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MUHAMMADIYAH
Menebar Maslahat, Mencerahkan Umat

THE MANHAJ TARJIH (METHODOLOGY OF IJTIHAD) OF MUHAMMADIYAH

**COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS OPINION AND TAJDID
THE CENTRAL BOARD OF MUHAMMADIYAH MUHAMMADIYAH**

1448 H/2026 M



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**Resolution of the 32nd National Conference of
Muhammadiyah Tarjih**

**COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS OPINION AND TAJDID
THE CENTRAL BOARD OF MUHAMMADIYAH MUHAMMADIYAH**

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THE MANHAJ TARJIH (METHODOLOGY OF IJTIHAD) OF MUHAMMADIYAH¹

Resolution of the 32nd National Conference of Muhammadiyah Tarjih²

A. Introduction

Muhammadiyah is a social reform movement grounded in the values of Islam. Muhammadiyah defines itself as an “Islamic Movement, *Da’wah* of *Amar Ma’ruf Nahi Munkar* (Enjoining Good and Forbidding Evil) and *Tajdid* (Religious Reform), based on the Qur’an and the Sunnah, and founded upon Islam.”³ As such, Muhammadiyah is naturally engaged in the study, interpretation, and application of Islamic teachings. For this purpose, the organization has established a special council tasked with carrying out this responsibility, currently known as the *Majelis Tarjih dan Tajdid* (Council for *Tarjih* and *Tajdid*), which exist at every organizational level, from the central board down to the branch level.

The Council for *Tarjih* and *Tajdid* within Muhammadiyah was first established in 1928 as a result of the resolution adopted at the 16th Muhammadiyah Congress in Pekalongan in 1927. The institutional structure, together with its leadership composition and the rules of the council, was officially ratified at the 17th Muhammadiyah Congress in Yogyakarta in 1928, with K.H. Mas Mansur (d. 1365 AH/1946 CE) serving as its first chairperson. From 1995 to 2005, this council was known as the *Majelis Tarjih dan Pengembangan Pemikiran Islam* (Council for *Tarjih* and the Development of Islamic Thought). Since 2005, it has been called the Council for *Tarjih* and *Tajdid*.

In carrying out the study, interpretation, and application of religious

¹ The initial manuscript was written by Prof. Syamsul Anwar and subsequently supplemented by the Manhaj Tarjih Materials Team.

² This manuscript serves as a *Tanfidz* (official implementation) document and becomes formally effective after receiving a *Tanfidz* Decree from the Central Board of Muhammadiyah.

³ The Statute of Muhammadiyah, 2005, Article 4 paragraphs (1) and (2). See *Berita Resmi Muhammadiyah* [Official News of Muhammadiyah], Special Edition No. 1/2005 (Rajab 1426 H / September 2005), p. 111.

teachings, a particular system is necessarily employed. This system is known as the *Manhaj Tarjih*. The present document represents an evolution of previous resolutions concerning the *Manhaj Tarjih*. Such development is necessary in order to continuously refine the system of legal derivation (*istinbāt al-ḥukm*) so that it may effectively address various contemporary issues.

B. Definition of Manhaj Tarjih

The phrase *manhaj tarjih* literally means “the method of conducting tarjih.” As a technical term, however, *manhaj tarjih* signifies more than merely a method of performing *tarjih*. The term *tarjih* itself originates from the discipline of *uṣūl al-fiqh* (Islamic legal theory). Within *uṣūl al-fiqh*, *tarjih* refers to the process of evaluating *shar’i* evidences that outwardly appear to be in conflict, or to the evaluation of juristic opinions (*aqwāl*) in order to determine which opinion is stronger. Al-Rāzī (d. 606 AH/1209 CE) defines *tarjih* in *uṣūl al-fiqh* as “strengthening one proof over another so that it becomes known which proof is stronger; the stronger proof is then acted upon, while the weaker one is abandoned.”⁴ This definition highlights two principal aspects of *tarjih*:

1. *Tarjih* is an act performed by a mujtahid (an expert in Islamic law), not an inherent characteristic of a proof itself.
2. The object of *tarjih* is evidence that appears to be contradictory, from which the stronger evidence is selected.

However, this definition, along with others of a similar nature, has been considered incomplete because it restricts the object of *tarjih* solely to *shar’i* evidences that outwardly appear contradictory. In reality, *tarjih* is not only

⁴ Ar-Rāzī, *Al-Maḥṣūl*, edited by Ṭāhā Jābir Fayyāḍ al-‘Alwānī (Beirut: Mu’assasat al-Risālah, n.d.), Vol. V, p. 397; Asy-Syaukānī, *Irsyād al-Fuḥūl ilā Taḥqīq al-Ḥaqq min ‘Ilm al-Uṣūl* [Guidance of the Scholars toward Verifying the Truth in Legal Theory], edited by Abū Ḥafṣ Sāmī ibn al-‘Arabī al-‘Asarī (Riyadh: Dār al-Faḍīlah for Publishing and Distribution, 1421/2000), p. 1113; Al-Barzanjī, *At-Ta’āruḍ wa at-Tarjīḥ bayna al-Adillah al-Shar’iyyah* [Conflict and Preference among Sharī’ah Evidences] (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah, 1417/1996), Vol. I, p. 79.

applied to shar'ī evidence that appears contradictory, but also to methods of argumentation (*awjuh*), juristic opinions (*aqwāl*), and differing, even conflicting, narrations attributed to a juristic imam. For example, two narrations are reported from Imam Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal regarding whether a person who begins a journey during the daytime in Ramadan may break his fast on that same day. The first narration states that Imam Aḥmad permitted such a traveler to break his fast, while the second states that he did not permit it and required the traveler to continue fasting until sunset. Ibn Qudāmah (d. 620 AH/1223 CE) gave preference (*tarjih*) to the first narration.⁵

Thus, *tarjih* is not conducted only among evidences but also among narrations transmitted from the mujtahid imams. Furthermore, *tarjih* is applied to diverse and even conflicting juristic opinions concerning the same issue, evaluating them in order to determine which is closer to the Qur'an and the Sunnah and which better serves the public good (*maṣlaḥah*). On this basis, some scholars define *tarjih* as “the act of a mujtahid in preferring one of two paths that possesses an acceptable superiority, thereby rendering it more deserving of practical application than the other.”⁶ The term “path” in this definition encompasses: (1) evidences (*dalā'il*), because evidences serve as the path leading to legal conclusions regarding an issue; (2) methods of interpretation (*wajh*), because modes of understanding likewise function as paths to legal conclusions; (3) narrations, because narrations also constitute a means of arriving at legal conclusions.

In reality, however, the evaluation of juristic opinions and narrations ultimately amounts to evaluating their evidentiary foundations in order to determine which is stronger. Conversely, the process of *tarjih* among evidences ultimately aims to establish the strongest legal ruling derived from those evidences. Thus, *tarjih* among evidences and *tarjih* among juristic opinions or narrations are closely interconnected and converge upon a single

⁵ See Ibn Qudāmah, *Al-Mughnī* [The Sufficient], edited by 'Abdullāh ibn 'Abd al-Muḥsin al-Turkī, Vol. III, pp. 345–347.

⁶ Al-Barzanjī, *At-Ta'arūḍ wa at-Tarjih bayna al-Adillah al-Shar'iyyah* [Conflict and Preference among Sharī'ah Evidences] (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 1417/1996), Vol. I, p. 79.

objective: the discovery of the most firmly established ruling of Islamic law.

This is the meaning of tarjih within its original discipline, namely *uṣūl al-fiqh*. It should also be noted that tarjih constitutes one level of *ijtihad*. Within *uṣūl al-fiqh*, the levels of *ijtihad* include: independent absolute *ijtihad* (*ijtihād muṭlaq mustaqill*), non-independent absolute *ijtihad* (*ijtihād muṭlaq ghayr mustaqill*), restricted *ijtihad* (*ijtihād muqayyad*), *ijtihad tarjih*, and *ijtihad fatwa*.⁷

Within Muhammadiyah, however, the meaning of *tarjih* has undergone significant development. Initially, *tarjih* was understood according to its original meaning in *uṣūl al-fiqh*, namely “comparing—in a deliberative forum—the opinions of scholars (whether from within or outside Muhammadiyah, including the opinions of the leading imams), and subsequently selecting the opinion considered to possess the stronger foundation and reasoning.”⁸ Gradually, this understanding shifted due to the development of *tarjih* activities within Muhammadiyah. *Tarjih* came to signify not merely the process of strengthening one evidence over another or selecting among existing opinions. Rather, its meaning expanded considerably until it became identical (or at least nearly identical) to *ijtihad* itself. This development occurred because Muhammadiyah, through the *Majelis Tarjih dan Tajdid*, has frequently undertaken *ijtihad* concerning new issues that had not been addressed by earlier jurists and for which no answers could be found in classical works of *fiqh*. Within Muhammadiyah, *tarjih* is not limited to responding to issues from the perspective of Islamic legal rulings alone. It also encompasses responses to issues from the broader perspective of Islam, although it must be acknowledged that legal *ijtihad* occupies a far greater proportion of its activities. Consequently, within Muhammadiyah, *tarjih* is understood as any intellectual endeavor undertaken to respond to social and humanitarian issues from the perspective of Islam. In this sense,

⁷ Az-Zuhailī, *Uṣūl al-Fiqh al-Islāmī* (Damaskus: Dār al-Fikr li aṭ-Ṭibā’ah wa an-Nasyr wa at-Tauzī’, 1406/1986), II: 1079-1081.

⁸ Manhaj Gerakan Muhammadiyah: Ideologi, Khittah dan Langkah [*The Methodology of the Muhammadiyah Movement: Ideology, Guiding Principles, and Strategy*] (Yogyakarta: Suara Muhammadiyah and Muhammadiyah Cadre Education Council, 1433/2012), p. 20.

performing *tarjih* is equivalent, or nearly equivalent, to conducting *ijtihad* on a given issue from an Islamic perspective.

It is clear that *tarjih* is not conducted arbitrarily, but rather on the basis of specific principles and foundations. The collection of principles and methods underlying the activity of *tarjih* is called the *Manhaj Tarjih* (Methodology of Tarjih). *Manhaj Tarjih* may be defined as “a system comprising a set of perspectives (or outlooks/spirits), sources, approaches, and specific technical procedures (methods) that serve as the framework for the activity of *tarjih*.” The activity of *tarjih* is an intellectual endeavor aimed at responding to various social, societal, and humanitarian issues from the perspective of Islam. Such responses may be undertaken within an evaluative framework (viewing issues from the perspective of *das sollen*, or what ought to be) through the development of a responsive normative system. They may also be undertaken within an explanatory framework (viewing issues within empirical reality, or from the perspective of *das sein*, or what is), while remaining grounded in the foundational teachings of Islam and developing a critical and analytical framework of Islamic thought.

It must be acknowledged that the products of *Tarjih* have predominantly been directed toward responses within the framework of *das sollen*, providing normative guidance and direction. Only a small number of *Tarjih* products take the form of Islamic thought within a *das sein* framework. Even then, such works exist merely as intellectual discourse rather than as formal resolutions or fatwas. Examples include the books *Religion and the Plurality of Local Cultures (Agama dan Pluralitas Budaya Lokal)* and *The Development of Muhammadiyah Islamic Thought: Purification and Dynamization (Pengembangan Pemikiran Keislaman Muhammadiyah: Purifikasi dan Dinamisasi)*, both produced through collaboration between the *Majelis Tarjih* and other parties. This situation is understandable given that the primary function and responsibility of the *Majelis Tarjih* is to study religious teachings in order to attain their purity and provide guidance and direction for members of Muhammadiyah in particular and for society at large.

C. Perspective (Outlooks/Spirit) of Tarjih

The definition of *Manhaj Tarjih* above illustrates that this methodology consists of the following elements: (1) perspectives (or outlooks/spirit); (2) sources of teachings; (3) approaches; and (4) methods (technical procedures). As an intellectual endeavor aimed at responding to various issues from the perspective of Islam, *Manhaj Tarjih* does not merely rely upon a number of technical procedures per se, but is also grounded in religious perspectives and outlooks that constitute the distinctive character of Muhammadiyah Islamic thought. These tarjih perspectives include:

1. the perspective of understanding religion;
2. the perspective of tajdid;
3. the perspective of tolerance;
4. the perspective of openness;
5. the perspective of non-affiliation with any particular madhhab;
6. the perspective of wasatiyyah (moderation).

These perspectives (outlooks/spirit) are expected to provide a foundation for Muhammadiyah Islamic thought in responding to various new developments in a more creative and innovative manner. Their implementation, however, is largely determined by the attitudes of Muhammadiyah members themselves, since Muhammadiyah is a people's movement rather than a movement of a small elite, although the role of the elite remains highly important.

1. The Perspective of Understanding Religion

There are many approaches to understanding religion. Some scholars understand religion through its social function, as adopted by several anthropologists, particularly those of the functionalist school. Others perceive the essence of religion through the experiences of the individuals who practice it, as is common among certain scholars of *Religionswissenschaft* (religious studies). Muslim scholars, on the other hand, generally emphasize a perspective that views religion as a

normative order. In general, Muslim scholars define religion as "a divine ordinance that guides rational human beings, by their own choice, toward goodness both inwardly and outwardly."⁹ This definition views religion as a normative framework that provides guidance and direction for human beings in attaining a virtuous life.

Not substantially different from this definition is the understanding of religion formulated in a Tarjih resolution, which states:

الدِّينُ هُوَ مَا شَرَعَهُ اللهُ عَلَى لِسَانِ أَنْبِيَائِهِ مِنَ الْأَوْامِرِ وَ النَّوَهِى وَالْإِرْشَادَاتِ لِصَلَاحِ الْعِبَادِ دُنْيَاهُمْ وَأُخْرَاهُمْ.

