



## MULTIPLE CRITIQUES AS A METHOD OF PROGRESSIVE MUSLIM THINKING CONFRONTING PLURALITY

Siti Amallia

Sekolah Tinggi Agama Islam (STAI) Yasba Kalianda, Lampung, Indonesia

[go.amallia@gmail.com](mailto:go.amallia@gmail.com)

### Abstract:

Substantially, the term progressive Muslim in Islamic discourse is not a new thing. Progressive Muslims are Muslims who have a forward and open mindset. There are three major missions carried out, such as justice, gender equality, and accepting plurality. The purpose of this study is to find the root cause of the problem of religious exclusivism and how the role of progressive Muslims in solving this problem. Because misunderstandings about the meaning of plurality can then give birth to an attitude of radicalism that endangers many people. As a result, Islam is interpreted as a religion that is hard and rigid because some people criticize it in a narrow and way. How should a progressive Muslim try to reconstruct his thinking in facing plurality according to Omid Safi? The researcher uses descriptive and interpretive methods to explain the problem of plurality and Omid Safi's theory is related to contemporary problems. This research is library research by utilizing reading sources such as books and journals. From the research, it is found that Omid Safi uses multiple critiques as a progressive Muslim thinking method. According to him, multiple criticism or double criticism is an attempt to criticize Western and Islamic thought. Constructive criticism is necessary. Not only criticizing the hegemony of the West, but progressive Muslims also need to be criticized if they display an attitude that tends to be rigid, dogmatic, and authoritarian towards plurality. Safi associates plurality with humanism and open knowledge. Seeing that humans have the same values justice is one of the elements that must be upheld. Safi defines plurality as a form that goes beyond tolerance (Beyond pluralism). According to him, there is still a distance between tolerance in accepting differences. Like a poison that can still be tolerated by the human body. Plurality is when we can say "we" even though we have different beliefs. In the end, the idea of plurality encourages us to be humanist and dynamic towards the times.

**Keywords:** Progressive Muslims, Multiple critique, Plurality, Humanisme

Copyright (c) 2022 Siti Amallia.

\* Corresponding author : Siti Amallia

Email Address : [go.amallia@gmail.com](mailto:go.amallia@gmail.com) (Lampung, Sekolah Tinggi Agama Islam (STAI) Yasba Kalianda)

Received : June 20, 2022; Revised : October 4, 2022; Accepted : November 16, 2022; Published : December 15, 2022

### INTRODUCTION

A new discourse in Muslim civilisation is made possible by the changing times and their diverse characteristics. Some of them are expanding in terms of politics, the economy, technology, social issues, and culture, and as a result, the issues that arise are getting more complicated. On the other hand, advancements that should progressively have a positive impact on human lives are not. Along with the spirit of submitting new ideas, the spirit of upholding tradition grows. Age must therefore follow Islam rather than the other way around as a result. sayings When modernity is rejected, Salih kull

zamn wa makn frequently turns into a breeding ground for violent behavior committed in the name of Islam.<sup>1</sup>

If the attention of Islamic law is only on specific topics, it is impossible to address issues that affect humanity as a whole, such as justice, human rights, terrorism, and poverty. Because of Islam's decline, Islamic law has frequently been held responsible. The only explanation for this is because, after realizing the problems of today, ijtihad closed its doors. However, a lot of Muslim intellectuals have an extreme focus on the idea that the prophet's acts are the only binding standards for the sunnah. The sunnah is a genuine concept, says Fazlur Rahman. But the sunnah underwent numerous interpretations following the prophet's passing. due to the increasingly complex and shifting circumstances of the times.<sup>2</sup>

A person's human nature will be lost if such things are allowed to persist without a solution. If this is the case, Islam's purpose to extend mercy to every ummah will be unable to be adequately accomplished. This condition is exacerbated by the issue of debate between Islam and the West which has continuously colored the history of world development. There is an assumption that Islam is very close to violence and terrorism. Thus, labels emerged called traditionalist, extremist, secular, critical, including the one that recently emerged was the term "progressive Muslim" which was initiated by a Muslim scholar named Omid Safi as an alternative and clarification of the relationship between Islam and terrorism.<sup>3</sup> He would concentrate on giving life "new air" as part of his study that advances humanistic principles.

