



The *Manhaj* of Muhammadiyah Progressive Islam: Theological, Philosophical, and Ethical Perspectives

M. Amin Abdullah

Universitas Islam Negeri (UIN) Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, Indonesia

aminabdullah53@gmail.com

Article Info	Abstract
<p>Article History</p> <p>Received: May 12, 2024</p> <p>Revised: May 29, 2024</p> <p>Accepted: June 15, 2024</p> <p>Published: June 22, 2024</p> <p>Keyword: Ethic, Manhaj, Muhammadiyah, Philosophy, Theology</p>	<p>This article examines the Progressive Islamic Manhaj initiated by Muhammadiyah as Indonesia's largest modern Islamic organization. The method or <i>manhaj</i> was formulated by Muhammadiyah as a serious effort to transform Islamic movements and thoughts that are modern and responsive to the development of the times. In its review, this study complements its discussion with theological, philosophical, and ethical perspectives in viewing and providing answers to various contemporary social, political, and religious problems that are increasingly complicated. Moreover, the urgency of the Muhammadiyah Progressive Islamic Manhaj is needed to respond to the invitation to religion in a strict, rigid, narrow, and closed manner carried out by certain groups in the name of religion, both orally, in writing, and creative approaches on social media. This research article uses a descriptive analysis method for various socio-theological problems faced by the Muslim community in Indonesia. Then, this article would like to explain a vital approach initiated by Muhammadiyah, namely the Progressive Islamic Manhaj, by updating the interpretation of the five main principles of <i>maqāṣid sharī'ah</i> as a solution to contribute to the solution of various socio-religious problems. In the end, this study concludes that it is essential for Muhammadiyah to reform the basic epistemology of Islamic legal thought, especially those related to social life at large, especially with the spread of procedural reasoning religious perspectives or <i>al-'aql al-ijrā'i</i> in Fiqh and Kalām and legal-formal religious fatwa reasoning or <i>al-'aql al-iftā'i</i>, which seems to close the meetings of the universal values of humanity listed in the Qur'an.</p>

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Introduction

Inviting question marks and deep curiosity why Al-Azhar University held an international seminar entitled “Renewal of Islamic Thought (*al-Tajdid fii al-Fikr al-Islamy*)” in Cairo, 2-3 Jumada al-Akhirah, 1441 AH / 27-28 January 2020. A different question with the same intention was asked by Sheikh Sakib Arsalan, Syria, 150 years ago, *Li madza taakhkhara al-Muslimun wa taqaddama ghairuhum?* (Why is Muslim civilization retreating while Western civilization is advancing? (Arsalan, 1976), also, the same question of Hasan al-Nadawi, *Madza khasira al-alam bi al-khitat al-Muslimin?* (What does the world lose with the decline of Muslims?) (Nadwi, 2006). Not to mention Muhammad Abduh, Muhammad Iqbal, Fazlur Rahman, and KH Ahmad Dahlan. Generally, Muslim thinkers and reformers always ask this question in every era they go through in the context of facing complex problems and difficulties that are being faced such as religious, social, political, cultural, economic, scientific, and technological problems, and the relationship between one and the other (Kuru, 2019).

The most prominent Islamic religious, socio-political problem that Muslims around the world are facing in the digital era today, as expressed by Grand Sheikh al-Azhar Ahmed Thayyib, is the spread of da’wah or invitation through oral, written, and electronic (internet; digital) for Islam in a strict, narrow, rigid and closed manner; fanatical invitation to Islam (*da’wa al-ta’assub*) Both through learning or education as well as through oral da’wah forums and taklim assemblies which are easily *shared* and virtualized through electronic media.

The phenomenon of thought and discourse of Islamic religion (*al-khitab al-diny*) that is superficial, not serious, and hasty (*‘adamu al-jiddiyyah*; *‘adamu dirasah kafiyah ‘adamu i’dad ‘ilmiy al-sabiq*); Using reason at a lower order of thinking level which leads to closed thinking (*inghilaq*), even leading to *hate speech* (*karahiyyatu al-ghair*), not accepting the existence of other people and followers of different religions (*rafidhu al-akhar*) and invitations to use violence (*‘al-‘unf; irhabiyyah*). Due to the complexity of the problems faced by Muslims around the world today, al-Azhar University invites Muslims around the world to think and re-examine the religiosity of Muslims.

Result and Discussion

The Relevance of the Renewal of Islamic Thought

What is the relevance of Al-Azhar’s international seminar with the Muhammadiyah Progressive Islamic Manhaj as a da’wah, educational and social movement is very interested in being involved in it, both directly and indirectly, because what is alleged by Shaykh al-Azhar is also felt by Muhammadiyah at every level of its organization. There are several doctrines or fundamental principles of Muhammadiyah’s Islamic religious teachings, such as *al-Ruju’ ila al-Qur’an wa al-sunnah*, teachings to avoid superstition (*Takhayyul*), heresy (*Bid’ah*), and superstition (*Khurafat*) (TBC), da’wah *amar ma’ruf nahi munkar* which intersects with the basic principles held and guided by Islamic people, groups or organizations other than Muhammadiyah. In general, Sheikh al-Azhar refers to it as “*al-Jama’at al-Mutatharrifah*” (a group or line of understanding of Islamic religion that is excessive, beyond the limits of reasonableness), not to call it an intolerant, extremist, radical, or terror group.

These various slices can potentially be interpreted, utilized, distorted, and abused by other groups whose goals differ from those of the Muhammadiyah organization. Even later, some of the *internal* circles of Muhammadiyah itself also used these slices for their purposes and interests. Some of Muhammadiyah’s internal and external

groups, for example, those who use and utilize the doctrine of *amar ma'ruf nahi mungkar* Muhammadiyah, criticized that the Muhammadiyah organization was not firm and not harsh in carrying out the task of "*nahi munkar*."