*Religion is what Allah has prescribed through His Prophets in the form of commands, prohibitions, and guidance for the welfare of humanity in this world and the Hereafter.*¹⁰

In the Corpus of Creed and Life Goals of Muhammadiyah, it is affirmed that the measure of well-being in this world and the Hereafter is the realization of both material and spiritual prosperity, worldly and otherworldly. This explanation constitutes an authentic interpretation of Islam as *rahmatan lil-'ālamīn* (a mercy to all creation), as affirmed in Qur'an 21:107. Mercy (*rahmah*) means creating the conditions for *ḥayāh ṭayyibah* (a good and wholesome life). Based on Qur'an 2:62, the criteria of *ḥayāh ṭayyibah* include three elements: *al-rafāhiyyah* (prosperity), *al-salām* (peace), *al-sa'ādah* (happiness).

The foregoing explanation concerns religion in a general sense, namely the religion revealed to the prophets whom Allah sent to humankind in order to establish the conditions of *ḥayāh ṭayyibah*.

In addition, the Tarjih resolution also defines Islam, the religion brought by the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him):

⁹ Ibn 'Āshūr, *Tafsīr al-Taḥrīr wa al-Tanwīr* [The Exegesis of Liberation and Enlightenment] (Tunis: al-Dār al-Tūnisīyah li al-Nashr, 1984), Vol. III, p. 189.

¹⁰ Council for Tarjih and Tajdid, Central Board of Muhammadiyah, *Himpunan Putusan Tarjih* [Compilation of Tarjih Decisions] (Yogyakarta: Suara Muhammadiyah, 1430/2009), p. 278.

الدِّينُ (أَيُّ الدِّينِ الْإِسْلَامِيِّ) الَّذِي جَاءَ بِهِ مُحَمَّدٌ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ هُوَ مَا أَنْزَلَهُ اللَّهُ فِي الْقُرْآنِ وَمَا جَاءَتْ بِهِ السُّنَّةُ الصَّحِيحَةُ مِنَ الْأَوَامِرِ وَالنَّوَاهِي وَالْإِرْشَادَاتِ لِصَلَاحِ الْعِبَادِ دُنْيَاهُمْ وَأُخْرَاهُمْ.

Religion (namely Islam) brought by the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) is what Allah revealed in the Qur'an and what is contained in the authentic Sunnah in the form of commands, prohibitions, and guidance for the welfare of humanity in this world and the Hereafter.¹¹

One occurrence of the term al-dīn in reference to Islam is found in Qur'an 30:30:

فَأَقِمْ وَجْهَكَ لِلدِّينِ حَنِيفًا فِطْرَةَ اللَّهِ الَّتِي فَطَرَ النَّاسَ عَلَيْهَا لَا تَبْدِيلَ لِخَلْقِ اللَّهِ ذَلِكَ الدِّينُ الْقِيمُ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ

So direct your face steadfastly toward the religion, inclining to truth—the natural disposition of Allah upon which He has created humankind. There is no altering the creation of Allah. That is the upright religion, but most people do not know.

According to Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, the verse above constitutes a command to the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), and at the same time serves as instruction for his community, to devote themselves entirely to the religion of monotheism (Islam) with a ḥanīf disposition, that is, turning away from every form of polytheism and deviation and adhering solely to tawḥīd. The phrase *aqim wajhaka* ("direct your face") is used as a symbolic expression indicating total commitment of the self (including the heart, mind, and actions) to the upright religion.¹²

In the Hadith literature, the meaning of Islam is discussed in the well-known narration describing the dialogue between the Prophet (peace be upon him) and the Angel Jibril:

حَدِيثُ أَبِي عُمَرَ بْنِ الْخَطَّابِ قَالَ: بَيْنَمَا نَحْنُ عِنْدَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ ذَاتَ

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *Mafātīḥ al-Ghayb*, (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā' al-Turāts al-'Arabī, 1420 H), Juz 25, 98.

يَوْمَ إِذْ طَلَعَ عَلَيْنَا رَجُلٌ شَدِيدُ بَيَاضِ الثِّيَابِ، شَدِيدُ سَوَادِ الشَّعْرِ، لَا يَرِي عَلَيْهِ أَتْرَ السَّفَرِ، وَلَا يَعْرِفُهُ مَنَّا أَحَدٌ، حَتَّى جَلَسَ إِلَى النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، فَأَسْنَدَ رُكْبَتَيْهِ إِلَى رُكْبَتَيْهِ، وَوَضَعَ كَفَّيْهِ عَلَى فَخْذَيْهِ، وَقَالَ: يَا مُحَمَّدُ، أَخْبِرْنِي عَنِ الْإِسْلَامِ، فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: الْإِسْلَامُ أَنْ تَشْهَدَ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ، وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ، وَتَقِيمَ الصَّلَاةَ، وَتُؤْتِيَ الزَّكَاةَ، وَتَصُومَ رَمَضَانَ، وَتَحُجَّ الْبَيْتَ إِنْ اسْتَطَعْتَ إِلَيْهِ سَبِيلًا ...

Narrated by Umar ibn al-Khattab: One day, while we were sitting with the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him), there appeared before us a man whose clothes were exceedingly white and whose hair was exceedingly black. No signs of travel were visible upon him, and none of us recognized him. He sat before the Prophet, placing his knees against the Prophet's knees and his hands upon his thighs, and said: "O Muhammad, inform me about Islam." The Messenger of Allah replied: "Islam is that you testify that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah; that you establish prayer, give zakat, fast during Ramadan, and perform pilgrimage to the House if you are able to find a way to it..."¹³

The Hadith above explains that religion consists of three principal elements: essence, form, and manifestation. The essence of religion lies in the experience of faith (*īmān*), namely belief in the six pillars of faith: Allah, His angels, His books, His messengers, the Last Day, and divine decree, whether good or bad. This belief constitutes the spiritual foundation connecting human beings with Allah. The form of religion is embodied in the norms of the *Sharī'ah*, which provide the framework for human conduct, such as the five pillars of Islam: the testimony of faith, prayer, zakat, fasting during Ramadan, and pilgrimage. These norms offer practical guidance in worship and social interaction. Its manifestation is righteous action (*'amal*), reflecting *ihsān*—worshipping Allah as though one sees Him. These three elements complement one another.

Like the definitions proposed by Muslim scholars, the understanding of religion formulated by Tarjih likewise views religion as a normative order

¹³ Muslim bin al-Ḥajjāj, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, editor. Muhammad zihni Afandī, et al. (Turki: Dār aṭ-Ṭabā'ah al-Āmirah, 1334 H), I/28.

that serves both as a frame of reference and as guidance for human beings in their pursuit of happiness in this world and the Hereafter. This definition is entirely valid, yet it describes only one aspect of religion. To complete this conception, religion may also be viewed from the standpoint of its essence as experienced and manifested by its adherents. From this perspective, religion may be defined as "an experience of faith expressed through righteous deeds inspired by Islam, *iḥsān*, and the Shari'ah."¹⁴

By an experience of faith is meant an awareness of the existence, presence, and immediate encounter with Allah, the All-Seeing, All-Hearing, and All-Knowing. Externally, this awareness is manifested in the form of righteous deeds, some of which are strictly regulated (known as *'ibādah*) and others which are not strictly regulated (known as *mu'āmalāt duniyawayyah*). As manifestations of faith, righteous deeds encompass both acts of thought and acts of behavior. In order for these manifestations to be properly institutionalized, a normative framework is required. In Islam, this framework consists of the Shari'ah revealed by Allah through His Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). The norms revealed in the Qur'an and Sunnah constitute the primary norms. However, these norms frequently require expansion through *ijtihad* and interpretation, producing supplementary norms known, in one of its meanings, as *fiqh*. Thus, religion consists of: (1) an essence in the form of the experience of faith; (2) a form in the form of Shari'ah norms serving as a frame of reference; (3) a manifestation in the form of action.

The expression of faith gives rise to culture, and it is not uncommon for existing cultural forms within society to be adopted as vehicles for that expression. In such cases, religious manifestations flow into pre-existing cultural forms, resulting in an ongoing interaction and negotiation between religion and culture. Frequently, the normative framework guiding the manifestation of faith must itself be expanded in order to

¹⁴ Anwar, Syamsul, "The Methodology of Ijtihad/Tajdid in Muhammadiyah," in Mefidwel Jandra and M. Safar Nasir (eds.), *Tajdid Muhammadiyah for the Enlightenment of Civilization* (Yogyakarta: Majelis Tarjih dan Pengembangan Pemikiran Islam in cooperation with UAD Press, 1426/2005), pp. 66–67.

accommodate continually evolving forms of expression. Existing norms may therefore require extension or reinterpretation in order to facilitate cultural expression. It is in this sphere that *tajdid* and *ijtihad* play an essential role.¹⁵

2. The Perspective of *Tajdid*

Tajdid, as a defining characteristic of Muhammadiyah Islamic thought, remains deeply embedded in the collective memory of Indonesian Muslims, who have long identified Muhammadiyah as a modernist movement. Deliar Noer emphasized that Muhammadiyah is "a modernist movement that approaches these sources [namely the Qur'an and the Sunnah] through the exercise of *ijtihad* in order to carry out social and religious reform among Indonesian Muslims."¹⁶ Since 2005, this spirit has been formally enshrined in Muhammadiyah's official documents.

The spirit (or perspective) of *tajdid* is affirmed as a general identity of the Muhammadiyah movement, including its religious thought. This is explicitly stated in Article 4 of the Muhammadiyah Constitution.¹⁷ In relation to the *Manhaj Tarjih*, *tajdid* describes both the orientation of *tarjih* activities and the character of their products.

Tajdid has two meanings:

- a. in matters of creed (*'aqīdah*) and ritual worship (*'ibādah maḥḍah*), *tajdid* means purification, namely restoring creed and worship to their original purity in accordance with the Sunnah of the Prophet (peace be upon him); and
- b. in matters of worldly affairs (*mu'āmalāt duniyawiyyah*), *tajdid* means dynamizing social life through creativity and innovation in accordance with the demands of the age.

¹⁵ Summarized from *ibid.*, p. 68-70.

¹⁶ Noer, Deliar, *The Modernist Movements in Indonesia 1900-1942*, (London-New York: Oxford University Press, 1973), h. 73.

¹⁷ See footnote no. 1.

Purification in matters of worship means deriving its guidelines as thoroughly as possible from the Sunnah of the Prophet (peace be upon him) in order to discover the form that is most consistent with, or closest to, his practice. Seeking the form that most closely conforms to the Sunnah of the Prophet does not negate the existence of diversity (*tanawwu'*) in the modalities (*kaifiyyāt*) of worship itself, provided that such modalities have a basis in the Sunnah. One example is the variation found in the recitation of the *du'ā'* *al-istiftāḥ* (opening supplication) in prayer, which demonstrates that the Prophet himself performed it in different ways. Variations in worship that are not supported by the Sunnah, according to Muhammadiyah Tarjih, cannot be regarded as legitimate devotional practices to be observed.

With regard to creed (*'aqīdah*), purification means conducting critical study in order to free belief from elements of superstition (*khurāfāt*) and unfounded myths (*takhayyul*). The doctrines of faith that may be upheld are those affirmed in the Qur'an and the Sunnah. Beliefs that do not originate from these two foundational sources cannot be accepted. For example, the belief that the number thirteen is unlucky has no basis in either the Qur'an or the Sunnah. In the tradition of electing the Central Executive Board of Muhammadiyah through the *Muktamar* (Muhammadiyah National Congress), thirteen executive members are consistently elected, although additional members may subsequently be appointed if necessary. The election of thirteen executive members constitutes a form of resistance against the superstition concerning the supposed misfortune associated with the number thirteen.

The concept of *tajdid* as purification is rooted in the Qur'an, among others in Surah al-Nisā' (4):59:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِي الْأَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ ۖ فَإِن تَنَازَعْتُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ إِن كُنتُمْ تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَحْسَنُ تَأْوِيلًا

O you who believe! Obey Allah and obey the Messenger and those entrusted with authority among you. Then if you differ concerning anything, refer it

back to Allah and the Messenger if you truly believe in Allah and the Last Day. That is better and more conducive to a proper outcome.

The meaning of the verse above is that obedience to Allah consists of carrying out His commands and refraining from His prohibitions, while obedience to His Messenger consists of complying with what he commanded and prohibited.¹⁸ Obedience to Allah and the Messenger indicates the obligation to follow the Qur'an and the Sunnah (*aṭī'ū Allāha wa-aṭī'ū al-Rasūla yadullu 'alā wujūbi mutāba'ati al-kitābi wa-al-sunnah*)¹⁹. The Majelis Tarjih further specifies that in matters of worship and creed, beliefs and practices must be both consistent with and founded upon evidence from the Qur'an and Hadith.

The spirit of purification derived directly from the Qur'an and the Sunnah is also explicitly reflected in the hadith narrated by Abu Hurairah concerning the appearance of a *mujaddid* (renewer) at the beginning of every century:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَبْعَثُ لِهَذِهِ الْأُمَّةِ عَلَى رَأْسِ كُلِّ مِائَةِ سَنَةٍ مَنْ يُجَدِّدُ لَهَا دِينَهَا

*Indeed, Allah will raise up for this community at the beginning of every hundred years one who will renew for it its religion.*²⁰

This hadith speaks of the continuity of Islamic teachings throughout history. According to Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Hādī al-Sindī, as the Seal of the Prophets, the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) perfected the Islamic message, which will remain relevant until the end of time. However, as time passes and the distance from the prophetic era increases, religious vitality may diminish, deviations may emerge, and understanding of the religion may decline. In this context, Allah sends one or more

¹⁸ Şiddīq Ḥasan Khān, *Faṭḥ al-Bayān fī Maqāşid al-Qur'ān*, (Beirut: al-Maktaba al-'Aşriyyah li-al-Ṭibā'ah wa-al-Naşr, 1412 H/1992 M), Juz 3, 155.

