différance", which refers to the ways in which meaning is suspended and deferred in language and culture. This concept has been used to challenge traditional notions of identity and subjectivity, and to open up new possibilities for understanding and expressing non-normative identities and desires. Derrida's work has also been influential in the development of queer phenomenology, which seeks to explore the lived experiences of LGBTQ+ individuals and the ways in which those experiences are shaped by cultural norms and expectations.

This approach emphasises the importance of embodiment and affect in understanding gender and sexuality, and has been used by scholars such as Sara Ahmed and Jack Halberstam. Butler, "Critically Queer." (Butler, 1993) For performative theory, the categorisation that society has understood that there are only two sexes does not represent a variety of sexual expressions. This is because each individual's body should be able to actualise one's sexual expression. So that what society calls sexual orientation is only what is naturally known can be deconstructed so that there is no longer a stereotype that says that orientations that are different from what has been established are deviant sexual orientations.

The deconstructive approach used by queer studies to dismantle these sexual categories has methodological implications that are far broader than simply criticising social norms. When the body

is positioned as a free medium for producing identity through performativity, the boundaries between biological structure, subjective experience and social norms become blurred. As a result, the concept of identity is no longer understood as something with a stable foundation, but rather as the result of a continuous construction that can change at any time according to the discursive context. This change in the way identity is understood not only affects the way individuals view themselves, but also affects the way society establishes values, moral categories, and ethical judgements. This is where we see that the queer deconstruction project paves the way for a significant epistemological shift—which then leads to the issue of value relativism.

The potential for value relativism in queer studies arises when identity and sexual orientation are understood as completely fluid entities, without reference to ontological boundaries or stable ethical norms. When basic categories such as male and female are considered to have no natural foundation, the measures for assessing right and wrong, appropriate and inappropriate, or beneficial and harmful in sexual behaviour lose their foundation. In this situation, moral criteria shift from universal principles to individual preferences that change according to one's performative construction. Consequently, the space for ethical discussion becomes fragile because there are no fixed parameters for assessing actions other than the subjectivity of the perpetrator, thus opening up opportunities for the justification of any practice as long as it is declared an expression of identity. This condition not only raises epistemological problems regarding how moral knowledge can be constructed, but also disrupts social order and the concept of human responsibility, which requires more stable value references and does not merely depend on personal constructions.

With the queer approach, the standards of right and wrong that have been the reference for society are shifted to something relative and changeable. Truth is no longer understood through stable norms, but depends solely on individual feelings and judgements. In this situation, behaviour that was previously considered deviant can gain new justification, thereby potentially weakening the value system that has long maintained social order.

The understanding of gender performativity provides space for everyone to freely shape their gender identity and expression, without reference to biological structures or more fixed moral norms. As a result, the measure of truth becomes subjective and increasingly determined by cultural trends and personal tastes, rather than by principles with a solid foundation. Overall, this condition shows that the queer approach not only offers freedom but also raises serious issues because it opens up the possibility of value relativism that undermines the moral foundation for understanding human identity.

The Concept of Fitrah as an Epistemological Corrective

When discussing bodily freedom from an Islamic perspective, it is important to first understand that human freedom does not exist outside the framework of divine destiny and will. Islam views humans as having room for choice, but that choice always exists within the order of creation established by God. It is within this framework that Hamka's thinking becomes relevant, when he asserts that humans in this world are definitely not free. (Muhammad Khalid Muslih, 2019, p. 219) That is, many aspects of his life—including birth, environment, parents, and gender—were determined without his involvement. Therefore, the question of the extent to which the body can be freely managed must be placed within the awareness that human freedom moves within predetermined cosmic boundaries. Freedom that is in accordance with these boundaries is precisely the condition for the creation of balance, both in the natural order as the macrocosm and in the human being as the microcosm.