Muhammadiyah only focuses on the *amar ma'ruf* (command goodness) area, but minus in the *nahi munkar* (stay away from prohibitions) area, for example (Burhani, 2013, pp. 118–119; Huda, 2017, p. 115). It is common for some Muhammadiyah residents to be tempted by this invitation. In Munir Mulkhan's sociological research (Mulkhan, 2000) a few years ago, I found a category of some Muhammadiyah residents in rural areas as a combination variant between Muhammadiyah-NU (MUNU), so recently it has become crowded in groups *WhatsApp* which gave rise to a new variant, namely Muhammadiyah-Salafi (MUSA) or Muhammadiyah Rasa Salafi (MURSAL) (Sholikh Al Huda, n.d.).

How can we return Muhammadiyah to its original khittah, namely the progressive Islamic ideology amid disruptive social and technological changes like today? It is not easy because some of the teachings, doctrines, and basic principles of Muhammadiyah's religious understanding do intersect with the Islamic knowledge of other Islamic organizations, including the understanding of contemporary Salafi (Chaplin, 2021; Meijer, 2009, Chapter 3 (244-300)). Of course, there are advantages and disadvantages. The drawback is if the religious understanding of Salafi Islam rashly turns in the direction of Salafi-Jihadi by carrying out the doctrine *al-Wala' wa al-Bara'* (loyal and obedient only to members of his group and disloyal, disloyal or disobedient to groups outside his group) (Wagemakers, 2009, pp. 81–106). This doctrine or teaching, if it develops widely in society by being facilitated by electronic social media, the internet with various supporting facilities, *Facebook*, *X (Twitter)*, *YouTube*, and *WhatsApp*, then in time it will disturb the integrity of Muslims, moreover it will disrupt the unity and unity of the nation, disturb the peace and peace of harmonious coexistence (Muthohirin, 2015). Fake news, hate speech that contains hate (*karahiyyah*), mocking; harassing (*istihza'*), and rejecting the presence of followers of other religions, tribes, races, groups, and other different groups (*rafdhu al-Akhar*) will interfere with the life of a pluralistic society such as Indonesia and interfere with the integrity of the life of the nation and state (Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict, 2015; Noor Huda Ismail, 2014) (Muthohirin, 2019).

Examples that have occurred in some areas of the country include refusing the presence of village heads or non-Muslim officials, bombing churches, and damaging mosques, such as the cases of Surabaya, Tolikara, Manado, and others. Acts of excessive hatred of people, groups, and followers of other religions, tribes, races, and other groups, in time, will turn into acts of violence (*al-'unf*) which begin with gossip in *WhatsApp* groups, the formation of false opinions (*hoaxes*), slander, sheep fighting, proxy wars, acts of exclusion, ex-communication, rallies, demonstrations, treason and so on. If it is not controlled and socio-political conditions allow in that direction, then conflicts, kidnappings, bloodshed, murders, and even prolonged wars and conflicts like those that are happening today in parts of the Middle East and some other places. Shaykh al-Azhar mentioned that he was worried about that in his opening speech at the international seminar. All Muslims are not allowed to be hasty, underestimate the problem in facing the challenge of the new virus of Islamic religious understanding, which is getting farther and farther away from the "essence" and essence or substance of the natural religion, and then urge the launch of the agenda of Renewal of Islamic Thought in the Islamic world.

Methods of Renewal and Development of Islamic Thought

Perhaps Indonesian Muslims have finished discussing the more basic quality (*content*, *al-maddah*, *madhhaby*) or methods (*manhajy*). In the past, people debated whether it was possible for Islamic thought or Islamic religious discourse (*al-khitab al-diniy*) to be renewed or developed. Some argue that it is unnecessary. Isn't Islam itself always new? Even the grand *sheikh* al-Azhar mentioned in his speech that the renewal of thought is "*qaanunun qur'aniyyun khaasun*" or the typical basic teachings of the Qur'an, citing several verses of the Qur'an (including *al-Anfal*, 54; *al-Ra'd*, 12 and *al-Naml*, 88) and al-Hadith. The opinion of groups that disagree with the agenda of renewal (*tajdid*), improvement (*islah*), or development (*tathwir*) obscures the meaning of "Islam" and "Islamic Thought" between "Islam" and "Interpretation of Islam" by individuals to other individuals, society, ulema organizations, socio-religious organizations, supporters of *madzhab* and so on. The agenda of renewal (*tajdid*) or development (*tathwir*) is aimed or directed at the side of thinking, understanding, or interpretation of Muslim people, individual individuals, groups, organizations, *madzhab*s towards the teachings of Islam, not the religion of Islam itself.

Along with the improvement of the level of education in the country, people have been able to distinguish between the two and agree that the thought or interpretation of Islam needs to be continuously renewed and developed "*al-Qabt wa al-Bast fi al-Shari'ah*" (Soroush, 2002, 2009). Moreover, there is a hadith that is often quoted by Muhammadiyah leaders and preachers who state that "every peak of 100 years, Allah sends someone as a reformer in his religious understanding (*Inna al-allaha yab'atsu li hadzihi al-ummah 'ala ra'si kulli mi'ati sanah man yujaddidu laha dinaha*). Muhammadiyah is one of the Islamic religious organizations in Indonesia that has carried out reforms. However, recently, some of its members have been affected by the tendency of Islamic religious understanding towards conservatism because the recent reforms are more focused on developing and multiplying charities but do not or lack the focus on the way of thinking, world view, philosophy, and religious theology. Therefore, Every time before Congress, Muhammadiyah consistently holds pre-Congress seminars to refresh the "essence" (not only stopping at "shari'a" and "tarekat") or the true essence and substance of Islam. Prioritizing and forgetting the essence of religion is very prone to infiltration of understanding and movement"*al-Jama'at al-Mutatharrifah*."