¹⁹ Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *Mafātīḥ al-Ghayb*, (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā' al-Turāts al-'Arabī, 1420 H), Juz 10, 112.

²⁰ Sulaiman bin al-Asy'as, *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, (India: al-Maṭba'ah al-Anşāriyyah, 1323 H), IV/178.

scholars at the beginning of every century whose task is to renew the religion.²¹ Accordingly, this hadith indicates that the process of renewal (*tajdid*) will continue uninterrupted throughout history.

Tajdid in the sphere of worldly affairs (*mu'āmalāt duniyawiyyah*)—as distinct from creed and ritual worship—means dynamizing social life in accordance with the achievements of human civilization while remaining guided by the spirit and ethos of the Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Prophet (peace be upon him). In this sphere, certain norms established in the past may change when there is a legitimate need and sufficient grounds for change in accordance with the requirements governing the modification of Islamic legal rulings. For example, in earlier times the determination of the beginning of a new lunar month, particularly Ramadan, Shawwal, and Dhu al-Hijjah, was based on moon sighting (*ru'yah*) in accordance with the hadiths in which the Prophet instructed Muslims to observe the crescent moon. Today, however, Muhammadiyah employs astronomical calculation (*ḥisāb*) rather than physical moon sighting. Another example concerns women's leadership. In the past, women were considered ineligible for leadership positions on the basis of the hadith narrated by Abu Bakrah. In contemporary times, however, a new legal *ijtihad* has emerged allowing women to serve as leaders, as affirmed in the Tarjih resolution *Adab al-Mar'ah fi al-Islam*, adopted in 1976.²²

²¹ Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Hādī al-Sindī, *Fatḥ al-Wadūd fi Syarḥ Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, (Damanhūr: Jumhūriyyat Miṣr al-'Arabīyyah, 1431 H/2010 M), Juz 4, 231.

²² The Prophet's hadith prohibiting the appointment of women as leaders states: "A people who entrust their affairs to a woman will never prosper" (reported by al-Bukhārī and al-Nasā'ī). See Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, edited by Ṣidqī Jamīl al-'Aṭṭār (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr for Printing, Publishing and Distribution, n.d.), p. 1082, Hadith no. 4425, and p. 1783, Hadith no. 7089; and An-Nasā'ī, *Sunan al-Nasā'ī*, edited by Ṣidqī Jamīl al-'Aṭṭār (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr for Printing, Publishing and Distribution, 1426/2005), p. 1211, Hadith no. 5398. For Muhammadiyah's Tarjih ruling on this issue, see Council for Tarjih and Tajdid, Central Board of Muhammadiyah, *Ādāb al-Mar'ah fī al-Islām [Etiquette of Women in Islam]* (Yogyakarta: Muhammadiyah Publishing, 2012), pp. 74–77; see also Tarjih Council Team, Central Board of Muhammadiyah, *Tanya Jawab Agama [Questions and Answers on Religion]*, 7th ed. (Yogyakarta: Suara Muhammadiyah Publishing, 2012), pp. 240–244.

The spirit of *tajdid* in the sense of dynamization is found in Surah al-Zumar (39):18:

الَّذِينَ يَسْتَمِعُونَ الْقَوْلَ فَيَتَّبِعُونَ أَحْسَنَهُ ۗ أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ هَدَاهُمُ اللَّهُ ۖ وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمْ
أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ

Those who listen to what is said and follow the best of it. They are the ones whom Allah has guided, and they are the people of understanding.

According to Ibn ‘Ashūr, this verse emphasizes the importance not merely of knowing and understanding the legal rulings of the Sharī‘ah, but also of reflecting upon the guidance contained within them and exploring the objectives underlying the laws governing worship, social transactions, and ethical conduct. The purpose is to establish the most sound and complete order of Islamic society.²³ This view implicitly indicates that Islamic law, when understood deeply and contextually, possesses the capacity to remain dynamic in response to changing times.

The spirit of *tajdid* in its dimension of dynamization may also be appreciated through the well-known hadith describing the dialogue between the Prophet (peace be upon him) and Mu‘adh ibn Jabal when the latter was sent to Yemen:

حَدِيثُ مُعَاذٍ: أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ لِمُعَاذِ بْنِ جَبَلٍ حِينَ بَعَثَهُ إِلَى الْيَمَنِ فَذَكَرَ: "كَيْفَ تَقْضِي إِنْ عَرَضَ لَكَ قَضَاءٌ؟" قَالَ: أَقْضِي بِكِتَابِ اللَّهِ. قَالَ: "فَإِنْ لَمْ يَكُنْ فِي كِتَابِ اللَّهِ؟" قَالَ: فَبِسُنَّةِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ. قَالَ: "فَإِنْ لَمْ يَكُنْ فِي سُنَّةِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ؟" قَالَ: أَجْتَهِدُ رَأْيِي وَلَا أَلُو. قَالَ: فَضَرَبَ صَدْرِي، فَقَالَ: "الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي وَفَّقَ رَسُولَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ لِمَا يَرْضَى رَسُولُهُ"

Narrated from Mu‘adh: When the Prophet (peace be upon him) sent Mu‘adh ibn Jabal to Yemen, he asked, “How will you judge if a case is brought before you?” Mu‘adh replied, “I will judge according to the Book of Allah.” The Prophet asked, “And if you do not find it in the Book of Allah?” He replied, “Then according to the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah.” The Prophet

²³ Muḥammad al-Ṭāhir Ibn ‘Āsyūr, *Taḥrīr wa Tanwīr*, (Tunis: Al-Dār al-Tūnisīyah li al-Naṣr, 1984), Juz 23, 367.

asked, “And if you do not find it in the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah?” Mu‘adh replied, “I will exercise my own reasoning (ijtihad) and spare no effort.” Then the Prophet struck my chest and said, “Praise be to Allah who has guided the messenger of the Messenger of Allah to that which pleases His Messenger.”

Mu‘adh’s response demonstrates a structured framework for legal reasoning. He understood that the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of the Messenger constitute the primary sources of guidance. However, when neither source provides an explicit solution, a scholar is required to exert every effort in seeking the truth through ijtihad. The Prophet (peace be upon him) endorsed this method. Islam therefore provides room for human reason to operate within the boundaries established by the Shari‘ah. As observed by Ibn Malak, this hadith also serves as an important foundation for the development of fiqh and the principle of qiyās (legal analogy).²⁴

3. The Perspective of Tolerance

Tolerance means that Tarjih decisions do not regard themselves as the sole truth while considering others false. In “*Penerangan tentang Hal Tardjih*” (Explanation Regarding Tarjih), issued in 1936, it is stated that “from the stage of deliberation until the establishment of a Tarjih decision, there is no spirit of opposition, namely opposing or discrediting everything that is not chosen by Tarjih.”²⁵ This statement illustrates that Muhammadiyah’s Tarjih does not negate other opinions, much less declare them invalid. Muhammadiyah views its decisions as the best conclusions attainable at the time they are made. Therefore, Tarjih remains open to new insights supported by stronger arguments. This openness to new findings is closely related to another principle of Muhammadiyah’s Tarjih perspective: openness.

²⁴ Ibn al-Malak, *Sharḥ Maṣābiḥ al-Sunnah li al-Imām al-Baghawī* [Commentary on al-Baghawī’s *Maṣābiḥ al-Sunnah*] (n.p.: Idārat al-Thaqāfah al-Islāmiyyah, 1433 AH/2012 CE), Vol. IV, p. 276.

²⁵ Boeah Congres 26 (Yogyakarta: Hoefdcomite Congres Moehammadijah, n.d.), p. 32.

The spirit of tolerance as a Tarjih perspective is rooted in values contained in the Qur'an, for example in Surah al-Hujurat (49):13:

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

O humankind, indeed We created you from a male and a female and made you into peoples and tribes so that you may know one another. Indeed, the most honored of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous among you. Indeed, Allah is All-Knowing, All-Aware.

Ibn 'Aṭīyah explains that the essence of this verse is: “Do not boast of yourselves, nor should some of you seek to regard yourselves as more honorable than others” (*li-allā tufākhirū wa yurīdu ba'dukum an yakūna akrama min ba'd*).²⁶ Therefore, when differences of opinion arise, there is no need to assume absolute correctness while condemning opposing views, for only Allah possesses ultimate truth.

In addition to Qur'anic verses, the value of tolerance is also reflected in the Prophet's concept of *al-ḥanīfiyyah al-samḥah*:

عَنْ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ، قَالَ: قِيلَ لِرَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: أَيُّ الْأَدْيَانِ أَحَبُّ إِلَى اللَّهِ؟
قَالَ: الْحَنِيفِيَّةُ السَّمْحَةُ

Ibn 'Abbas narrated that the Messenger of Allah was asked, “Which religion is most beloved to Allah?” The Prophet replied, “The religion characterized by uprightness and tolerance.”²⁷

According to 'Abd al-Razzāq, as quoted by Ibn Ḥajar al-Haythamī, *al-ḥanīfiyyah al-samḥah* refers to *al-Islām al-wāsi*²⁸—a broad and accommodating Islam. One clear manifestation of this breadth is the

²⁶ Ibn 'Aṭīyah, *Al-Muḥarrar al-Wajīz fī Tafsīr al-Kitāb al-'Azīz*, (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 1422 H), Juz 5, 152.

²⁷ Aḥmad bin Ḥanbal, *Musnad Aḥmad*, editor. Syu'aib al-Arna'ūt, et al. (Beirut: Mu'assasah ar-Risālah, 2001 M), IV/17.

²⁸ Ibn Ḥajar al-Haythamī, *Al-Fatḥ al-Mubīn bi-Sharḥ al-Arba'in*, (Jiddah: al-Mamlakah al-'Arabiyyah al-Su'ūdiyyah, 1428 H/2008 M), 97.

diversity of opinions (*ikhtilāf*) produced by scholars in various disciplines such as jurisprudence, theology, and Qur’anic exegesis. This demonstrates Islam’s wide space for dialogue and *ijtihād*, making differences of opinion a natural phenomenon.

The spirit of tolerance in the context of *ijtihād* can also be understood from the Prophet’s hadith concerning the correctness and error of *ijtihād*:

عَنْ عَمْرٍو بْنِ الْعَاصِ، أَنَّهُ سَمِعَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَقُولُ: إِذَا حَكَمَ
الْحَاكِمُ فَاجْتَهَدَ فَأَصَابَ فَلَهُ أَجْرَانِ، وَإِذَا حَكَمَ فَاجْتَهَدَ فَأَخْطَأَ فَلَهُ أَجْرٌ

‘Amr ibn al-Āṣ narrated that he heard the Messenger of Allah say: “If a judge exercises ijtihad and reaches the correct judgment, he will receive two rewards. If he exercises ijtihad and errs, he will receive one reward.”

A mujtahid whose *ijtihād* coincides with Allah’s ruling receives two rewards. According to Maḥzar al-Dīn al-Zaydānī, the first reward is for the sincere effort exerted in seeking the truth and examining the relevant evidences, while the second reward is for successfully reaching the truth and benefiting those who act upon the resulting ruling. Thus, the benefit of the *ijtihād* extends beyond the mujtahid to others as well. If a mujtahid errs, however, he is not deprived of reward. Al-Zaydānī explains that he still receives compensation for his effort in searching for evidence and constructing a reasoned argument based on accountable proofs. He does not receive the additional reward associated with arriving at the correct conclusion, conveying the truth, or having others act upon it. Nevertheless, such an error does not constitute a sin so long as he does not knowingly promote falsehood.²⁹ This teaching highlights the importance of respecting differences of opinion. Every mujtahid strives sincerely to discover the truth, and every sincere effort carries value in the sight of Allah.

²⁹ Maḥzar al-Dīn al-Zaydānī, *al-Mafāṭih fī Syarḥ al-Maṣābiḥ*, (Kuwait: Dār al-Nawādir, 1433 H/2012 M), Juz 4, 311-312.

4. The Perspective of Openness

Openness means that all Tarjih decisions are subject to criticism for the purpose of improvement. Whenever stronger evidence and arguments are found, the Tarjih Council is prepared to reconsider its conclusions and revise arguments deemed less convincing. In “Penerangan tentang Hal Tardjih” it is stated, “We even invite all scholars to examine the correctness of the decisions of the Tarjih Council. If any errors or insufficient evidences are found, we hope they will be presented. We would be grateful if stronger and clearer proofs could be offered, which would then be reconsidered, reexamined, and, once established as correct, adopted. For Tarjih decisions are made only according to the extent of our understanding and capability at the time.”³⁰

This principle of openness is consistent with Qur’anic and Prophetic teachings. Allah says in Surah az-Zumar (39):18:

الَّذِينَ يَسْتَمِعُونَ الْقَوْلَ فَيَتَّبِعُونَ أَحْسَنَهُ أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ هَدَاهُمُ اللَّهُ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمْ أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ

Those who listen to all speech and follow the best of it. They are the ones whom Allah has guided, and they are the people of understanding.

This verse emphasizes the importance of listening to various viewpoints and following the best among them, providing a basis for the Tarjih Council’s openness to criticism and input. Likewise, in a hadith narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim from ‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ, the Prophet said:

إِذَا حَكَمَ الْحَاكِمُ فَاجْتَهَدَ ثُمَّ أَصَابَ فَلَهُ أَجْرَانِ وَإِذَا حَكَمَ فَاجْتَهَدَ ثُمَّ أَخْطَأَ فَلَهُ أَجْرٌ

*If a judge exercises ijtihad and reaches the correct judgment, he receives two rewards; if he exercises ijtihad and errs, he receives one reward.*³¹

This hadith demonstrates that ijtihad inherently contains the possibility of both correctness and error. Therefore, openness to criticism

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ Abu Al-Husain Muslim bin Al-Hajjaj bin Muslim Al-Qusyairi An-Naisaburi, *Al-Jami’ Ash-Shahih Shahih Muslim* (Turki: Dar At-Thaba’ah Al-‘Amirah, 1915), Vol. 5, 131, no. 1716.

and revision, as practiced by the Tarjih Council, is a practical implementation of the principles taught in the Qur'an and Sunnah. The Council recognizes that decisions reached at a particular time may require reevaluation if stronger evidence later emerges, in accordance with Islam's continual pursuit of truth and commitment to following what is best.