God as the creator not only created the heavens and the earth but also everything in them, 'We created the heavens and the earth and everything between them.' QS.Qaf:39. This includes the duality of masculine and feminine observed in all creations in one form or another, which is the result of His creation and not the consequence of some cosmic or biological process: 'For We have created you male and female.' QS. Az Zukhruf:12, (Sayyed Husein Nasr, 2022, p. 43) Al Attas categorises this process under the term *Khalaqa*, which in the Qur'an, God as the Creator is referred to by several terms, such

as *Khalaqa*, *Ja'ala*, and *ansha'a*. *Khalaqa*, as the most representative term, is interpreted as the creation of something that did not previously exist. *Ja'ala* creates from something latent, which already existed previously, while *ansha'a* is to make something that previously existed or was similar in form into something that did not previously exist.

In Islam, human freedom always operates within the boundaries of creation set by God, including the boundaries of the body. Humans are indeed given room to strive, but their bodies—their origins, forms, and genders—are part of a destiny they did not choose. Therefore, freedom does not mean the absolute ability to redefine the body, but rather to manage it within the framework of divine law and will. The duality of male and female bodies is also understood as part of a deliberately created cosmic order, not merely the result of social construction. From this perspective, discussions about the body must be linked to the concept of divine creation, which affirms the existence of a natural structure that cannot be denied.

The discussion regarding bodily boundaries in Islam becomes clearer when we look at how the Qur'an describes the process of human creation. At this stage, the Qur'an does not present creation as a biological process that stands alone, but rather as a series of divine actions that take place gradually and purposefully. This is illustrated in the verse which explains that humans are formed from a drop of water, then become something that sticks together, develops into a lump of flesh, forms bones, then is covered with flesh until it becomes a perfect creature. The use of the word *khalaqa*. 'Then We made the semen into something attached, then We made that which was attached into a lump of flesh, and We made the lump of flesh into bones, then We wrapped the bones with flesh. Then We made it into another creature.' QS. Al Mukmin: 14. This indicates that in every stage of creation, from a lump of flesh to the formation of bones and finally to a complete baby with its own identity, it is a new creation at every stage. It is not a natural process or a natural consequence, but rather the act of Allah (*af'al* Allah) in the sense of creation in accordance with the stages in the womb, which is the natural state and destiny of the body..(Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas, 2015, p. 25).

It is this bodily destiny that cannot be denied that each individual has a natural identity according to his or her *fitrah*. It is this nature that shows evidence of the existence and essence of a person. Biologically, it is not possible for there to be various genders outside of male and female. If this happens, it has gone out of the nature and destiny of each individual because it is very problematic because it violates the nature that exists in the self.

The Concept of *Fitrah* in Islam

Fitrah in Islam comes from the Arabic root *Ikhtiyar*, the same root as '*khayr*' which means 'good'. Therefore, *ikhtiyar* is a choice towards goodness. It is this understanding that requires one to choose something positive and good and focus on the attributes of goodness that refer to the sources of Islamic law, particularly the Quran and Hadith, which in whatever way chosen will bring goodness as well.

The meaning of *Fitrah* itself is the original creation and essential identity of man. With *fitrah* man becomes himself as a human being from the beginning of his existence until the end of his life. *Fitrah* is not only a natural inclination, but also an inclination towards right action and submission to Allah SWT, *fitrah* is the latent power that exists in man, which he has been carrying since birth; and will be the driving force for his personality. By recognising *fitrah*, individuals can understand the concept, structure and purpose of human creation.

Human creation is made up of matter and immaterial matter, with matter referring to the body and immaterial matter referring to the soul and spirit. Muslims see in themselves the wonders of God, because this order is a sign of His wisdom and will that rules on behalf of nature as a proof of His existence. Therefore, in order to protect ourselves from the relativist current of science, humans must emphasise the spiritual aspect.(Arroisi et al., 2022)

Creation in the Islamic context means more than just the creation of the physical world, which in itself is the crystallisation of realities that include higher levels of being, levels that are all also created by God. In all realms of the cosmos, let alone from the sublime to the material, there are laws established by God that all creatures obey, laws here are not simply understood in a quantitative

conception but in a qualitative conception. (Sayyed Husein Nasr, 2022, p. 51) As Al-Ghazali views humans with all their aspects and dimensions more perfectly. (Arroisi et al., 2022) Al-Ghazali argues that there are three dimensions in humans, namely the body (physiological), soul (psychological), and spirit (spiritual), which become a unity that influences each other in life.