But it doesn't stop at differentiating *qauly* and *manhajy*. Academically, it turns out that the territory methods (*manhaj*) renewal or expansion in question are more important to discuss profoundly and seriously. Understanding and awareness that content, *qauly*, or the opinion of a particular school as a fixed and rigid noun (*ghairu qabilin li al-niqasy*) can easily lead to fanaticism and *ta'assubiyah*. It's good. However, more severe and detailed discussions in the region *methods* are much more fundamental because the use of superficial and incomprehensive methods will also result in decisions, *content*, *qauly*, or schools of understanding *fiqh* and Islamic thought that are also different (*ta'addudu al-Sawab*) following the level of completeness or not of the methods and analysis tools used. An example is the controversy about Christmas greetings by some Indonesian Muslims for Christians, which was initially rooted in the problem of the presence of Muslims in commemorating Christmas and the agreement of scholars, *Scholars*, academics, clever participants of an international seminar at al-Azhar University, Cairo, Egypt which was listed in the results of the international conference on February 28, 2020, especially point 16 (*Controversial Issues Resolved by the Sheikh of Al-Azhar in the final statement of the*

Conference for the Renewal of Islamic Thought, 2020; Mudzhar, 1996).

The realization that the discussion of methods and approaches (*al-muqarabah al-maidaniyyah*) or how to draw conclusions or decisions before the results are practiced in the public domain, the realm of daily life is much more important to be discussed first than the discussion of *content*, *al-maddah*, *qauly* or *madhhab* is a significant advance in the discourse of Islamic thought or *al-khitab al-diniy* contemporary. However, the term *manhaj* or *manhajy* is not so clear, and it is not finished among Muslims because all Islamic thought from the past to the present also claims to have used a set of methods as best as possible as a tool or way to draw conclusions and decisions in their ways and methods.

Therefore, what is more urgent to be done and further observed is an effort to verify or test openly, involving various experts from various scientific disciplines, how *manhaj* or methods, processes, and procedures are used and can be accounted for in front of the public. How complete are the components of the methods included, involved, and used to make decisions so that such results, *content*, and opinions can be produced? Validity testing, careful testing of methods used by decision-makers, opinions, views, religious opinions such as the Tarjih and Tajdid Council (Muhammadiyah), Bahsu al-Masail (Nahdhatul Ulama), the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI), Diwan al-Hisbah (Persis), and even teachers, lecturers, ustadz, da'i, YouTubers, Facebookers, parents and individuals have become much more essential and urgent to be done than the method itself. *Manhaj* or method is an effort to achieve or understand the claim of the truth of science both in the realm of natural sciences (*al-kauniyyah*), social (*ijtima'iyah*), as well as humanities (*insaniyyah*) and religious (*diniyyah*).

From here, the idea of the need for public testing, *validity* testing, or verification of the methods or processes and procedures passed and used by decision-makers in general and religious elite figures in particular emerged. How complete are the relevant data and results of previous research and discussions involved (*dirasah kafiyyah*)? How complete are the reading materials and literature (*katsratu al-ittila'*)? Have you tried using a more complete cross-reference or not? Have you tried to carry out multiple critiques on religious methods, approaches, opinions, views, opinions, or decisions that will be disseminated to the broader community? What are the implications and consequences of religious opinions or views that will be disseminated or viral for the benefit of living together, the nation and the state? Are the approach and paradigm used only mono-disciplinary (*fiqh* and *kalam* only), or has it used a multidisciplinary, inter-disciplinary, or trans-disciplinary approach (*murakkabah* and *muta'addidatu al-takhassusat*)?

Below, we will try to see and detail what fundamental elements are necessary and mandatory to carry out the renewal (*tajdid*) and development (*tathwir*) of Islamic thought and contemporary Islamic "theology" thought, called Progressive Islam. These elements will impact and become a tool to check the intellectual and spiritual content list in legal thought, education, socio-politics, communication, Islamic da'wah, etc.

Values, Vision, Strategy, and Renewal of *the Manhaj* of Islamic Thought

At least, epistemologically and axiologically, there are 4 (four) aspects or essential elements of the methodology that need to be observed and considered in detail when we want to renew and develop Progressive Islamic thought in a disruptive era like today, namely 1) philosophical aspects and values in *fiqh* and *kalam*; 2) vision of civilization; 3) scientific strategy; 4) and the renewal and development of Islamic thought.

Philosophy and Values in Fiqh and *Kalam*

The concept of *Tawhid* is the main base and a strong paradigm foundation for Islamic civilization. The *divine* values in *Tawhid*, in this case Islamic theology, are not only related to the theological side that is specificistic but also the basic philosophical framework (*al-ru'yah al-falsafiyah*) and the fundamental values (*al-qiyam al-asasiyyah*) of Islam to understand universal humanity. The two are like a currency that unites (*wajhani di 'umlain wahidah*). The two are distinguishable but inseparable. If it is separated, as is commonly felt in the Islamic religious understanding that is now running, it will have fatal consequences. Josep van Ess illustrates the difference between ways and methods of thinking *Mutakallimun* and *Philosophy* as follows: "Aristotelian definition, however, presupposes an ontology of matter and form. Definition as used by the *mutakallimun* usually does not intend to lift individual phenomena to a higher, generic category; it simply distinguishes them from other things (*tamyiz*). One was not primarily concerned with the problem how to find out the essence of a thing, but rather how to circumscribe it in the shortest way so that everybody could easily grasp what was meant. This, however, could already be attained by verbal definition; most theologians of the early centuries seem to have contended themselves with this variety" (Ess, 1992).