There are three main topics that progressive Muslims are debating generally speaking. Gender, human rights, and issues of racism are a few of these. Although Omid Safi's theoretical analysis of many criticisms of how the plurality issue is seen is included, the writers of this study restrict the study's focus to issues relating to plurality. Plurality is sometimes considered as an ambiguity that readily starts "fire," which is why the author chose this topic. especially if it has to do with the subject of religious diversity. Truth claims will eventually resurface. Conflict-producing incidents have occurred on a number of occasions throughout religious history. Universally, it can be said that religious animosity was not a direct cause of the violence. However, the rioters did not think twice about destroying houses of worship like mosques, churches, and temples. If religious teachings are rigid and exclusive, excluding truths that emerge outside of their beliefs, major disputes may result from theological difficulties.<sup>4</sup>

In the religious life, exclusivity is quite likely. In order to prevent these potentials from becoming widespread, progressive Muslims' next responsibility is to suppress them. The multiple critique method emphasizes the necessity of having a two-edged sword while criticizing both Muslims and the West. That in addition to assessing outside (Outsider), we are also expected to be able to assess ourselves (Insider). in order to prevent the reciprocal blaming of issues that should be appropriately discussed.

Omit Safi, an American citizen and scholar of Islamic thought of Iranian heritage, has had a significant impact on modern Muslim thinking. He goes into great detail on the

<sup>1</sup> Mark Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind of God: The Global Rise of Religious Violence*, 3rd ed. (England: University of California Press, 2003).

<sup>2</sup> Abdullah Saeed, *Pemikir Islam: Sebuah Pengantar* (Yogyakarta: Kaukaba, 2017), 67.

<sup>3</sup> M. Sya'dullah Fauzi, "Gagasan 'Muslim Progresif' Omid Safi: Antara Tasawuf Dan Humanisme," *Arrahim.Id*, January 13, 2021, <https://arrahim.id/msf/gagasan-muslim-progresif-omid-safi-antara-tasawuf-dan-humanisme/>.

<sup>4</sup> Nur Solikin AR, *Agama Dan Problem Mondial : Mengurai Dan Menjawab Problem Kemasyarakatan*, 1st ed. (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2013), 103–104.

topic of the study, the research techniques, and the justifications for why it's so crucial that progressive Muslims are active in the lives of everyday people. As he considers the issues with religious diversity, the author wants to take stock of his ideas. attempting to identify the root causes of the radicalization issues that have a significant impact on the ummah's destruction The term "Progressive Islam" will now be replaced by the phrase "progressive Muslim" in the text. Omid Safi's viewpoint, which I've quoted, states that:

*On one hand, "Islam has always been progressive. It is Muslims that have not always been so". On the other hand, we are also wary of falling into the easy dichotomy of "I love Islam, it is those darn Muslims that i have a problem with"*<sup>5</sup>

Islamic teachings are always present in a developing style that changes with the times. Unrelated incident involving a Muslim or Muslims. Since not all Muslims are progressive, this fact is what leads to misperceptions. Progressive Muslims, or progressive Islam as some have referred to them, have been the subject of numerous prior investigations. "Islam Progresif: Telaah Atas Pemikiran Omid Safi" by Aminuddin is one of them.<sup>6</sup> In order to be a progressive Muslim, one must be able to oppose injustice and have the courage to denounce the injustices carried out by the West, according to the researcher's attempt to illuminate Omid Safi's ideas and their applicability to modern Islamic traditions. The author, who remains the same, also addresses "Pemikiran Abdullah Saeed Tentang Muslim Progresif Sebagai Jalan Alternatif Tantangan Era Modern". The researcher wants to examine progressive Muslims through the eyes of a different person, Abdullah Saeed. Saeed's progressive ijtihad theory that the Qur'anic verses must be interpreted in accordance with the events that took place in his time in order to achieve sharia/benefit must be taken into consideration.<sup>7</sup>

The following study is a study by Mukhlis titled "Metodologi Muslim Progresif Dalam Memahami Pesan Sejati Al-Qur'an."<sup>8</sup> This study reveals the passages of the Qur'an that address modern Muslim concerns including gender equality, human rights, and pluralism. As in Al-Hijr/15:29, Šād/38:71, and al-Nahl/16:90.