5. The Perspective of Non-Affiliation with Any Particular *Madhab* (*Allā-maḏhabiyyah*)

Understanding religion within the Tarjih framework is undertaken directly from its primary sources—the Qur'an and Sunnah—as well as from paratextual sources through the mechanism of *ijtihad*. This means that Muhammadiyah does not bind itself to any specific *madhhab*. However, this does not imply a rejection of the views of classical jurists. Their opinions remain highly valuable and are taken into consideration when determining normative rulings and teachings that best correspond to the spirit of the age. *Madhhab* opinions may serve as references in legal determination so long as they are consistent with the spirit of the Qur'an and Sunnah or other strong supporting grounds.³²

This principle is in accordance with Allah's statement in Surah al-Hashr (59):7:

وَمَا آتَاكُمُ الرَّسُولُ فَخُذُوهُ وَمَا نَهَاكُمْ عَنْهُ فَانْتَهُوا ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ ۗ

Whatever the Messenger gives you, take it; and whatever he forbids you, refrain from it. And fear Allah; indeed, Allah is severe in punishment.

This verse emphasizes the importance of returning directly to the teachings conveyed by the Messenger of Allah. Similarly, Allah says in Surah al-Hujurat (49):1:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَقْدِمُوا بَيْنَ يَدَيْ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ

O believers, do not put yourselves ahead of Allah and His Messenger, and fear Allah. Indeed, Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing.

³² Abdurrahman, Asjmun, *Manhāj Tarjih Muhammadiyah: Methodology and Application* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2002).

This verse warns believers against placing human opinions above the judgments of Allah and His Messenger, providing a foundation for the principle of non-affiliation with any particular madhhab.

The principle of returning to Islam's primary sources is further reinforced by a hadith narrated by Imam Malik:

عَنْ مَالِكٍ أَنَّهُ بَلَغَهُ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: تَرَكْتُ فِيكُمْ أَمْرَيْنِ، لَنْ تَضِلُّوا مَا تَمَسَّكْتُمْ بِهِمَا: كِتَابَ اللَّهِ وَسُنَّةَ نَبِيِّهِ

*I have left among you two matters; you will never go astray so long as you hold firmly to them: the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Prophet.*³³

This hadith clearly establishes that the primary guidance for Muslims is the Qur'an and Sunnah rather than any particular *madhhab* or scholar.

Furthermore, the Prophet emphasized the importance of *ijtihad*, as reflected in the well-known narration of 'Amr ibn al-Āṣ concerning legal reasoning.³⁴ The hadith demonstrates that *ijtihad* is an essential part of understanding and applying Islamic teachings, which aligns with Muhammadiyah's principle of not binding itself to a specific madhhab.

Interestingly, the founders of the major madhhabs themselves encouraged Muslims not to imitate them blindly and instead to return to the primary sources of Islam. Imam Abu Hanifah stated:

إِذَا قُلْتُ قَوْلًا يَخَالِفُ كِتَابَ اللَّهِ وَخَبَرَ الرَّسُولِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَاتْرُكُوا قَوْلِي

*If I express an opinion that contradicts the Book of Allah and the report of the Messenger of Allah, then abandon my opinion.*³⁵

³³ Malik bin Anas, *Al-Muwattha'* (Beirut: Dar Ihya At-Turats Al-'Arabiyy, 1985), Vol. 2, 899, no. 3.

³⁴ The previous hadith:
عَنْ عَمْرِو بْنِ الْعَاصِ: أَنَّهُ سَمِعَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَقُولُ: إِذَا حَكَمَ الْحَاكِمُ فَاجْتَنَبْهُ ثُمَّ أَصَابَ فَلَهُ أَجْرَانِ، وَإِذَا حَكَمَ فَاجْتَنَبْهُ ثُمَّ أَخْطَأَ فَلَهُ أَجْرٌ، صحيح البخاري [6/2676]

³⁵ Ṣāliḥ bin Muḥammad al-Fullānī, *Īqāz Himam Ulī Al-Abṣār Li al-Iqtidā' Bi Sayyid al-Muhājirīn Wa al-Anṣār* (Beirut: Dār al-Ma'rifah, n.d.), 62.

Likewise, Imam Malik said:

أَنَا بَشَرٌ أَخْطِئُ وَأُصِيبُ فَانظُرُوا فِي رَأْيِي فَكُلُّ مَا وَافَقَ الْكِتَابَ وَالسُّنَّةَ فَخُذُوا بِهِ وَمَا لَمْ يُوَافِقِ الْكِتَابَ وَالسُّنَّةَ فَاتْرُكُوهُ

*I am only a human being who may be right or wrong. Examine my opinions; whatever agrees with the Qur'an and Sunnah, accept it, and whatever does not, abandon it.*³⁶

Imam al-Shafi'i similarly stated:

إِذَا وَجَدْتُمْ فِي كِتَابِي خِلَافَ سُنَّةِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَقُولُوا بِسُنَّةِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَدَعُوا قَوْلِي

*If you find in my writings something that contradicts the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah, then follow the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah and leave my opinion.*³⁷

Likewise, Imam Ahmad firmly declared:

لَا تُقَلِّدُنِي، وَلَا تُقَلِّدْ مَالِكًا، وَلَا الشَّافِعِي، وَلَا الْأَوْزَاعِي، وَلَا الثَّوْرِي، وَخُذْ مِنْ حَيْثُ أَخَذُوا

*Do not imitate me, nor Malik, nor al-Shafi'i, nor al-Awza'i, nor al-Thawri. Take from the same sources from which they took.*³⁸

Thus, Muhammadiyah's principle of non-affiliation with a particular madhhab does not mean disregarding the intellectual heritage of earlier scholars. Rather, it represents an effort to return to the original sources of Islam while still considering juristic opinions as valuable references. This approach is consistent with the spirit of ijtihad exemplified by the Prophet, his Companions, and even the great imams of the madhhabs themselves.

This principle enables Muhammadiyah to adopt opinions that are most consistent with the Qur'an, Sunnah, and contemporary

³⁶ Alī bin Aḥmad bin Ḥazm, *Al-Iḥkām Fi Uṣūl al-Aḥkām*, Vol. VI (Beirut: Dār al-Āfāq al-Jadīdah, n.d.), 56.

³⁷ 'Abdullah bin Yusuf al-Juwaini, *Al-Furūq* (Beirut: Dār al-Jīl, 2003), Vol. 1, 30.

³⁸ Alī bin 'Umar al-Baghdādī, *'Uyūn al-Adillah Fi Masā'il al-Khilāf Baina Fuqahā' al-Amṣār* (Kuwait: Dār al-Asfār, 2022), Vol. 1, 193.

circumstances without being restricted to any single school of thought. Consequently, Muhammadiyah is able to develop a religious understanding that is dynamic and responsive to changing times while remaining firmly rooted in the foundational teachings of Islam as contained in the Qur'an and Sunnah.

6. The Perspective of *Wasatiyyah* (Moderation)

Wasatiyyah as a fundamental religious attitude has a strong foundation in the Qur'an, particularly in Surah al-Baqarah (2):143. In this verse appears the phrase “*ummatan wasaṭan*”, meaning a middle or balanced community.

وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ أُمَّةً وَسَطًا لِتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى النَّاسِ وَيَكُونَ الرَّسُولُ عَلَيْكُمْ شَهِيدًا
وَمَا جَعَلْنَا الْقِبْلَةَ الَّتِي كُنْتَ عَلَيْهَا إِلَّا لِنَعْلَمَ مَنْ يَتَّبِعِ الرَّسُولَ مِمَّنْ يَنْقَلِبُ عَلَى عَقْبَيْهِ
وَإِنْ كَانَتْ لَكَبِيرَةً إِلَّا عَلَى الَّذِينَ هَدَى اللَّهُ وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُضِيعَ إِيمَانَكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِالنَّاسِ
لَرءُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ

Thus We have made you a middle nation so that you may be witnesses over humanity and that the Messenger may be a witness over you. We did not appoint the qiblah to which you formerly turned except that We might distinguish those who follow the Messenger from those who turn back on their heels. Indeed, it was a difficult test except for those whom Allah guided. Allah would never let your faith go to waste. Indeed, Allah is Most Compassionate and Most Merciful toward humanity.

According to Abū Ishāq Aḥmad ibn Ibrāhīm al-Tha‘labī, the best position is fundamentally the middle one (*aṣluḥū huwa anna khayr al-ashyā’ awsaṭuhā*).³⁹ Al-Sa’dī further explains that “*ummatan wasaṭan*” refers to a community positioned between the two religious extremes represented by Judaism and Christianity.⁴⁰ Islamic teachings consistently seek to establish balance in all aspects of life.

³⁹ Al-Tha‘labī, Abū Ishāq Aḥmad ibn Ibrāhīm, *Al-Kashf wa al-Bayān ‘an Tafsīr al-Qur’ān* [Unveiling and Clarification in Qur’anic Exegesis], Vol. IV (Jeddah: Dār al-Tafsīr, 1436/2015), p. 176.

⁴⁰ Al-Sa’dī, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān bin Nāṣir, *Tafsīr al-Karīm al-Raḥmān* [The Exegesis of the Most Generous, the Most Merciful], 2000, p. 70. Also see: Al-‘Amr, Nāṣir bin Sulaimān, *Al-*

Allah opposes excessiveness in every sphere of life. For example, He forbids religious extremism in Surah al-Nisā' (4):171:

يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لَا تَغْلُوا فِي دِينِكُمْ وَلَا تَقُولُوا عَلَى اللَّهِ إِلَّا الْحَقَّ ۗ إِنَّمَا الْمَسِيحُ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَكَلِمَتُهُ أَلْقَاهَا إِلَىٰ مَرْيَمَ وَرُوحٌ مِنْهُ ۗ فَآمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ ۗ وَلَا تَقُولُوا ثَلَاثَةً ۗ انتَهُوا خَيْرًا لَّكُمْ ۗ إِنَّمَا اللَّهُ إِلَهُ وَاحِدٌ ۗ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ أَنْ يَكُونَ لَهُ وَلَدٌ ۗ لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ ۗ وَكَفَىٰ بِاللَّهِ وَكِيلًا

O People of the Book, do not go to extremes in your religion, and do not say about Allah except the truth. The Messiah, Isa son of Maryam, was only a messenger of Allah and His word which He conveyed to Maryam, and a spirit from Him. Therefore, believe in Allah and His messengers, and do not say "Three." Desist—it is better for you. Indeed, Allah is only One God. Exalted is He above having a son. To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth, and Allah is sufficient as a Guardian.

Allah also encourages believers to avoid excess in social and economic dealings (Qur'an 7:31), and He does not love those who transgress limits even in warfare (Qur'an 2:190). These foundational values have guided Muslim scholars throughout history, causing extremist tendencies to remain marginal and generally rejected within the broader Muslim community.

The Prophet Muhammad himself exemplified moderation. A narration from Anas ibn Mālik tells of three Companions who believed they could attain greater piety by intensifying their worship. One declared that he would fast continuously without breaking his fast, another that he would pray all night without sleeping, and the third that he would abstain from marriage so as not to be distracted from worship. The Prophet responded, "I am the most God-conscious among you, yet I fast and I break my fast; I pray at night and I sleep; and I marry women."⁴¹

Wasāṭiyyah fī Ḍaw' al-Qur'ān al-Karīm [Moderation in the Light of the Noble Qur'an], n.d., p. 16.

﴿ أَنَسُ بْنُ مَالِكٍ ۖ أَنَّهُ سَمِعَ ۖ حُمَيْدُ بْنُ أَبِي حُمَيْدٍ الطَّوِيلُ أَخْبَرَنَا ۖ مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ جَعْفَرٍ أَخْبَرَنَا ۖ سَعِيدُ بْنُ أَبِي مَرْيَمَ حَدَّثَنَا ۖ يَقُولُ: «جَاءَ ثَلَاثَةٌ رَهْطٍ إِلَى بُيُوتِ أَزْوَاجِ النَّبِيِّ ﷺ، يَسْأَلُونَ عَنِ عِبَادَةِ النَّبِيِّ ﷺ، فَلَمَّا أُخْبِرُوا كَانَتْهُمْ تَقَالُوبًا، فَقَالُوا: وَأَيْنَ نَحْنُ مِنْ

The *wasatiyyah* demonstrated by the Prophet in this narration is reinforced by another hadith that identifies one of his prophetic missions as the propagation of *al-ḥanīfiyyah al-samḥah*:

فَقَالَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِنِّي لَمْ أُبْعَثْ بِالْيَهُودِيَّةِ وَلَا بِالنَّصْرَانِيَّةِ وَلَكِنِّي بُعِثْتُ بِالْحَنِيفِيَّةِ السَّمْحَةِ وَالَّذِي نَفْسُ مُحَمَّدٍ بِيَدِهِ لَعْدُوهُ أَوْ رُوْحَهُ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا وَمَا فِيهَا وَلِمَقَامٍ أَحَدِكُمْ فِي الصَّفِّ خَيْرٌ مِنْ صَلَاتِهِ سِتِينَ سَنَةً.