This is the most formidable challenge in the effort to present *Tawhid* values that can arouse a sense of social, cultural, and religious empathy and sympathy for the diversity of people or groups, including compassion and sympathy for various Islamic religious understandings and non-mainstream Islamic movements or groups (*al-firaq; al-ahzab; al-tawaif* and *madhahib al-fiqhiyyah*), not to mention The ideology of nationality and Indonesianness that does not explicitly mention Islam as the basis of the state.

Procedural reasoning rigidity (*al-'aql al-ijraiy*) in *Fiqh* and *Kalam* in Islam (which is generally limited to the Qur'an, al-Hadith, *Ijma'* and *Qiyas*) and the reason for legal-formal religious fatwas (*al-'Aql al-Ifta'i*) as if closing the meetings of the universal values of humanity listed in the Qur'an, such as the dignity and dignity of humanity (*al-karamah al-insaniyyah; human dignity*), justice (*al-'is; i'diluu even though 'ala anfusikum*), equation (*al-Musawah*) and deliberation and dialogue (*al-Shura*) from the understanding of Muslims towards the teachings and doctrines of *Tawheed* which are generally studied and taught so far in various (Islamic) educational pockets. The knowledge of *Tawheed* is the basis of values in the creativity and potential of Muslims to build a dynamic society instead of static, rigid, and hard as it has been felt so far (al-Mestiry, 2014, p. 18).

So far, the encounter of Islamic thought (*al-Khitab al-Diny*), and Islamic scientific dialogue with other scientific disciplines tend to be conflictual and mutually negotiating. What is happening now is that the relationship between the two is more of a divergence than a convergence. In the educational experience in Indonesia, Islamic religious values, especially those inspired by Wahhabi-Salafi doctrines from the Middle East, tend to confront or even contradict the values of nationality, diversity, and Indonesianness. A small example is the flag salute by the Red and White flag hoisting ceremony participants. Surprisingly, one of the vice chairpersons of the Indonesian Ulema Council once had a polemic with the MUI leadership itself and the public in this small matter. Still, it is a symbol of national unity. The influence of education, training, and ideology from outside Indonesia has entered the heart of MUI (Ichwan, 2016, p. 91).

Lecturers of Compulsory or General Basic Courses (MKWU-MKDU), especially religion, citizenship, and Pancasila courses in universities, often disagree with the dialogue between specific religious values and universal human values. Not to mention

between religious/Islamic values and national-state-Indonesian values. Especially at the level below it. One of the reasons is that the nature of Islamic science is patterned *centripetal*, moving inward toward the axes, the text axis, but forgetting *al-ru'yah al-falsafiyah* and *Al-Qiyam Al-Asasiyyah*. Instead of Centrifugal, they were moving out wide, widening, opening out, through research (*al-muqarabah al-maidaniyyah*) of the axis-axis while still involving philosophy and values (Hanafi, 2000, p. 128). In addition, Islamic religious teaching has not been able to penetrate to the limit of “essence” (*wisdom*) and a clean conscience (*qalbun salim*). Discussions about the relationship between “faith” and “conscience” are rarely discussed in Islamic thought.

As a result, the understanding of religion (Islam) is only preoccupied with the problems of ideology and power (*al-Aql al-Siyasy*). It does not pay attention to the scientific methodological aspects of fatwa issuance that are studied completely and comprehensively before being expelled in public spaces. The Wahhabi movement of the 19th century, its development, and further marriage with the contemporary Salafi movement, especially those with a Jihadi-Salafi style (Meijer, 2009; Muthohirin, Kamaludin and Mukhlis, 2022), become tangible evidence of the historical reality of the present. As long as Muslims’ reactions to the current contemporary situation and conditions are retrospective, nostalgic, and romantic, with longing for the glory and golden past of Islam (*al-'Asr al-Dhahaby*), then the basis of its scientific epistemology will always depend on the idealization of history and stories taken from the manuscripts and the *Yellow Book* that have been available.

Epistemology produces static religious and Islamic thought without a vision of future civilization. Efforts to reform religious reasoning in Islamic culture have recently been narrowed down to the project of Islamization of knowledge (S. M. Bukhari, 2019; Guessoum, 2010, pp. 116–131; Traore, 2019) and skipping the debate on scientific methodology at the epistemological level of Islamic knowledge in the global civilization arena (al-Mestiry, 2014, pp. 19–20).

Vision of Civilization

Civilization is defined as a static noun and a dynamic-dialectical verb. The problem is that the vision of contemporary Islamic civilization has an excessive tendency towards religious reform movements in the field of power politics alone. The vocabulary that emerges is political. It is indeed in line with the slogan of the Islamists, who always prioritize the slogan “*al-Din wa al-Daulah*” (religion and state/politics). It does not consider social and cultural aspects, let alone enter the heart of science. Vocabularies such as *hakimiyyah*, *hijrah*, *jihād*, *qital*, *caliphate*, *takfiriyyah*, *thoghut*, and *salafi-jihadi* is a political vocabulary. This vocabulary is also what caused the emergence of “*Islamophobia*” in Western and Eastern countries. This eventually ushered in the vision of civilization (*Ru'yatu al-Hadharah*). Muslims are led to utopian and nostalgic ideals, such as *al-daulah al-Islamiyyah*, *al-shari'ah al-Islamiyyah*, *al-caliphate al-Islamiyyah*, which was later better known as ISIS (*Islamic State of Iraq and Syria*) (Rahmanto et al., 2020). Some of the MUI’s fatwas, especially Hizbu al-Tahrir (Aitkulova, 2021), have been banned in various countries and Indonesia (Muhtadi, 2009). The year 2017 is also loaded with such a vision of civilization, although it is not as firm, precise, or complex as what happened in the Middle East region.