Reza Adeputra Tohis also covered the subject of studying progressive Islam in a paper titled "Islam Progresif Dan Tan Malaka (Reposisi MADIALOG Sebagai Metode Pemikiran Islam Progresif)."<sup>9</sup> The aim of his research is to draw a connection between Tan Malaka's contribution to the struggle against capitalism's social structure as described in MADIALOG and the issue of progressive Muslims.

In addition to the research mentioned above, Muhammad Syafi'i also conducted a study on progressive Muslims titled "Ijtihad Epistemologis Muslim Progresif Omid Safi

<sup>5</sup> Omid Safi, *Progressive Muslim: On Justice, Gender, and Pluralism* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2003), 18.

<sup>6</sup> Aminudin Aminudin, "Islam Progresif: Telaah atas Pemikiran Omid Safi," *Farabi* 16, no. 2 (December 31, 2019): 147–160, accessed June 29, 2022, <https://journal.iaingorontalo.ac.id/index.php/fa/article/view/1085>.

<sup>7</sup> Aminudin Aminudin, "Pemikiran Abdullah Saeed Tentang Muslim Progresif Sebagai Jalan Alternatif Tantangan Era Modern," *RUSYDIAH: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam* 2, no. 1 (August 4, 2021): 40–52, accessed June 28, 2022, <http://ejournal.stainkepri.ac.id/index.php/rusydiah/article/view/267>.

<sup>8</sup> Mukhlis Mukhlis, "Metodologi Muslim Progresif dalam Memahami Pesan Sejati Al-Qur'an," *Al-Tahrir: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam* 11, no. 1 (May 1, 2011): 29, accessed June 29, 2022, <http://jurnal.stainponorogo.ac.id/index.php/tahrir/article/view/25>.

<sup>9</sup> Reza Adeputra Tohis, "Islam Progresif Dan Tan Malaka (Reposisi MADIALOG Sebagai Metode Pemikiran Islam Progresif)," *Aqlam: Journal of Islam and Plurality* 6, no. 2 (October 21, 2021), accessed June 29, 2022, <http://journal.iain-manado.ac.id/index.php/AJIP/article/view/1%20-%2022>.

Dan Respon atas Tantangan Global."<sup>10</sup> Syafi'i wrote about the philosophy held by Muslim intellectuals who were required to be current with society. Through a progressive Ijtihad with three research focuses justice, gender, and human right. He also disclosed information regarding the epistemology of Omid Safi's thought.

According to the several studies above, what distinguishes this research from previous research is the selection of issues that specifically address the issue of pluralism through Omid Safi's perspective. The issues surrounding the misunderstanding of the rigid and harsh face of Islam are discussed in more depth. The author tries to reveal the root cause of the misunderstanding and who is actually responsible for the negative assessment. What is the next role of a progressive Muslim in responding to it.