[... then the Prophet (peace be upon him) said, “Indeed, I was not sent to preach Judaism nor Christianity, but I was sent to preach the religion of *ḥanīfiyyah* and *samḥah*. By Allah, in whose hand is the soul of Muhammad, going forth in the path of Allah is better than the world and all that it contains, and standing firm in the battle line is better than sixty years of prayer.”⁴²

In this hadith, the Prophet refers to the religion he preached with the term *al-ḥanīfiyyah as-samḥah*. The root of *ḥanīfiyyah* is *ḥanafa*, which according to al-Aṣḥāhānī means *taḥarra al-istiqāmah* (carefully pursuing steadfastness). According to him, steadfastness (*istiqāmah*) means *luzūm al-manhaj al-mustaqīm*, remaining firmly upon the straight path.⁴³ The “straight path” mentioned in Surah al-Fātiḥah is the path that leads to blessings, *al-ḥālah al-ḥasanah*, a good condition in all aspects of life.⁴⁴ Ibn

النَّبِيِّ ﷺ فَدَغُفِرَ لَهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِهِ وَمَا تَأَخَّرَ؟! قَالَ أَحَدُهُمْ: أَمَا أَنَا فَإِنِّي أَصْلِي اللَّيْلَ أَبَدًا، وَقَالَ آخَرُ: أَنَا أَصُومُ الدَّهْرَ وَلَا أَفْطِرُ، وَقَالَ آخَرُ: أَنَا أَعْتَزِلُ النِّسَاءَ فَلَا أَتَزَوَّجُ أَبَدًا، فَجَاءَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ فَقَالَ: أَنْتُمْ الَّذِينَ قُلْتُمْ كَذَا وَكَذَا، أَمَا وَاللَّهِ إِنِّي لِأَحْشَاكُمُ بِهِ وَأَتَفَاكُمُ لَهُ، لَكِنِّي «أَصُومُ وَأَفْطِرُ، وَأَصْلِي وَأَرْفُدُ، وَأَتَزَوَّجُ النِّسَاءَ، فَمَنْ رَغِبَ عَن سُنَّتِي فَلَيْسَ مِنِّي»

Abu Abdullah Muhammad bin Ismail bin Ibrahim bin al-Mughirah ibn Bardizbah al-Bukhari al-5063. .no ,2. p ,(2001 ,Dar Tauq al-Najah :Beirut) ,7 .Vol ,Shahih Bukhari ,Ju'fi

⁴² Imam Ahmad bin Hambal, Musnad Al-Imam Ahmad bin Hambal, Vol. 36, (t.k: Muassasah Ar-Risalah, 2001), p. 624, no. 22291

⁴³ Al-Aṣḥāhānī, *Mufradāt fī Alfāz al-Qurʾān* [Lexicon of Qurʾanic Vocabulary] (Damascus: Dār al-Qalam, 2009), p. 433.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 520

Manzūr further explains that *ḥanīfiyyah samḥah* refers to a religion that does not contain matters that make life narrow and burdensome.⁴⁵

This principle of ease in religion is emphasized in several hadiths of Prophet Muhammad:

إِنَّ الدِّينَ يَسْرٌ وَلَنْ يُشَادَّ الدِّينَ أَحَدٌ إِلَّا غَلَبَهُ فَسَدِّدُوا وَقَارِبُوا وَأَبْشِرُوا وَاسْتَعِينُوا
بِالْعَدْوَةِ وَالرُّوحَةِ وَشَيْءٍ مِنَ الدَّلْجَةِ

*Indeed, religion is easy, and no one makes religion difficult except that it overcomes him (making it increasingly difficult and burdensome). Therefore, remain upright, draw near to what is correct, receive glad tidings, and seek help through al-Ghadwah (setting out early in the morning), ar-Ruhah (setting out after noon), and something of ad-Duljah (setting out at night) (Narrated by al-Bukhari from Abu Hurairah).*⁴⁶

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِيَّاكُمْ وَالْغُلُوَّ فِي الدِّينِ، فَإِنَّهُ أَهْلَكَ مَنْ كَانَ قَبْلَكُمْ الْغُلُوَّ فِي الدِّينِ

*O people, beware of excessiveness in religion, for indeed what destroyed those before you was excessiveness in religion (Narrated by Ibn Majah from Ibn ‘Abbas).*⁴⁷

هَلَكَ الْمُتَنَطِّعُونَ

*“Those who are excessive in religion will perish.” (Narrated by Muslim from Abdullah ibn Mas‘ud).*⁴⁸

يَسِّرُوا وَلَا تُعَسِّرُوا، وَبَشِّرُوا وَلَا تُنْفِرُوا

Make things easy and do not make them difficult. Give glad tidings and do not drive people away (Narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim from Anas ibn

⁴⁵ Ibn Manzūr, *Lisān al-‘Arab* [The Tongue of the Arabs], 1997, Vol. II, p. 189.

⁴⁶ Abu Abdullah Muhammad bin Ismail bin Ibrahim bin al-Mughirah ibn Bardizbah al-Bukhari al-Ju‘fi, *Shahih Bukhari*, Vol. 1, (Beirut: Dar Tauq al-Najah, 2001), p. 215, no. 39.

⁴⁷ Ibn Majah Abu Abdullah Muhammad bin Yazid al-Qazwaini, *Sunan Ibnu Majah*, Vol. 2, (t.k: Dar Ihya Al-Kutub Al-‘Arabiyy, 1968), p. 1008, no. 3029.

⁴⁸ Abu Al-Husain Muslim bin Al-Hajjaj bin Muslim Al-Qusyairi An-Naisaburi, *Al-Jami’ Ash-Shahih Shahih Muslim* (Turki: Dar At-Thaba’ah Al-‘Amirah, 1915), Vol. 4, 2055, no. 2670.

Malik).⁴⁹

يَأْتِيهَا النَّاسُ خُدُّوا مِنَ الْأَعْمَالِ مَا تُطِيقُونَ ، فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَمَلُّ حَتَّى تَمَلُّوا ، وَإِنَّ أَحَبَّ الْأَعْمَالِ إِلَى اللَّهِ مَا دَامَ وَإِنْ قَلَّ

O people, perform deeds according to your ability. Indeed, Allah does not tire until you tire. Truly, the most beloved deeds to Allah are those that are done consistently, even if they are few (Narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim from Aisha).⁵⁰

The Treatise of Progressive Islam as a decision of the 48th Muhammadiyah Congress in Surakarta in 2022 further elaborates the concept of *Wasatiyyah*. The document states that *Wasatiyyah* is manifested in social attitudes: (1) being firm in principles, broad in outlook, and flexible in attitude; (2) respecting differences of views or opinions; (3) rejecting the practice of declaring fellow Muslims unbelievers (*takfir*); (4) advancing and bringing happiness to society; (5) understanding realities and priorities; (6) avoiding excessive fanaticism toward particular groups or religious understandings; and (7) facilitating the practice of religious teachings.⁵¹

Meanwhile, the principles of *Wasatiyyah* in the process of *ijtihad* and the derivation of Islamic law (*istinbāṭ al-aḥkām*) include: (1) making the Qur'an and Sunnah the primary sources of Islamic law through a holistic and comprehensive understanding as an inseparable unity; (2) balancing textual and contextual understanding in engaging with scriptural texts proportionally; (3) considering the higher objectives of Islamic law (*maqāṣid al-syarī'ah*) in the process of *ijtihad*, particularly concerning contemporary issues and problems whose legal status is not explicitly

⁴⁹ Abu Abdullah Muhammad bin Ismail bin Ibrahim bin al-Mughirah ibn Bardizbah al-Bukhari al-Ju'fi, *Shahih Bukhari*, Vol. 8, (Beirut: Dar Tauq al-Najah, 2001), p. 30, no. 6123.

⁵⁰ Abu Abdullah Muhammad bin Ismail bin Ibrahim bin al-Mughirah ibn Bardizbah al-Bukhari al-Ju'fi, *Shahih Bukhari*, Vol. 7, (Beirut: Dar Tauq al-Najah, 2001), p. 155, no. 5861.

⁵¹ Central Board of Muhammadiyah, *Risalah Islam Berkemajuan: Decision of the 48th Muhammadiyah Congress, 2022* [The Treatise of Progressive Islam] (Yogyakarta: Gramasurya, 2023), p. 11.

explained in the texts; (4) understanding matters of worship, whether irrational (*maḥḍah/ta'abbudī*) or rational (*ghair maḥḍah/ta'aqqulī*), in a proportional manner; and (5) understanding and distinguishing between *qaṭ'ī* (definitive) and *ẓannī* (speculative) matters proportionally in engaging with scriptural texts and in the process of *ijtihad* and legal derivation.⁵²

D. Sources of Religious Teachings

1. Primary Sources

The *Manhaj Tarjih* (methodology) also encompasses the sources from which religious rulings and doctrines are derived. The primary sources of Islamic teachings are the Qur'an and the Sunnah, as affirmed in a number of official Muhammadiyah documents:

- a. Article 4 paragraph (1) of the Muhammadiyah Constitution, cited above, states that, “Muhammadiyah is an Islamic Movement, a movement of *Da'wah, Amar Ma'ruf Nahi Munkar*, and *Tajdid*, based on the Qur'an and the Sunnah.”⁵³
- b. The Corpus of Creed and Life Goals of Muhammadiyah, point 3, states: “Muhammadiyah practices Islam based on: a) the Qur'an, the Book of Allah revealed to Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him); b) the Sunnah of the Messenger, namely the explanation and implementation of the teachings of the Qur'an provided by Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), employing reason in accordance with the spirit of Islamic teachings.”
- c. The Tarjih Decision of Jakarta in 2000, Chapter II, point 1, further affirms, “The sources of Islamic teachings are the Qur'an and the

⁵² Al-Shāmī, ‘Abd al-Raḥīb Ṣāliḥ, *Al-Manāhij al-Mu'āṣirah li al-Fiqh al-Islāmī* [Contemporary Methodologies of Islamic Jurisprudence] (Sudan: *Majallat Kulliyah al-Dirāsāt al-Islāmiyyah*, Nile University, 2018), pp. 64–77.

⁵³ Berita Resmi Muhammadiyah [Official Muhammadiyah Gazette], Special Edition, No. 1/2005 (Rajab 1426 H / September 2005), p. 111.

accepted Sunnah (*as-Sunnah al-Maqbūlah*).⁵⁴ This Tarjih Decision reiterates what had already been emphasized in earlier decisions:

الأَصْلُ فِي التَّشْرِيعِ الْإِسْلَامِيِّ عَلَى الْإِطْلَاقِ هُوَ الْقُرْآنُ الْكَرِيمُ وَالْحَدِيثُ الشَّرِيفُ.

*The absolute foundation in establishing Islamic law is the Noble Qur'an and the Noble Hadith.*⁵⁵

The Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Messenger constitute the principal foundations of Islamic law and teachings that contain the truth. Therefore, Qur'anic exegesis (*tafsīr*) and Hadith commentary (*sharḥ al-ḥadīth*) must be able to uncover the truths contained in these two sources and explain their meanings.

Regarding Hadith (Sunnah), the type that can serve as religious proof (*ḥujjah*) is the accepted Sunnah (*sunnah maqbūlah*), as emphasized in the Jakarta Tarjih Decision of 2000 cited above. The term *sunnah maqbūlah* was introduced as a refinement of the earlier formulation in the *Himpunan Putusan Tarjih* (HPT), which defined Islamic teachings using the expression *sunnah ṣaḥīḥah* (“sound Sunnah”). The term *sunnah ṣaḥīḥah* often led to misunderstandings by being equated exclusively with *ṣaḥīḥ* Hadith. Consequently, *ḥasan* Hadith was sometimes not recognized as valid religious evidence. However, it is the consensus (*ijmāʿ*) of the Muslim community that *ḥasan* Hadith is also an acceptable religious proof. Therefore, to avoid such misunderstandings, the formulation was revised to reflect its intended meaning more accurately. What was meant by *sunnah ṣaḥīḥah* was actually a Sunnah that may serve as religious proof, namely both *ṣaḥīḥ* and *ḥasan* Hadith. Hence, the new formulation uses the term *sunnah maqbūlah*, meaning a Sunnah that is accepted as religious evidence, whether in the form of *ṣaḥīḥ* or *ḥasan* Hadith.

⁵⁴ Decision of the 25th National Deliberation of Muhammadiyah Tarjih in Jakarta, 2000 (Yogyakarta: Secretariat of the Council for Tarjih and Tajdid, 2012), p. 6 (Chapter II, point 1).

⁵⁵ Council for Tarjih and Tajdid, Central Board of Muhammadiyah, *Himpunan Putusan Tarjih* [Compilation of Tarjih Decisions] (Yogyakarta: Suara Muhammadiyah, 1430/2009), p. 278.

Weak Hadith (*ḍaʿīf*) may also be used as religious evidence, provided that its weakness is not severe. A weak Hadith may serve as a religious proof if it: (1) possesses multiple chains of transmission that strengthen one another; (2) shows indications of originating from the Prophet (peace be upon him); (3) does not contradict the Qur'an; (4) does not contradict another Hadith that has been established as authentic; and (5) is not considered weak due to a transmitter being accused of lying or fabricating Hadith.

The foregoing discussion concerns the primary sources of Islamic teachings in general. In relation to the normative system of Islam, there are also supporting sources accompanying these primary sources, known as paratextual sources.

2. Paratextual Sources

Sources other than the Qur'an and the Sunnah may be referred to as paratextual sources. These sources are also recognized and accepted within Tarjih practice, including *ijmāʿ* (consensus), *qiyās* (analogical reasoning), *maṣlaḥah mursalah* (unrestricted public interest), *istiḥsān* (juristic preference), *istiṣḥāb* (presumption of continuity), preventive measures (*sadd al-dharīʿah*), the opinions of the Companions (*qawl ṣaḥābī*), the laws of previous religious communities (*sharʿu man qablana*), and custom (*ʿurf*).