Fundamental problems related to Education and Social Welfare It is not a priority scale like other nations worldwide do. These two things used to usher in the Islamic

civilization of the Abbasid era (Kamali, 2023) reached its glory before European culture soared in the modern era of the 16th century and above. This means that the vision of Islamic civilization being built today is not supported by a solid scientific epistemology, leading to the inability to understand the essence of the problem and formulate creative solutions.

The above reality shows that contemporary Islamic civilization does not yet have a vision of modern scientific civilization (*al-Ru'yah al-Hadatsiyah*), which is fundamental and comprehensive (Rahman, 1982). Not to mention its support of the spirit of transcendental spirituality-spirituality. The vision of civilization represents how deep and broad it is and the ability to reason and conscience. Humans can navigate the direction of human life in current and future civilizations. Therefore, contemporary Islamic civilization is still impressed by outsiders as a complex, rigid civilization. The task of modern Muslim thinkers must be able to introspect, introspect, and be able to immediately get out of the trap of interpretation and understanding of religious beliefs, antinomies, disharmonious and classified physically and imaginatively between Muslims-infidels, Muslims-non-Muslims and sectarian politics that turn away, stay away and are not based on the principle of universal humanism based on the authentic view of the Qur'an (*al-Hujurat*, 10-13) (al-Mestiry, 2014, pp. 20–21).

Scientific Strategy

Reform (*islah*), renewal (*tajdid*), and development (*tathwir*) Islamic thought must be based on an understanding of the occurrence of change in life and a priority on social-humanitarian ethics (*ethico-legal*). The changes happening today are scripturally and theologically valid and not strange (Compare with al-Qur'an, *al-Ra'd*, verse 11 and *al-Anfal*, verse 54, *al-Ra'd*, 12 and *al-Naml*, 88). Over the past 150 years, there have been tremendous changes in all fields: globalization, migration, scientific and technological revolutions, space exploration, archaeological discoveries, evolution and genetics, literacy, and general education. In addition, it must also be added that there is an increase in human understanding of human dignity and dignity, closer social relations between religious communities around the world, the emergence of the concept of nation-states that result in equality (*equal citizenship*) citizens before the law and gender equality (Mir-Hosseini, 2022; Saeed, 2005, p. 2) which has become inherent to generally accepted conceptions of justice only in the last decades of the 20th century, with the expansion of human rights and feminist discourses. As with other religious traditions, it was not part of the juristic landscape of Islam in the past. But what presents Muslims across the globe today with a distinct problem is that pre-modern interpretations of Shari'a, as embodied in classical jurisprudence (*fiqh*).

Islamic scientific civilization's strategy is inadequate in dealing with these various changes. The unpreparedness directly impacts the cultivation of values, the formation of social, economic, cultural, and political attitudes, social skills, and the maturity of spirituality in the life of a pluralistic wider society. To the point that some people state that we do have religion, but we do not have spirituality. Change is responded to with a defensive, *apologetic*, sentimental, emotional, and reactive attitude. It is expressed through issuing a unilateral fatwa, which tends to be authoritarian (despotic interpretation), without going through persuasive open dialogue, demonstrations, sweeping threats, forcing the dissolution of book discussions, dissolving seminar forums, etc. It is worth noting that polemics with the problem of social and cultural change will only lead to artificial problem-solving rather than substantial.

The strategy that needs to be pursued is to fundamentally re-understand the nature and meaning of the common good based on universal problems and humanity to fight for the realization of a just and civilized society by involving all members of the pluralistic society rather than thinking exclusively about the interests of Muslims. Contemporary Islamic legal thinkers and researchers criticize Muslims' understanding of *Maqasid* as conventionally and traditionally hereditary, as it has been going on so far. An experience that obstructs and inhibits development is the correct understanding of justice, freedom, freedom of religion, human rights, gender justice, pluralism, diversity, diversity, harmonious relations between fellow Muslims, Muslims and non-Muslims, multiculturalism, and so on.

Jasser Auda summarizes some of the criticisms made by contemporary Muslim academics and intellectuals with the following expressions:

“... 2. Traditional *maqasid* are generally concerned with individuals rather than families, societies, and humans.

3. The traditional *maqasid* classification did not include the most universal and fundamental values, such as justice and freedom.

4. Traditional *maqasid* were deduced from studying ‘*fiqh literature*’ rather than the source/scripts.

... In order to remedy the individuality drawback, the notion of *maqasid* has been expanded to include a wider scope of people – the community, nation, or humanity, in general.” (Auda, 2008, pp. 4–5)

According to Jasser Auda's observation, the main weakness of Muslims' understanding of the conventional *theory of maqasid* is the loss of knowledge of the existence of *maqasid* in general, which is more fundamental-substantial (such as justice, freedom, and humanity) and is more reduced only to *maqasid* specifically, which is only aimed at safeguarding and defending the interests of Muslims. Suppose we are drawn to the area of problems faced by Muslims internally. In that case, the “claim of truth” of the understanding of specific groups along with the implications and consequences in the socio-political sphere that is strongly believed by the Sunni group, as well as the Shi'i, in the Middle East and South Asia region makes the fate of Muslims in the region constantly plagued by endless conflicts, one after another. Often bloody, as in Syria and some other areas. Some of the fatwas of the Indonesian Ulema Council are also affected by acute humanitarian problems like this.