## RESEARCH METHODS

This research is library research, the information gathered was from sources such as books and periodicals that dealt with actual items and formal research objects. The researcher's method for analyzing the data involved several steps, including reading at the symbolic level, which refers to reading that wasn't done thoroughly at first but instead focused on capturing an overview of the book's contents from the chapters that make up the book, down to its smallest components. Additionally, reading semantically entails reading carefully, deciphering the information, and absorbing its core.<sup>11</sup> Descriptive and interpreting techniques are applied. The descriptive approach is utilized to coherently explain the problems associated with Omid Safi's progressive Muslim ideals. Where problems are not only presented in the abstract and separated from concrete life, but it must be felt that the conceptions presented are indeed born and grow from concrete problems and situations, thus providing answers to problems. Meanwhile, the interpretation method is to capture the explicit and implicit meaning of pluralism issues that occur, especially religious pluralism. From here, the meaning contained in reality can be easily captured and understood. Through the interpretation dimension, efforts are made to obtain an explanation based on structure and form such as values, views of life, and the knowledge system contained.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Knowing the Meaning and Great Mission of Progressive Muslims

In an effort to represent Muslims in the 20th and 21st centuries, Tariq Ramadhan divides Muslims into six groups: Sufism, Liberal or Rational Reformism, Political Literalist Salafism, Salafi Literalism, and Scholastic Traditionalism. In addition, he pointed out that liberal or rational reformism is a group that includes progressive Muslims.<sup>12</sup>

The term "progressive" came into use, and it is frequently understood to mean unrestrained, unrestricted advancement, giving rise to liberalism. Because of this

---

<sup>10</sup> Muhammad Syafi'i, "Ijtihad Epistemologis Muslim Progresif Omid Safi dan Respon Atas Tantangan Global," *NALAR: Jurnal Peradaban dan Pemikiran Islam* 2, no. 1 (August 30, 2018): 57, accessed June 29, 2022, <http://e-journal.iain-palangkaraya.ac.id/index.php/nalar/article/view/740>.

<sup>11</sup> Kaelan, *Metode Penelitian Kualitatif Bidang Filsafat* (Yogyakarta: Paramadina, 2005), 157.

<sup>12</sup> Tariq Ramadan, *Western Muslims and the Future of Islam* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 24–28.

interpretation, the terms "progressive Muslim" and "liberal Muslim," which have distinct connotations, are frequently used in opposition to one another. Progressive Muslims are a continuation of liberal Muslims who attempt to challenge the beliefs and actions of people who are less humanistic, claims Omid Safi.<sup>13</sup> In introducing the term progressive Muslim, Safi intends to clarify to the Western world that Islam is a hard and rigid religion and does not respect women's rights.<sup>14</sup> The term "liberal" gives off an elitist and arrogant attitude, which is obviously at odds with the objectives of "progressive Muslims," whose existence represents an alternative to the development of Islamic civilisation. Furthermore, according to Safi, an elitist attitude (feeling self-righteous) that only cares about criticism without any action or solution is not a meaningful struggle.<sup>15</sup>

It is referred to as an alternative since progressive Muslims offer a range of options for a Muslim's behavior. Aside from outlining discourses and theories, one should also be able to offer instances that fit the situation. Because its focus is on people and it strives to critique modern ideas, progressive Islam is a modernist movement that simultaneously transforms into a postmodernist one. Therefore, progressive Islamic thought should be oriented towards things that are progress.<sup>16</sup> Before attempting to define what progressive Muslims include, it is important to consider the subject from a linguistic angle.

Naturally, progressive Muslims are responsible for some of the justifications for the designation. Why 'progressive Muslims' rather than 'critical Muslims,' 'liberal Muslims,' or 'reformer Muslims'? Actually, the definition of "progressive Muslim" has been contested in a number of contexts because progress itself is progress, but progress toward what? Additionally, the growth of the idea that progressives are clever, developed individuals as opposed to non-progressives also adds to the ambiguity surrounding the intended meaning. But aside from that, the objective is to implement a free and secure notion to carry out the inclusion of tradition in additional efforts.<sup>17</sup>

In this context, the term "liberal Muslim" is not utilized because the definition of the term itself is ambiguous. Progressive Muslims' goals and ambitions cannot be reconciled with an understanding of Islam that is so loose. The idea that modernity and the American and European power structures have a significant influence on liberal Muslims contributes to inequity in Western predominance.<sup>18</sup> Furthermore, to overcome uncertainty about the meaning of progressive, Omid Safi provides criteria for this. So that what is meant by "progressive" according to Omid Safi, is an effort to change towards a better, more useful and efficient way for human life and the world as a whole.<sup>19</sup>

The phrase "progressive Muslim" first appeared in a Toronto, Canada, Islamic organization in 1999. Omid Safi is the organization's leader, and it is known as the

<sup>13</sup> Aminudin, "Islam Progresif."