Some circles within Muhammadiyah regard these elements as methods rather than sources. Such a view arises because these elements are often perceived primarily as processes. However, they need not necessarily be understood in that way. *Ijmāʿ*, for example, if viewed as a process, may be considered impossible because it would require a period extending beyond a human lifespan and because it is extremely difficult to determine who qualifies to participate in such a consensus. On the other hand, if *ijmāʿ* is viewed as a product, it cannot function as a method; rather, it becomes a source. In a Tarjih ruling concerning waqf, *ijmāʿ* was employed as one of the foundations of the decision alongside textual evidence, where it was stated, “because of the consensus of jurists that the condition

(clause) stipulated by a donor (*wāqif*) has the same standing as a legal text.”⁵⁶

a. Ijmā‘ (Consensus)

Al-Ghazālī (d. 505/1111) defined *ijmā‘* as “the agreement of the community of Muhammad (peace be upon him) in particular concerning a religious matter.”⁵⁷ This conception of *ijmā‘* is relatively populist because it involves the entire Muslim community. Another view conceptualizes *ijmā‘* in a more elitist manner, defining it as the agreement of qualified *mujtahids* after the time of the Prophet concerning a matter for which no explicit ruling exists in the Qur'an or the Sunnah.⁵⁸ Regardless of the conception adopted, human beings as social creatures inevitably live through various forms of agreement in many aspects of life, including religious matters. Therefore, Muhammadiyah cannot disregard it. In Tarjih decisions, *ijmā‘* has indeed been employed as a supporting argument.

b. Qiyas (Analogical Reasoning)

Al-Āmidī (1156–1233) defined *qiyās* as “the equivalence between a subsidiary case and an original case with respect to the effective cause (*‘illah*) derived from the ruling of the original case.”⁵⁹ Thus, in relation to *qiyās*, the source of legal authority is the similarity between a new case and one whose ruling has already been established in the textual sources. Under this understanding, it is not inappropriate to regard *qiyās* as a source. It need not be viewed solely as a process of analogical reasoning; it may also be understood as *al-istiwā‘* (equivalence or similarity). The Tarjih Decision concerning the “Five

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 272.

⁵⁷ Al-Ghazālī, *Al-Mustaṣfā min ‘Ilm al-Uṣūl* [The Essentials of Legal Theory], edited by Muḥammad ibn Sulaimān al-Ashqar (Beirut: Mu’assasat al-Risālah, 1417/1997), Vol. I, p. 324.

⁵⁸ At-Taftazānī, *Sharḥ al-Talwīḥ ‘alā al-Tauḍīḥ li Matn al-Tanqīḥ fī Uṣūl al-Fiqh* [Commentary on al-Talwīḥ upon al-Tauḍīḥ on the Text of al-Tanqīḥ in Legal Theory], edited by Zakariyā ‘Umairāt (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah, 1416/1996), Vol. II, p. 89.

⁵⁹ Al-Āmidī, *Al-Iḥkām fī Uṣūl al-Aḥkām* [The Definitive Principles of Legal Theory] (Riyadh: Dār aṣ-Ṣumai‘ī for Publishing and Distribution, 1424/2003), Vol. III, p. 237.

Issues” contains an explicit affirmation of the use of *qiyās*:

وَمَتَى اسْتَدْعَتِ الظُّرُوفُ عِنْدَ مُوَاجَهَةِ أُمُورٍ وَقَعَتْ وَدَعَتِ الْحَاجَةَ إِلَى الْعَمَلِ بِهَا
وَلَيْسَتْ هِيَ مِنْ أُمُورِ الْعِبَادَاتِ الْمَحْضَةِ وَلَمْ يَرِدْ فِي حُكْمِهَا نَصٌّ صَرِيحٌ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ
أَوْ السُّنَّةِ الصَّحِيحَةِ فَالْوُصُولُ إِلَى مَعْرِفَةِ حُكْمِهَا عَنْ طَرِيقِ الْأَجْتِهَادِ وَالْإِسْتِنْبَاطِ
مِنَ النُّصُوصِ الْوَارِدَةِ عَلَى أُسَاسِ تَسَاوِي الْعِلَلِ كَمَا جَرَى عَلَيْهِ الْعَمَلُ عِنْدَ عُلَمَاءِ
السَّلَفِ وَالْخَلْفِ .

Whenever circumstances require addressing issues that have arisen and need to be acted upon, provided that they do not concern pure acts of worship and no explicit text concerning their ruling is found in the Qur'an or authentic Sunnah, the way to determine their ruling is through ijihad and legal inference from the available texts based on the equivalence of the effective cause ('illah), as practiced by the scholars of both the early and later generations.⁶⁰

c. *Maṣlaḥah mursalah* (Unrestricted Public Interest)

‘Abd al-Wahhāb Khallāf (d. 1375/1956) defined *maṣlaḥah mursalah* as “absolute (neutral) public interest, meaning a public benefit that is neither restricted nor specifically regulated by any particular legal evidence in the Sharia.” According to scholars of legal theory (*uṣūl al-fiqh*), *maṣlaḥah mursalah* refers to a public interest that the Qur'an and Sunnah neither explicitly command nor prohibit. There is no textual indication showing whether such a benefit should be considered or neglected.⁶¹

It has also been defined as “qualities that are consistent with the actions and objectives (*maqāṣid*) of the Lawgiver, yet are unsupported by any specific textual evidence affirming or negating them. Nevertheless, linking legal rulings to them brings benefits and prevents

⁶⁰ Council for Tarjih and Tajdid, Central Board of Muhammadiyah, *Himpunan Putusan Tarjih* [Compilation of Tarjih Decisions] (Yogyakarta: Suara Muhammadiyah, 1430/2009), p. 278.

⁶¹ Khallāf, ‘Abd al-Wahhāb, *‘Ilm Uṣūl al-Fiqh* [The Science of Legal Theory] (n.p.: Maktabah al-Da‘wah, n.d.), Vol. I, p. 84.

harm for people.”⁶²

The use of *maṣlaḥah mursalah* as both a method and a source of legal determination cannot be undertaken arbitrarily without binding conditions (*ḍawābiṭ*) that regulate its application. Such limitations are necessary to prevent the possibility of undermining the Sharia itself.

Among the conditions and limitations for exercising *ijtihād* through *maṣlaḥah mursalah* are the following:

- 1) The *maṣlaḥah mursalah* must represent a genuine and real benefit rather than a speculative one, meaning that it truly brings benefits to people and protects them from hardship and harm (*mafsadah*).
- 2) The *maṣlaḥah mursalah* must be general and comprehensive (*kullī*) rather than partial (*juz’ī*), meaning that it benefits society as a whole and not merely specific individuals or groups.
- 3) The *maṣlaḥah mursalah* must be consistent with the objectives and purposes of the Sharia and must not contradict definitive (*qaṭ’ī*) texts in either the Qur’an or the Sunnah.⁶³
- 4) The *maṣlaḥah mursalah* must be applied in situations of necessity or pressing need, meaning that without employing this method and approach, people would experience hardship (*mashaqqah*) or harm (*mafsadah*).

Within Tarjih fatwas, *maṣlaḥah mursalah* has been utilized, among other examples, in the ruling requiring divorce to be carried out before a court hearing.

d. *Istiḥsān* (Juristic Preference)

According to Abū al-Ḥasan al-Karkhī (340/952), *istiḥsān* is a

⁶² Asy-Syaṣrī, “Al-*Maṣlaḥah ‘inda al-Ḥanābilah*” [Public Interest According to the Hanbalis], *Majallat al-Buḥūs al-Islāmiyyah* [Journal of Islamic Research], Vol. 47 (Dhu al-Qa’dah 1416 H – Ṣafar 1417 H), p. 478.

⁶³ Al-Būṭī, Muḥammad Sa’id Ramaḍān, *Ḍawābiṭ al-Maṣlaḥah fī al-Sharī’ah al-Islāmiyyah* [Criteria of Public Interest in Islamic Law] (Beirut: Mu’assasat al-Risālah, 6th ed., 1992).

method used to decide a case differently from similar cases because of a stronger reason that necessitates adopting a ruling different from the previously established general rule. This means that a ruling may shift from the general to the particular, or from an earlier rule to a new one, as an application of *istihsān*.⁶⁴

In the context of *uṣūl al-fiqh*, *istihsān* indicates that what is considered good by society may become a source of religious guidance. This understanding is reinforced by a *mawqūf* narration conveying the idea that what believers regard as good is good in the sight of Allah. Thus, the voice of the believing community reflects divine guidance. The *mawqūf* narration reported by al-Ḥākim, and similarly by Aḥmad and al-Ṭabarānī, states:

عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ مَسْعُودٍ - رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ مَا رَأَيْتُ الْمُسْلِمُونَ حَسَنًا فَهُوَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ حَسَنٌ وَمَا رَأَهُ الْمُسْلِمُونَ سَيِّئًا فَهُوَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ سَيِّئٌ

*From ‘Abdullāh ibn Mas‘ūd (may Allah be pleased with him), it is narrated that he said: What the Muslims consider good is good in the sight of Allah, and what the Muslims consider bad is bad in the sight of Allah.*⁶⁵

Based on this narration, *istihsān* often takes into account societal views and values recognized by the Muslim community. In essence, *istihsān* seeks to overcome rigidity in the consistent application of legal rules to particular cases. For example, the general prohibition against viewing the *‘awrah* (parts of the body that must be covered), if applied strictly, could create difficulties in medical situations or other special circumstances. Therefore, *istihsān* allows exceptions or adjustments in legal application to achieve the public benefit that constitutes the primary objective of the law.⁶⁶

⁶⁴ Al-Bukhārī, ‘Alā’ al-Dīn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz, *Kashf al-Asrār ‘an Uṣūl Fakhr al-Islām al-Bazdawī* [Unveiling the Secrets of Fakhr al-Islām al-Bazdawī’s Legal Theory] (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-‘Arabī, 1411/1991), Vol. IV, p. 7.

⁶⁵ Al-Ḥākim, *Al-Mustadrak ‘alā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn* [Supplement to the Two Ṣaḥīḥ Collections], edited by Muṣṭafā ‘Abd al-Qādir ‘Aṭā (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah, 1422/2002), Vol. III, pp. 83–84, hadith no. 4465: 63.

⁶⁶ Asy-Syāṭibī, *Al-Muwāfaqāt*, p. 195

As a concept, *istihsān* seeks to prevent Islamic law from becoming rigidly positivistic and instead draws it closer to natural-law principles that emphasize welfare and justice. This principle permits exceptions to general rules when their application would produce counterproductive rigidity. In legal policymaking, *istihsān* may depart from general evidence, including textual evidence and *qiyās*, if their application conflicts with the very objectives of the law.

Tarjih has employed *istihsān* to permit the sale of waqf property or changes in its use contrary to the donor's stipulated conditions when circumstances justify such changes. The Tarjih Decision refers to this justification as *ḥifẓan li al-maṣlahah* (for the preservation of public benefit).⁶⁷ In legal theory, departing from a primary rule for a justified reason recognized by the Sharia is known as *istihsān*.

Another example is that the Prophet (peace be upon him) explicitly prohibited selling goods not yet possessed by the seller, saying, "Avoid selling what is not in your possession." Consequently, the majority of jurists considered transactions involving goods not yet owned by the seller to be invalid. In online commerce, however, goods may sometimes not yet be available at the time of sale and may only be acquired afterward by the seller. Given the pressing social need for online transactions, such sales may be recognized as valid on the basis of *istihsān*.

From the foregoing discussion, the distinguishing elements of *istihsān* may be identified as follows:

- 1) The existence of a general legal proof applicable to a particular case, such as the evidence prohibiting the sale of waqf property or the evidence prohibiting viewing the *'awrah*. In this respect, *istihsān* differs from *istiṣlāḥ* (legal determination based solely on public interest), because in the latter there is no specific evidence concerning the case and the ruling is based entirely on welfare considerations. In *istihsān*, however, there is already

⁶⁷*Ibid.*, p. 270 and 274

evidence relating to the case, but applying that evidence consistently would produce consequences contrary to the law’s objective of realizing public welfare.

- 2) The existence of a departure from the general evidence because its consistent application would lead to outcomes contrary to the objectives of the law. Therefore, another rule is adopted that better promotes benefit and prevents harm. For this reason, some definitions of *istiḥsān* describe it as “adhering to a particular benefit while setting aside a general proof,” while others define it as “abandoning one ruling in favor of another that is superior.”
- 3) The existence of a benefit to be achieved or a harm to be avoided. For example, in the case of waqf property, failure to sell certain endowed items may result in waste. Surplus roof tiles donated to a mosque, for instance, may be sold and the proceeds used to purchase other necessities that the mosque lacks.
- 4) The existence of supporting evidence—whether textual evidence, custom (*‘urf*), consensus (*ijmā’*), or even public interest itself—that serves as the basis for *istiḥsān*, namely the exercise of legal discretion.

e. *Istiṣḥāb* (Presumption of Continuity)

Ibn al-Subkī (756/1355) defines *istiṣḥāb* as establishing a ruling for a second legal issue based on the ruling of the first because no evidence has been found to alter it.⁶⁸ Meanwhile, al-Asnawī states that *istiṣḥāb* is the affirmation of a legal ruling for a matter in a later period on the basis that the ruling had already applied previously, due to the

⁶⁸ Al-Subkī, ‘Alī ‘Abd al-Kāfī, *Al-Ibhāj* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah, 1404 H), Vol. III, p. 173.

absence of any factor necessitating a change in that ruling.⁶⁹

Thus, *istiṣhāb* is the maintenance of an existing legal ruling as long as there is no new evidence (*dalīl*) indicating otherwise. In simple terms, *istiṣhāb* is a method of *ijtihād* that determines the ruling of a matter according to its original status until another proof changes that ruling.