In the context of responding to the events of September 11, 2001, in New York, Ibrahim M. Abu-Rabi' gave a critical note on the strategy and production of science in the area of Islamic religious sciences (*'Ulumu al-Din*) in various Islamic educational centers in the world as follows:

“The field's core revolves around *Syari'ah* and *Fiqh* studies that have often emptied of any critical or political content or relevance to the present situation. A clear-cut distinction has been made between the “theological” and the “political” or the “theological” and the “social,” with the former being understood as rites, symbols, and historical texts only. Furthermore, the perspective of the social sciences or critical philosophy is regrettably absent”. *Shari'ah* education in the Arab and Muslim world has been constructed ideologically to maintain, and not question, the status quo. It has become a shell without much substance” (Abu-Rabi., 2002, p. 34) .

Re-examining the scientific strategy and how to produce and reproduce these religious sciences (Islam) is essential and urgent to renew religious thinking methodology. The ultimate goal is to achieve the benefit of human beings (*Masalih al-Naas*) and the

public interest (*Masalih Al-'Am*), building peace, and strengthening national consensus in the life of the nation and state (*al-muwathanah; citizenship*) and also in the arena of international association as a world citizenship and protect themselves from the threat of humanity as a whole, namely ignorance, intolerance, poverty, corruption and so on. Therefore, a collective, collaborative, and comprehensive scientific epistemological basis is needed (*al-ma'rifah al-musyarakah; 'aqliyyah takamuliyah*) between the religious sciences, the natural sciences, the social sciences, and the humaniora sciences to avoid a closed mentality or way of thinking, sectarian, discriminatory and racial attitudes (Abdullah, 2019).

Renewal of *Progressive Islamic Manhaj*

The renewal of the basic epistemology of Islamic legal thought, especially those related to the public life of the wider community, needs to be re-examined. A critical study of the methodological references used and the need for social restructuring and reconstruction is significant. Considering the impacts, implications, and consequences of the issuance of religious opinions, opinions, views, appeals, or fatwas in the public space, it is also essential to re-measure the consequences they cause in the life of the nation and state. It is not the spirit of building civilization based on religious rhetoric that leads to myths and sacral understanding (*taqdis al-afkar al-diniyyah*) or specific interpretations of Islamic religious teachings that are no longer relevant to the development situation of the times. Now, it is starting to rebuild the scientific tradition of jurisprudence and Maqasid theory by introducing contemporary Islamic thought (law) methodology. However, these efforts only meet the minimum demands of a tradition of Muslim thought that is still based on formal legal aspects and procedural reasoning.

The revival of reason procedural and reason legal-formal, the current era only delivers, nurtures, and strengthens Islamic religious thought through shortcuts, cutting compasses, and non-strategic. The terminology of “Islamic caliphate” and “Islam is the only way out” (*al-Islam huwa al-hall*) is an accurate picture as well as proof that humans on earth are only reduced to the world of Muslims or Muslims. Ignoring and considering the role and contribution of other religions, nations, and ethnicities (*world civilizations*), and finally clashed with the reality of contemporary society, which is multicultural and multireligious (*al-Jama'iyah al-Ta'addudiyah*) (al-Mestiry, 2014, pp. 28–29). The procedural and legal-formal way of thinking can only use “instrumental ratios” to strengthen the group’s identity reasoning, which is sectarian and closed off from the outside world in the contemporary era.

The renewal of contemporary Islamic thought, especially the process of producing opinions, views, opinions, appeals, attitudes, and religious fatwas, must involve and seriously consider the views and theories that have developed by utilizing human achievements throughout history (*I'dad al-ilmiyyin al-Sabiq*). In short, the reform of the principles of Islamic thought (law) must be principled in an approach that is multi-methodical, multi-dimensional, multidisciplinary, multi-approaches (*Ushul Murakkabah Muta'addidatu al-Takhassusat*) and prioritizing data and facts observed in depth in the field and the community (*al-Muraqabah al-Maidaniyyah; the principle of evidentialism*) (Abdullah, 2014; al-Mestiry, 2014, p. 28; Directorate of Islamic Religious Higher Education, Directorate General of Islamic Education, 2019; Academic Paper, 2006).

Multi and cross-reference (*muta'addidatu al-maraji'*), which compares and benefits from various scientific insights (social, economic, cultural, scientific, religious, political, philosophy, art, language) is one of the absolute requirements that must be possessed

and fulfilled by reformers of contemporary Islamic thought, especially Islamic legal, educational and da'wah thinking that has been attached to Islamic religious organizations that want to issue "fatwas" to the public space. Jasser Auda firmly argued,

"Without incorporating relevant ideas from other disciplines, research in the fundamental theory of Islamic law will remain within the limits of traditional literature and its manuscripts, and Islamic law will continue to be largely "outdated" in its theoretical basis and practical outcomes, The relevance and need for a multidisciplinary approach to the fundamentals of Islamic law is one of the arguments of this book" (Auda, 2008, p. xxvi).