<sup>14</sup> Fauzi, "Gagasan 'Muslim Progresif' Omid Safi: Antara Tasawuf Dan Humanisme."

<sup>15</sup> Busyro et al., "Implementasi Islam Progresif Pada Permendikbud Ristek No.30 Tahun 2021 Dalam Kajian Filsafat Hukum Islam," *Al-Manahij: Jurnal Kajian Hukum Islam* 16, no. 1 (June 2022): 151.

<sup>16</sup> Farish Noor, *Islam Progresif: Peluang, Tantangan, Dan Masa Depan Di Asia Tenggara* (Yogyakarta: SAMHA, 2006), 23.

<sup>17</sup> Aminudin, "Islam Progresif."

<sup>18</sup> Safi, *Progressive Muslim: On Justice, Gender, and Pluralism*, 84.

<sup>19</sup> Omid Safi, *The Politics of Knowledge in Premodern Islam* (Chappel Hill: UNC Press, 2006), 77.

Progressive Muslim Network (PMN).<sup>20</sup> He is an assistant professor of philosophy of religion at Colgate University and an American citizen. Safi also serves on the American Academy of Religion's Steering Committee for Islamic Studies. His research focuses on postmodern Muslim ideas, premodern Islamic history, and sufi mysticism (Islamic mysticism).<sup>21</sup>

Progressive Muslims in Safi's opinion, need to start managing the modern Islam's currents while doing their best to establish justice within a multiethnic community.<sup>22</sup> Additionally, He advocated for active participation of progressive Muslims in real-world activities. On the basis of this, Safi declines to be a critical Muslim because, in his opinion, such a Muslim only tends to complain nonstop about the state of the world without actually doing anything about it. Furthermore, Safi suggested that progressive Muslim ideas should not only focus on criticism, but be directly involved in terms of real social transformation actions.<sup>23</sup>

According to mukhlis, the messages of the Qur'an found in al-Hijr/15:29, d/38:71, and al-Nahl/16:90 contain the objectives of progressive Muslims. Every person has a virtue, fighting for justice for all people is the reason humans are in the world, and everyone should be kind and courteous to others. Mukhlis also outlined the methods used, which include critical engagement with tradition, twofold critique of modernity, looking for the roots of plurality, and moving beyond apologetics.<sup>24</sup>

Therefore, the term "Muslim" was chosen because in this case Muslims, it is humans who have both progressive and non-progressive traits. Therefore, a Muslim must decide whether to become progressive or not if they want to be mentioned as progressive Muslims.<sup>25</sup> Progressive Muslims are focused on three main tasks in an endeavor to sustain humanism values that are the hallmark of modern thought. Concerns about justice, gender equality, and plurality are among them. A humanitarian catastrophe and a lack of sympathy for other downtrodden people have resulted from these themes, which have recently become critical challenges that plague mankind.<sup>26</sup> The three-way interaction calls for progressive Muslims to go above and above and work together to eradicate the problem's underlying causes.

**First**, Nurkholish Madjid stated that the primary concern that people have been aware of since they first began to think is justice. He was speaking about social justice in social life.<sup>27</sup> According to historical authorities, the Hammurobi Code (Code of Hammuroby) is where justice first became evident, which is why Babylon is regarded as the first nation to establish a judicial system based on the law. The Semites of Mesopotamia had a profound impact on his thought. Until Prophet Abraham, a Babylonian and the son of Azar, it persisted. As stated in a quote from Omid Safi's journal, "Voices of Islam," the idea that justice will bring about peace should not just be

<sup>20</sup> M. Arfan Muammar, Abdul Wahid Hasan, dkk, *Studi Islam Perspektif Insider/ Outsider* (Yogyakarta: IRCiSoD, 2013), 367.