An example of the application of the concept of *istiṣhāb* in addressing social issues concerns the status of divorce (*ṭalāq*) pronounced by a husband. A husband divorces his wife but is uncertain whether he pronounced a triple divorce or a single divorce. According to the majority of scholars, the divorce that takes effect is a single divorce, whereas according to Imam Mālik, it is a triple divorce. This difference arises because of a conflict between two principles. First, the continuation of the original state of the husband and wife as spouses (who are permitted to have marital relations) before the divorce, until something changes that condition. In this case, something has indeed altered that condition, namely divorce, but the nature of that divorce remains uncertain. Therefore, the permissibility of the marital relationship has not completely ceased. Second, divorce itself is known with certainty to have occurred. However, there is uncertainty as to whether reconciliation (*rujū'*) remains permissible. Since reconciliation cannot be established on the basis of uncertainty, the principle becomes contested. By applying *istiṣhāb*, it can be argued that the majority opinion, which holds that only a single divorce has taken effect, is stronger and more beneficial for both husband and wife.

f. Sadduz-ẓarī'ah (Preventive Measures)

According to Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah (751/1350), something that is originally permissible may become prohibited in two situations: when it is used for an unlawful purpose, or when, in a particular

⁶⁹ Al-Asnawī, 'Abd al-Raḥīm ibn Ḥasan al-Shāfi'ī, *Nihāyah al-Sūl fī Sharḥ Minhāj al-Uṣūl* [The Ultimate Attainment: Commentary on Minhāj al-Uṣūl] (Cairo: al-Maṭba'ah al-Salafiyyah), p. 131.

circumstance, it may lead to harm greater than its benefit.⁷⁰

The Tarjih Council once employed *sadduẓ-ẓarī'ah* as an argument for the invalidity of divorce carried out outside the court. The fatwa states: “Furthermore, it may also be affirmed that pronouncing divorce outside a court session, considering the harm that it may cause, must be prohibited and declared invalid based on the principle of *sadduẓ-ẓarī'ah* [blocking the means that lead to harm].”⁷¹

g. Companion Fatwas

Al-Bugā (lahir 1938) mengatakan bahwa “Yang dimaksud dengan mazhab Sahabat adalah segala yang dinukil kepada kita dari salah seorang Sahabat Rasulullah Saw. berupa fatwa atau keputusan mengenai suatu masalah syariat yang mengenainya tidak terdapat nas dari Al-Qur’an atau Sunah Nabi Saw. atau belum ada ijmak.”⁷²

The authority (*ḥujjiyyah*) of the legal opinions (*qawl/fatwa*) of the Companions has been a subject of intense debate among scholars of *uṣūl al-fiqh*. They formulate the issue as follows: scholars agree that the opinion of a Companion concerning matters open to *ijtihād* is not binding upon another Companion who is also a *mujtahid*, whether he is an imam, judge, or mufti. This is because the Companions themselves differed in opinion, and they accepted those differences, meaning that the opinion of one Companion was not binding upon another.

In Tarjih decisions, the opinions of the Companions are discussed under the topic of *mawqūf* hadith. A *mawqūf* hadith is a narration attributed to a Companion. The term *mawqūf* means “stopped,”

⁷⁰ Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah, *l'ām al-Muwaqqi'in 'an Rabb al-'Ālamīn* [Informing the Signatories on Behalf of the Lord of the Worlds], ed. Ṭāhā 'Abd al-Ra'ūf, 2nd ed. (Beirut: Dār al-Jīl, n.d.), Vol. III, p. 148.

⁷¹ Religious Questions and Answers Column, *Suara Muhammadiyah Magazine*, No. 12, 2007.

⁷² Al-Bugā, Muṣṭafā Dīb, *Aṣar al-Adillah al-Mukhtalaf Fihā fī al-Fiqh al-Islāmī* [The Impact of Disputed Evidences in Islamic Jurisprudence] (Damascus: Dār al-Imām al-Bukhārī, n.d.), p. 339.

indicating that the narration ends with the Companion and is not traced back to the Prophet (peace be upon him). In other words, a *mawqūf* hadith is essentially the statement or opinion of a Companion.

A *mawqūf* hadith that is judged to be *marfū'* may serve as a legal proof. Therefore, the consensus of the Companions may be accepted as a basis for legal decisions, provided there is an indication (*qarīnah*) from which its attribution to the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) can be understood.⁷³

An example is the hadith of Ummu 'Aṭīyah recorded in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*:

عَنْ أُمِّ عَطِيَّةَ قَالَتْ كُنَّا نُؤْمَرُ أَنْ نَخْرُجَ يَوْمَ الْعِيدِ حَتَّى نُخْرِجَ الْبِكْرَ مِنْ خَدْرِهِنَّ
حَتَّى نَخْرُجَ الْحَيْضَ فَيَكُنَّ خَلْفَ النَّاسِ فَيَكْبِرْنَ بِتَكْبِيرِهِمْ وَيَدْعُونَ بِدَعَائِهِمْ
يَرْجُونَ بَرَكَةَ ذَلِكَ الْيَوْمِ وَطَهْرَتَهُ

From Ummu 'Aṭīyah, it is narrated that she said: "We were commanded to go out on the day of Eid, so that we would bring out the young unmarried women from their seclusion, and we would also bring out menstruating women. They would stand behind the congregation, joining in their takbīr and supplications, hoping for the blessings and purification of that day."⁷⁴

This statement of the Companion Ummu 'Aṭīyah contains an indication of a *marfū'* hadith because it includes the phrase "we were commanded," meaning that the command came from the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him). Consequently, this narration is considered *marfū'* due to the Prophet's command and is no longer merely a *mawqūf* hadith or a pure Companion opinion.

⁷³ Abdurrahman, Asjmunī, *Manhāj Tarjih Muhammadiyah: Methodology and Application* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2002).

⁷⁴ Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, edited by Muṣṭafā Dīb al-Bugā (Damascus–Beirut: Dār Ibn Kathīr and al-Yamāmah for Printing, Publishing and Distribution, 1407/1987), Vol. I, p. 330, Hadith no. 928.

h. ‘Urf (Custom)

Al-Jurjānī (d. 816/1413) defines ‘urf as, “something that becomes firmly established in the heart based upon rational consideration and is accepted by sound human nature.”⁷⁵ Al-Nasafī (d. 710/1310) equates ‘urf with custom (‘ādah) and provides a similar definition: “‘Urf and custom are things that become firmly established in the heart through rational consideration and are accepted by sound human nature.”⁷⁶

Based on these definitions, the criteria for ‘urf that may serve as a basis for legal determination in Islamic law are that it constitutes a generally practiced custom within society, is firmly accepted by people, accords with reason, does not contradict human nature, and does not conflict with the Qur’an and the Sunnah of the Prophet (peace be upon him).

Legal regulations prevailing in society may be regarded as ‘urf *qanūnī* (legal custom), provided that they do not contradict explicit textual evidence (*naṣ ṣarīḥ*), or where a text exists but requires reinterpretation in order to realize greater public benefit, or where Islamic law has not specifically regulated the matter. Therefore, ‘urf is also recognized within Tarjih practice.

i. *Syar’u man qablanā* (The Law of Previous Communities)

Maḥmūd ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ‘Abd al-Mun‘im, in *Mu‘jam al-Muṣṭalaḥāt wa Alfāz al-Fiqhiyyah*, explains the phrase *syar’u man qablanā* terminologically as “all legal provisions brought by the Messengers for their respective communities before the sending of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), and which have been transmitted to us (the community of Prophet Muhammad) through

⁷⁵ Al-Jurjānī, *Kitāb al-Ta’rīfāt* [The Book of Definitions] (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah, 1403/1983), p. 149.

⁷⁶ An-Nasafī, *Al-Mustaṣfā*, edited by Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Sa’d Āl Sa’d al-Gāmidī (Mecca: Umm al-Qura University, 1431 H), Vol. I, p. 425.

authentic reports.”⁷⁷

The legitimacy of previous religious laws as a source of law can be found in several Qur’anic verses, one of which is part of Surah al-Mā’idah (5) verse 48:

لِكُلِّ جَعَلْنَا مِنْكُمْ شَرْعَةً وَمِنْهَا جَا ۙ وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَجَعَلَكُمْ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً وَلَكِنْ لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ فِي مَا آتَيْنَاكُمْ فَاسْتَبِقُوا الْخَيْرَاتِ ۗ إِلَى اللَّهِ مَرْجِعُكُمْ جَمِيعًا فَيُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ ۗ

“For each of you We have prescribed a law and a clear way. Had Allah willed, He could have made you one community, but He intended to test you in what He has given you. Therefore, compete with one another in doing good. To Allah you will all return, and He will inform you concerning that over which you used to differ.”

Another example of *syar’u man qablanā* is the obligation of fasting in Ramadan. Surah al-Baqarah (2) verse 183 states:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ۗ

O you who believe, fasting has been prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you, so that you may attain piety.

E. Approaches

The Tarjih Decision of 2000 in Jakarta explains that Muhammadiyah’s *ijtihad* employs the *bayānī*, *burhānī*, and *‘irfānī* approaches. The *bayānī* approach responds to issues by taking the revealed texts of the Sharia (the Qur’an and Sunnah) as its primary point of departure. This approach is commonly used in resolving matters related to *‘ibādah maḥḍah* (pure ritual worship), because the fundamental principle of Islamic law regarding worship states that: “Acts of worship, in principle, may not be performed except those

⁷⁷ ‘Abd al-Mun’im, *Mu’jam al-Muṣṭalaḥāt wa Alfāz al-Fiqhiyyah* [Dictionary of Jurisprudential Terminology and Expressions], n.d., p. 964.

that have been legislated.”⁷⁸ This principle affirms that a ritual act of worship is invalid unless there is evidence from the Qur’an or Hadith prescribing it. If a person performs a form of worship not sanctioned in the Sunnah of the Prophet (peace be upon him), such worship is invalid according to the Prophet’s saying: “Whoever performs an act that is not part of our religion, it is rejected,” and in another wording: “Whoever introduces into our religion something that does not belong to it, it is rejected” [Narrated by Muslim].⁷⁹ Therefore, in matters of *‘ibādah maḥḍah*, the *bayānī* approach is widely employed.

The *burhānī* approach addresses issues by extensively utilizing developments in the general sciences. For example, in *ijtihad* concerning the determination of the beginning of lunar months, particularly those associated with acts of worship such as Ramadan, Shawwal, and Dhulhijjah, Muhammadiyah relies heavily on the latest achievements in astronomical science (*‘ilm al-falak*), and therefore no longer depends on visual moon sighting (*rukyah*). This approach is intended to provide dynamism to Muhammadiyah’s Tarjih thought, particularly outside the field of pure ritual worship. Various social and humanitarian issues are approached not only through the lens of scriptural texts but also through relevant scientific disciplines. Although many Qur’anic and Prophetic texts are universal in nature, they were revealed within particular contexts and addressed specific situations. Therefore, when the context of their application has changed in the modern era, their understanding requires contextualization through the use of relevant sciences. However, contextualization does not simply force the texts to conform to the context, thereby distorting them merely to legitimize our interpretations. Context provides insight into how texts should be understood, but at the same time the texts illuminate us and guide us in dealing with context. All of this is carried out within the framework of *maqāṣid*

⁷⁸ As-Sa’dī, *Risālah Laṭīfah Jāmi’ah fī Uṣūl al-Fiqh al-Muhimmah* [A Concise Comprehensive Treatise on Important Principles of Islamic Jurisprudence], edited by Nādir ibn Sa’id Āl Mubārak al-Ta’murī (Beirut: Dār Ibn Ḥazm for Printing, Publishing, and Distribution, 1412/1992), pp. 105–106.

⁷⁹ Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, edited by Muḥammad Fu’ād ‘Abd al-Bāqī (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr for Printing, Publishing and Distribution, 1412/1992), Vol. II, p. 124, hadith no. 17-18:1718.

al-syarī'ah as the sphere of meaning.

The *'irfānī* approach is based upon efforts to enhance spiritual sensitivity and inner intuition through the purification of the soul, so that decisions are not based solely on intellectual sophistication but also upon moral awareness, enabling a person to comprehend the issues and decisions at hand while seeking guidance from the Most High.

It should be noted that these three approaches are not employed alternatively, whereby one is used only when another is not possible. Rather, they are utilized in a circular manner, meaning they are used together whenever necessary. However, if one or two of them are sufficient, the others need not be employed. The use of these three approaches is intended to ensure that they complement and reinforce one another.

F. Technical Procedure (Methodology)

1. Method Assumption

A method consists of procedural steps in the process of utilizing sources to discover religious guidance. The methodology of Tarjih is based on three fundamental assumptions: **(1) the integralistic assumption, (2) the hierarchical assumption, and (3) the purposive assumption.**

The integralistic assumption postulates a corroborative theory of normative validity, namely an assumption that views the existence of corroboration and mutual support among various source elements in generating a norm. A norm based on a single source element is already valid; however, such validity remains *ẓannī* (probable). The strength of that validity increases when more source elements can be presented that mutually reinforce and corroborate one another in support of the norm, to the extent that, in certain cases, the degree of validity may reach the level of *qat'ī* (definitive). Definitiveness is not found in individual proofs taken separately, but rather in the corroboration of multiple proofs that reinforce one another and point toward the same meaning. As al-Shāṭibī stated, "The whole possesses a strength that the individual parts do not

possess separately.”⁸⁰ The definitive status of the obligations of prayer, zakat, and fasting is achieved through this integralistic approach. This perspective requires that the operationalization of sources be conducted through an *istiqrā'* (inductive) method.