Without going through such a complex, multi-layered, transdisciplinary methodological process, Islamic legal thinking, education, and da'wah will only repeat the old diagnosis (*al-qira'ah al-mutakarrirah*) of new socio-cultural and scientific cases and problems, which are often inappropriate, inappropriate, ugly, outdated, and outdated (*quaint; obsolete*). Nidhal Guessoum said that this model of Islamic thinking would easily collide and even be crushed or crushed (overrun by modern knowledge) by modern scientific thinking that uses empirical methods (*al-muraqabah al-maidaniyyah*) and a more robust and more accurate way of thinking scientific thinking. I quote Nidhal Guessoum's opinion:

"The next important issue is the need to engage the Islamic scholars in a serious dialogue and convince them that scientists have much to say on topics that have for too long remained the monopoly of the religious scholars and their discourse. While there is no doubt in people's minds that human knowledge evolves and grows, it is often understood that religions, especially Islam, are (is) absolute, immutable, and transcendent principles, which are set in rigid frames of reference. But we know today that religions – and Islam is no exception – cannot afford to adopt a stationary attitude, lest they find themselves clashing with and overrun by modern knowledge, and religious principles appear more and more quaint and obsolete" (Guessoum, 2010, p. 344).

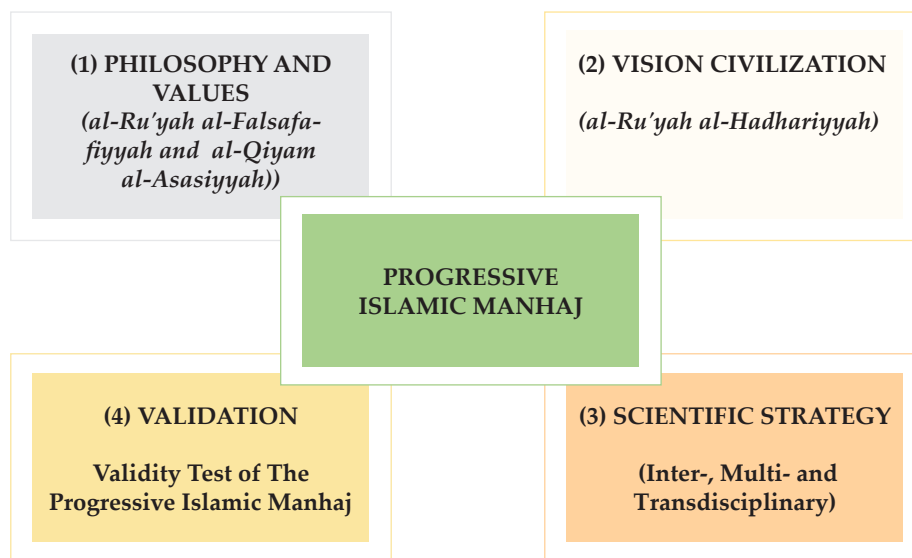
With the renewal of *the manhaj* of Islamic thought, at least the Progressive Islamic thought will produce a fresher formulation of social life, organization, religion, nation, and state. The concept of citizenship (*al-muwathanah*) no longer needs to be confronted and opposed to the idea of *ummah*. The following table made by Jasser Auda shows that there is a *paradigm shift* from the old understanding of the primary purpose of the enforcement of shari'ah (*maqasid al-Syariah*) to a new experience, development, expansion, and renewal of the new meaning of *maqasid al-Shari'ah*.

No.	Classical Maqasid Theory	Contemporary Maqasid Theory
1.	Keeping the Offspring (<i>al-Nasl</i>)	Theory oriented towards family protection: Greater concern for family institutions.
2.	Safeguarding the Intellect (<i>al-Aql</i>)	Multiplying scientific mindset and research; Prioritizing travel in search of knowledge; suppressing the mindset that comes first, crowds, mobs; avoiding attempts to underestimate the brain's work.
3.	Guarding Honor: Guarding the Soul (<i>al-'Irdh</i>)	Safeguarding and protecting human dignity; safeguarding and protecting human rights.
4.	Safeguarding Religion (<i>al-Diin</i>)	Safeguarding, protecting, and respecting freedom of religion and belief.
5.	Safeguarding the treasure (<i>al-Maal</i>)	Prioritizing social care, paying attention to economic development and development, and promoting social welfare eliminate the gap between the poor and the rich.

Check List of Progressive Islamic Manhaj

The four elements described above are interrelated, namely Values, Visions, Strategies, and Renewal and Development of *Manhaj*, which need to be used as an epistemological checklist tool to check the movement's validity for renewal and development of progressive Islamic thought. These four elements are a unit of *Systems*. Each element does not stand alone; it is separate from the other. The four are interrelated: checking each other, correcting, criticizing, strengthening, and improving. When viewed separately, it is not the work of a system. If each works separately, it will not bring scientifically satisfactory results, so it will fail in treating the difficulties or irregularities faced in life's praxis.

Check List of the Validity of the Use of Progressive Islamic Manhaj



It is necessary to make a checklist of Islamic religious opinions, views, opinions, appeals, yells, and religious fatwas that will be issued to the public domain through the four integrated elements. It is also necessary to see the implications and consequences of issuing opinions, opinions, appeals and fatwas if the fatwas, opinions, views, appeals, yell. Religious opinions do not meet one of the elements, two elements, or the four.

However, the scientific strategy must be underlined and observed in more detail and thoroughly. Whether Progressive Islam in issuing religious opinions and views has so far only relied on the monodisciplinary lines of law (*fiqh*) or religious doctrine (*aqidah*) alone, as observed by Ibrahim M. Abu-Rabi' above, without examining and relating it to other scientific disciplines such as social, political, cultural, artistic, economic, scientific and spirituality-spirituality in general. Or has Progressive Islam begun to use an inter-, multi-, and transdisciplinary approach in raising socio-religious issues, especially concerning the life of the wider community, the nation, and the state? If so, what are the indicators? Is it true that the religious mindset of Progressive Islam has fulfilled the four essential elements in its scientific epistemology when it establishes religious opinions or views issued in the public sphere? What are the implications and consequences if Progressive Islam does not meet the criteria for fulfilling these four elements? What needs to be done by the internal mechanisms of organizations, communities, socio-religious and socio-national life observers, and the government if faced with such a situation?