The divine aspect of man

Imam Al Ghazali describes humans as consisting of, *nafs, spirit, jism*. *Nafs* is a substance that stands alone (divine spirit), the spirit is *nafs al hayat* which in its absence the human being is said to be dead or the heat of nature that flows in the veins, muscles and nerves. While the *jism* or body is composed of material elements. The body is the most imperfect part of man or is also included in the lowest reality because it includes *jism* whose composition is damaged and helpless, it is only subject to forces outside it. (Muhammad Khalid Muslih, 2019, p. 207) Therefore, the movement of the body will not be possible if there is no soul. According to Al-Kindi, the spirit or soul is the most sublime element in humans, even though it is from God, it does not mean that it is like God, but rather, the ability to see the truth and the good qualities given by God as God is all righteous and good. (Muhammad Zaini utsman, 2020)

It has been said before that humans consist of three elements, *nafs, ruh and jism*. The blowing of the divine spirit is the moment of distinction between the soul and the body. It is also included in the *nasf an natiqah*, which is something that already exists before it is united to the body, this *nasf an natiqah* carries the mandate as khalifah (*mithaq*) mentioned in the verse QS Al A'raf 172. When it is united with the body, it is a proposition, the giver of direction as well as inspiration towards what is wrong and right, success and failure depending on whether it leads to obedience or damage. (Syed Muhammad Naquib Al atas, 20215).

Conclusions

Queer studies brings new orders of identity, especially sex and gender, into a space of uncertainty where everyone can play without being

trapped in one identity. This theory became one of the theories that became the basis for the affirmation of the LGBTQ movement. Butler asserts that there is no gender identity behind a gender expression. Queer rejects the principle of identity that has a beginning and an end. A person can have masculine and feminine identities at the same time or at different times. Since identity is also not a fixed thing, the meaning of identity can be determined by interpreting performative actions, lesbian conversations, performativity of appearance and physicality, performativity of sexual activities that are always changing. This thinking has had a significant impact on the development of queer theory and has opened up new avenues for thinking about the relationship between language, identity and power, the aim of queer theory is not just to expand the boundaries of existing identity categories, but to challenge the idea of fixed and stable identities.

However, Boucher argues that Butler's approach ignores the importance of material conditions and the structural determinants of social inequality. Wendy Brown argues that Butler's emphasis on performativity can lead to a neglect of the material conditions of social life, and this can limit the possibilities for political action and social change. Not only ignoring material conditions, Butler's performativity theory is the basis of LGBTQ actualisation through queer studies. Its main strategy is the deconstruction of norms that they perceive as heteronormative. For performative theory, the categorisation that society has understood that there are only two genders does not represent a variety of sexual expressions. So that what society calls sexual orientation is only what is naturally known can be deconstructed so that there is no longer a stereotype that says that orientations that are different from what has been established are deviant sexual orientations. Thus, the norm that has been the standard of truth is changed and gives rise to value relativity.

Truth becomes a freedom that can only be subjectively judged by the individual himself. Moreover, deviant behaviour will become more entrenched and can cause chaos to the norms and values that have been established in society. As a result, truth becomes subjective, influenced by the individual, society, and culture. Individuals feel

freer to express themselves according to what they feel is right, without feeling bound by restrictive norms. In the Islamic perspective, human beings in this world are definitely not free, all the plans he makes in his life endeavours can only work if they are in accordance with a greater design. Even his birth into this world was not by his own will, his parents, the place where he was born and even his gender were his destiny. Fitrah in Islam requires a person to choose something positive and good and focus on good traits that refer to the sources of Islamic law, especially the Al-Quran and Hadith which in any way chosen will bring goodness as well.

The meaning of Fitrah itself is the original creation and essential identity of man. With fitrah man becomes himself as a human being from the beginning of his existence until the end of his life. Fitrah is not only a natural inclination, but also an inclination towards right action and submission to Allah SWT. By knowing oneself, one will not change one's destiny based on claims of being trapped in the wrong body. It is fitrah that insists on living one's destiny according to His will. This is because fitrah is the latent power that exists in man, which he has been carrying since birth; and will be the driving force for his personality. By recognising fitrah, each individual can know the concept, structure and purpose of human creation.

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