The hierarchical assumption holds that norms exist in layers, ranging from the lowest to the highest level. If the hierarchy is viewed from top to bottom, it consists first of fundamental principles and values (*al-qiyam al-asāsiyyah*), including theological, ethical, and juridical norms. These foundational norms are derived from the universal values of Islam, such as *tawhīd*, noble character (*akhlāq karīmah*), public welfare (*maṣlaḥah*), justice, equality, freedom, and brotherhood, all of which originate from the Qur'an and Sunnah, or may be inferred from human experience under the guidance of these primary sources. These foundational norms encompass the level below them, namely the general principles (*al-uṣūl al-kulliyah*), which are derived from the two primary sources and, on the one hand, constitute deductions from foundational values, while on the other hand represent abstractions from concrete norms. These principles serve as concretizations of foundational values. In turn, these principles encompass the lowest level of norms, namely concrete norms in the form of specific legal rulings (*al-aḥkām al-far'iyah*) that directly qualify a particular legal event.

This normative structure may also be viewed from the bottom upward. From this perspective, foundational norms occupy the lowest level and serve as the basis for the general principles. These principles, in turn, form the foundation for concrete norms, which constitute the highest level of norms and stand upon the two more fundamental layers beneath them.

The purposive assumption (*kebermaksudan/kebertujuan*) holds that every norm revealed by God to humanity contains an intended purpose or objective. No divine command imposed upon humanity is devoid of

⁸⁰ Asy-Syāṭibī, *Al-Muwāfaqāt* [The Reconciliations], edited by Abū 'Ubaidah Mashhūr ibn Ḥasan Āl Salmān (Al-Khubar: Dār Ibn 'Affān for Publishing and Distribution, 1417/1997), Vol. I, p. 28; Vol. II, p. 82.

purpose or meaning. This purposive assumption is based on the conviction that Islamic law was established to realize human welfare (*maṣlaḥah*), both in this world and in the hereafter.

The purposiveness of norms may be examined from several perspectives. First, in terms of the breadth of their scope. Second, from a hierarchical perspective. In terms of scope, the purposes of norms are classified into three categories: (1) general objectives of the Sharī'ah (*maqāṣid al-syarī'ah al-'āmmah*), (2) partial objectives (*maqāṣid al-syarī'ah al-juz'iyah*), and (3) particular objectives (*maqāṣid al-syarī'ah al-khāṣṣah*).

General objectives refer to the purposes that the Sharī'ah seeks to realize as a whole, as reflected in the entirety of its provisions. In other words, the general objective of the Sharī'ah is the realization of welfare (*maṣlaḥah*). Particular objectives, meanwhile, refer to purposes that can be observed within a group of Sharī'ah rulings concerning a specific chapter, field, or area, such as the objectives underlying commercial transactions, finance, or marriage. As for specific objectives, they refer to the purpose embodied in an individual legal ruling, such as the purpose contained in the command to sight the moon (*ru'yah*), the objective behind the prohibition of selling goods before possessing them, and similar rulings. In other words, borrowing the terminology of 'Allāl al-Fāsī, specific objectives are the purposes contained within each individual Sharī'ah ruling.⁸¹

From a hierarchical perspective, the purposes of norms are divided into three levels: (1) essential objectives (*ḍarūriyyāt*), (2) complementary needs (*al-ḥājjiyyāt*), and (3) embellishments (*taḥsīniyyāt*). Essential objectives are interests that must be fulfilled to preserve a sound human order in both worldly and spiritual life; their absence would lead to the collapse of that order. The *ḍarūriyyāt* represent matters that are indispensable for humanity, without which society would fall into disaster, chaos, and disruption. Complementary needs (*ḥājjiyyāt*) are interests

⁸¹ Allāl al-Fāsī, *Maqāṣid al-Syarī'ah al-Islāmiyyah ma Makārimuhā* [The Objective of Islamic Law and Its Noble Values], 5th. ed (Beirut: Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī, 1993), p. 7.

necessary for human life to proceed normally; if they are not fulfilled, the social order is not destroyed, but life becomes extremely difficult and abnormal. As for embellishments (*taḥsīniyyāt*), they are interests whose fulfillment enhances the beauty and refinement of human life.

Based on these three methodological assumptions, responses to social and humanitarian issues are not always carried out by introducing concrete legal norms (viewed in terms of *taklīfī* rulings such as lawful, unlawful, obligatory, and so forth). Rather, where necessary, they are undertaken by exploring the principles of religious teachings that guide action, and even by identifying the foundational values that inspire human activity. Such procedures have frequently been employed in Tarjih deliberations, including decisions concerning the *Fiqh of Governance (Fiqh Tata Kelola)* and the *Fiqh of Water (Fiqh Air)*.

2. Types of Methods

To derive concrete legal norms (*al-aḥkām al-far'iyyah*), there are three methodological forms that have been implicitly practiced in Tarjih decisions and fatwas. These are: (1) the *bayānī* method (interpretive method), (2) the method of causation, whether based on efficient causes or final causes (*maqāṣid al-syarī'ah*), and (3) the method of harmonization in cases of conflict (*ta'āruḍ*).

The *bayānī* method (which should not be confused with the term *bayānī* used in the discussion of approaches) is an interpretive method aimed at clarifying existing scriptural texts. This method is employed in dealing with cases for which there are already direct textual proofs, but where the texts remain ambiguous and therefore require clarification. The causation method, by contrast, is used to resolve issues for which no direct textual proof exists. The process involves identifying causes, whether efficient or final, that may provide the basis for determining the ruling applicable to the case.

The harmonization method is used to determine legal rulings for cases in which there are apparently conflicting proofs (*ta'āruḍ al-adillah*). Regarding this matter, a Tarjih decision states:

“If a *ta’āruḍ* (conflict of proofs) occurs, it shall be resolved according to the following order:

- a. *Al-Jam’u wa al-Taufiq*, namely accepting all proofs even though they appear to conflict outwardly. At the level of implementation, freedom is given to choose among them (*takhyir*).
- b. *Al-Tarjih*, namely selecting the stronger proof for practice and abandoning the weaker one.
- c. *Al-Naskh*, namely applying the proof that was revealed later.
- d. *Al-Tawaqquf*, namely suspending judgment regarding the proofs being used and seeking new evidence.”⁸²

The process of *tarjih* (preference) among textual proofs is carried out from several perspectives:

- a. From the perspective of the chain of transmission (*sanad*):
 - 1) The quality and quantity of transmitters (*rawi*).
 - 2) The form and characteristics of transmission.
- b. From the perspective of the text (*matan*):
 - 1) a *matan* that employs a *ṣīgah an-nahyi* (prohibitive form) is considered more preferable (*rājih*) than one that employs a *ṣīgah al-amr* (command form);
 - 2) a *matan* that employs a *ṣīgah al-khāṣṣ* (specific expression) is considered more preferable (*rājih*) than one that employs a *ṣīgah al-‘ām* (general expression);
- c. from the perspective of the legal ruling; and
- d. external considerations.⁸³

⁸² Decision of the 25th National Deliberation of Muhammadiyah Tarjih in Jakarta, 2000, pp. 17 ff. (Chapter IV, section C).

⁸³ *Ibid*

3. Several Principles Concerning Hadith

Tarjih Decisions contain several principles that support the Tarjih methodology as a whole. These principles relate to hadith and are as follows:

Principle 1

الْمَوْقُوفُ الْمَجْرَدُ لَا يُحْتَجُّ بِهِ

A pure mawqūf hadith cannot be used as a legal proof (hujjah).

Principle 2

الْمَوْقُوفُ الَّذِي فِي حُكْمِ الْمَرْفُوعِ يُحْتَجُّ بِهِ

A mawqūf hadith that has the status of a marfu' hadith may be used as a legal proof.

Principle 3

الْمَوْقُوفُ يَكُونُ فِي حُكْمِ الْمَرْفُوعِ إِذَا كَانَ فِيهِ قَرِينَةٌ يُفْهَمُ مِنْهَا رَفْعُهُ إِلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ (صَلَعَم) كَقَوْلِ أُمِّ عَطِيَّةَ: كُنَّا نَوْمَرُ أَنْ نُخْرِجَ فِي الْعِيدِ الْحَيْضَ (الْحَدِيثُ وَنَحْوَهُ)

A mawqūf hadith attains the status of a marfu' hadith when there is a qarīnah (indication) from which its attribution to the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) can be understood, such as the statement of Ummu 'Atiyyah: "We were commanded to bring out menstruating women on the Day of Eid," and the remainder of that hadith and similar narrations.

Principle 4

مُرْسَلُ التَّابِعِيِّ الْمَجْرَدُ لَا يُحْتَجُّ بِهِ

A pure mursal tābi'ī hadith cannot be used as a legal proof.

Principle 5

مُرْسَلُ التَّابِعِيِّ يُحْتَجُّ بِهِ إِذَا كَانَتْ تَمَّ قَرِينَةٌ تَدُلُّ عَلَى اتِّصَالِهِ

A mursal tābi'ī hadith may be used as a legal proof when accompanied by a qarīnah indicating the continuity of its chain of transmission.

Principle 6

مُرْسَلُ الصَّحَابِيِّ يُحْتَجُّ بِهِ إِذَا كَانَتْ تَمَّ قَرِينَةٌ تَدُلُّ عَلَى اتِّصَالِهِ

A mursal ṣaḥābī hadith may be used as a legal proof when accompanied by a qarīnah indicating the continuity of its chain of transmission.

Principle 7

الأَحَادِيثُ الضَّعِيفَةُ يَعْضَدُ بَعْضُهَا بَعْضًا لَا يُحْتَجُّ بِهَا إِلَّا مَعَ كَثْرَةِ طُرُقِهَا وَفِيهَا قَرِينَةٌ تَدُلُّ عَلَى ثُبُوتِ أَصْلِهَا وَلَمْ تُعَارِضِ الْقُرْآنَ وَالْحَدِيثَ الصَّحِيحَ

Weak (ḍa‘īf) hadiths that mutually reinforce one another may not be used as legal proof except when they possess numerous chains of transmission, contain indications demonstrating the authenticity of their origin, and do not contradict the Qur’an or authentic (ṣaḥīḥ) hadith.

Principle 8

الْجَرْحُ مُقَدَّمٌ عَلَى التَّعْدِيلِ بَعْدَ الْبَيَانِ الشَّافِي الْمُعْتَبَرِ شَرْعًا

Jarḥ (criticism of a transmitter) takes precedence over ta‘dīl (accreditation) after the presentation of a clear explanation that is valid according to the Sharī‘ah.

Principle 9

تُقْبَلُ مِمَّنِ اشْتَهَرَ بِالتَّدْلِيسِ رَوَايَتُهُ إِذَا صَرَّحَ بِمَا ظَاهِرُهُ الْإِتِّصَالُ وَكَانَ تَدْلِيسُهُ غَيْرَ قَادِحٍ فِي عَدَالَتِهِ

The narration of a person known for practicing tadrīs may be accepted if he explicitly states that the narration is connected and if his tadrīs does not compromise his integrity.

Principle 10

حَمْلُ الصَّحَابِيِّ اللَّفْظِ الْمَشْتَرَكِ عَلَى أَحَدِ مَعْنَيْيهِ وَاجِبُ الْقَبُولِ

A Companion’s interpretation of a polysemous expression (lafz musytarak) according to one of its possible meanings must be accepted.

Principle 11

حَمْلُ الصَّحَابِيِّ الظَّاهِرِ عَلَى غَيْرِهِ أَلْعَمَلُ بِالظَّاهِرِ

If a Companion interprets an apparent (zāhir) expression according to a meaning other than its apparent sense, then the apparent meaning is the one that should be applied.

4. The Principle of Legal Change

In Islamic jurisprudence, the permissibility of legal change has long been recognized. Indeed, it has been formulated as a legal maxim and accepted by jurists:

لَا يُنكَرُ تَغْيِيرُ الْأَحْكَامِ بِتَغْيِيرِ الْأَزْمَنِ وَالْأَمْكِينَةِ وَالْأَحْوَالِ

*The change of legal rulings due to changes in times, places, and circumstances is not to be denied.*⁸⁴

Within Muhammadiyah, the possibility of changes in legal rulings has been recognized in practice, including not only rulings derived through *ijtihad* but also rulings explicitly stated in textual sources. One example concerns women's leadership, which is prohibited in certain hadith but is permitted in Tarjih decisions and fatwas. Likewise, the practice of moon sighting (*rukyyah*), which is commanded in hadith, is no longer followed by Tarjih, which instead employs astronomical calculation (*hisāb*).

Legal rulings, however, cannot be altered arbitrarily. Certain conditions must be met before a ruling may be changed. Four conditions are required:

- a. there must be a demand of public welfare (*maṣlaḥah*) necessitating the change. If there is no such need or necessity, the ruling may not be altered;
- b. the ruling must not concern the core matters of 'ibādah maḥḍah (pure ritual worship), but rather matters outside of it. The provisions of pure ritual worship cannot be changed because, in principle, the laws governing worship are not fully accessible to rational explanation;
- c. the ruling must not be qaṭ'ī (definitive). If a ruling is definitive, it cannot be altered, such as the prohibition of usury (*ribā*), the prohibition of unlawfully consuming others' property, the prohibition of murder, the prohibition of adultery, the obligation of

⁸⁴ As-Sadlān, *al-Qawā'id al-Fiqhiyyah al-Kubrā* (Riyad: Dār Balansiyyah li an-Nasyr wa at-Tauzī', 1417), p. 426

- fasting during Ramadan, the obligation of the five daily prayers, and similar rulings; and
- d. the new ruling must itself be based upon a valid Shari‘ah proof (*dalil syar‘i*). Thus, a legal change is essentially a transition from one legitimate proof to another.⁸⁵

⁸⁵ Anwar, Syamsul, *Discussion and Correspondence on the Global Hijri Calendar* (Yogyakarta: Suara Muhammadiyah Publishing, 2014), pp. 262–263.

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1 ABAD
MAJELIS TARJIH
MUHAMMADIYAH

Menebar Maslahat, Mencerahkan Umat