If there are still irregularities in the issuance of opinions, religious views, opinions,

or religious fatwas that are felt by the public, the government, and observers of social life that are not following public morality, where do people complain? Or does the community have no place to complain? If there is no place to complain and seek justice, then it is true that Khaled M. Abou El Fadl allegedly, when researching the CRLO (Council for Scientific Research and Legal Opinions) fatwa-*Lajnah al-Da'imah li al-Buhuts al-Ilmiyyah wa al-Ifta'* in Saudi Arabia, religious fatwas tend to be authoritarian and represent arbitrary religious interpretations (*Despotic Interpretation*) (Fadl, 2001, pp. 92–94).

Only fatwas, opinions, views, and religious opinions that meet the standards of public morality and social propriety and contain intercultural values in the life of the nation and state, are guided by the fundamental values of Pancasila, Diversity, and Unity of the State of the Republic of Indonesia (*darul 'ahdi wa al-syahadah*) that can be released into public spaces. Therefore, before issuing a fatwa to the public space, it is necessary to pass a public test to get input from the broader community so that the product of Islamic religious opinions or views will not cause controversy in the wider community and will not be trapped in the coil of arbitrary religious interpretation and authoritarianism in issuing fatwas, opinions, views, and religious opinions in the public sphere in the Indonesian nation-state.

Ethics Above *Manhaj*

Religious views and opinions of Progressive Islam must always be guided by ethics or morals (*innama bu'ithtu li utammima makarim al-akhlaq*). It is not enough to be guided only by procedural reason (*al-'aql al-ijra'iy*) and fatwa reason (*al-'aql al-iftaiy*). It is not enough to be guided by methods or *manhaj*. According to Khaled Aboe el-Fadl, at least 5 (five) ethical guidelines need to be considered by Progressive Islam: *First*, honesty (*al-sidq; al-tawadhu'*). Be honest and humble. Religious people must be truthful and humble. Honestly, admit that as a human being as intelligent, simple, and capable as he is, he must have shortcomings. The knowledge they have is minimal. The knowledge is inadequate and cannot be used to solve complex human problems, especially if the sectoral ego, scientific ego, and religious sectarian ego dominate it. Human beings must be open to dialogue, deliberation, and collaboration with others to reduce the abyss of their incompetence.

Second, diligent (*al-jiddiyyah*). Solving complex humanitarian problems must be earnest. *Jiddiyyah*. Do not underestimate and take issues lightly. Don't play with fire on the short axis of religious emotions. It is always necessary to consider the implications and consequences of religious views and opinions embraced and brought into the public sphere. *Third*, Comprehensiveness (*al-syumuuliyah*) Seeing socio-religious, socio-political, spiritual, and cultural issues requires a complete perspective. Understanding the verses of the Qur'an and al-Hadith is also full. Not piecemeal, let alone selective, according to the desires of the interests of a person or group. Any problem needs to be seen from multiple perspectives and multi-dimensions. Inter-, multi-, and transdisciplinary approaches of science and expertise are included here.

Fourth, reasonableness (*al-ma'quliyyah*). Religious views and opinions should not be contrary to common sense. Nor is it contrary to a clean conscience. *Lahum qulubun laa yafqahuna biha*. They have a conscience but are not used to thinking and consider good and evil, *mafsadah* or *madharat*. Conscience, the *innermost voice of the heart*, is the source of the origin of Muhammad's prophetic morals, namely *shiddiq*, *amanah*, *fathanah*, and *tabligh*. The voice and call of a clean conscience should not be idle, dull, useless, and unused. A conscience that never lies must be involved in making decisions, opinions, and religious views. A conscience never addressed and used will be dull and hardened

(*tsumma qasat qulubuhum*). A clean conscience should be above procedural reason (*al-'aql al-ijraiyy*) in legal thought in general.

Fifth, self-restraint (*al-hilm au zabt al-nafs*). Ability to be able to restrain yourself. Not everything needs to be spilled. This is the most complex and essential at the same time. Even though they are intelligent, capable, pious, and experienced, they are still required to be able to restrain themselves. Do not impose your will even if your intentions are good. Do not be quick to get angry because his religious opinions and interpretations are not followed or even opposed by others. In social media, people tend to want to go viral about sensitive things without *tabayun*. Unable to hold back. Do not people indeed have a hasty nature (*'ajula*) and are full of grievances (*halu'á*), even rejection of their God represented by their pure conscience (*kanuud*)?

Conclusion

The prototype of the Muslim human being who claims to be Progressive Islam is the Muslim human being who can dialogue and combine compactly in one breath between the demands of science and the demands of ethics and a noble conscience in living a life as a caliph on earth under the umbrella of two eternal heirlooms, the Qur'an and the Sunnah.

Muhammadiyah is Indonesia's most prominent Islamic organization, known for its modernity of religious thought. It is natural to renew Islamic thought, especially when facing the challenges of changing times. With a new method of thinking, Islamic movements and thoughts in Muhammadiyah will produce a contextual formulation following the needs of the times. It is essential to realize these formulations, especially regarding society, religion, state, and organization. An important key to formulating a progressive *manhaj* is to uphold sharia to understand, develop, expand, and renew the contemporary meaning of *maqasid al-sharia*.

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