<sup>21</sup> M.Arfa Muammar and Wahid Hasan, *Studi Islam Perspektif Insider/ Outsider* (Yogyakarta: IRCiSoD, 2013), 367.

<sup>22</sup> Muammar and Hasan, *Studi Islam Perspektif Insider/ Outsider*, 2.

<sup>23</sup> Fauzi, "Gagasan 'Muslim Progresif' Omid Safi: Antara Tasawuf Dan Humanisme."

<sup>24</sup> Mukhlis, "Metodologi Muslim Progresif dalam Memahami Pesan Sejati Al-Qur'an."

<sup>25</sup> Mukhlis, "Metodologi Muslim Progresif dalam Memahami Pesan Sejati Al-Qur'an," 8–10.

<sup>26</sup> Mukhlis, "Metodologi Muslim Progresif dalam Memahami Pesan Sejati Al-Qur'an," 3.

<sup>27</sup> Nurcholis Madjid, *Islam Doktrin Dan Peradaban* (Jakarta: Paramadina, 2008), 503.

seen as a "safe" stance during times of hostilities. More crucial than preserving a "safe" environment is the fight for justice.<sup>28</sup>

**Second**, realizing gender equality. If discrimination against women is eliminated, Muslims can be considered progressive. Because social justice and pluralism, which are based on gender equality, are one of the indicators of Islam's advancement. If you look at history, the Prophet is even an excellent example of this. When he dispatched Aisyah to deliver a specific lesson on Islamic beliefs. This implies that men and women hold the same positions and have the same rights. The Qur'an and hadith have faulty meanings and interpretations from specific groups' perspectives, which results in women's positions being consistently suppressed. This is one of the reasons of gender-based discrimination.<sup>29</sup>

Gender issues are examined from a language standpoint in addition to theological and cultural perspectives. Ardiansyah, who wrote about gender and language in the journal *al-Turats*, asserted that Arabic has a patriarchal history by reiterating this notion in a claim that language is a mirror of culture and that it is crucial as a medium of communication in the Middle East. Therefore, it is extremely conceivable that language plays a unique function in culture.<sup>30</sup>

Women should be entitled to the same rights as men as they are fellow humans. Considering that everyone has essentially the same status in God's eyes. Level of piety makes a difference. It should be underlined that Omid Safi's views on gender equality and justice must be applied to women in this situation, not out of kindness or compassion for them, but rather because they are a part of human beings who do have the right to everything they deserve.<sup>31</sup>

Furthermore, HT Wilson defines gender in *Sex and Gender* as the foundation for identifying cultural traits and aspects of society that divide men from women.<sup>32</sup> The developing understanding of gender equality in society is currently only seen as a feminist tool with inbuilt features like lipstick and powder. Even though it is far from that, discussions on gender equality ought to focus on how women are perceived in public. Progressive Muslims strive to comprehend feminism as the multiplicity of women's identities and the particularity of the setting. attempting to incorporate feminist discourse with Muslim women's expression of their involvement in gender issues. In turn, this opens up a channel for conversation and horizontal fraternity between Muslim women and women from various religious and cultural backgrounds.<sup>33</sup>

**Third**, realizing plurality. Giving others the freedom and chance to live their lives according to their own views is what is meant by plurality. Do not criticize, injure, or even assign blame to others who hold different opinions. Because working together to create harmony between religious communities is the core of life not being hostile.

<sup>28</sup> Vincen, "Voice of Change," in *Voice of Islam*, 1st ed., 5 vols. (London: Praeger Publisher, 2007).

<sup>29</sup> Quraish Shihab, *Wawasan Al-Qur'an* (Bandung: Mizan, 1998), 179.

<sup>30</sup> Ardiansyah, "MORFOLOGI GENDER DALAM BAHASA ARAB DAN INGGRIS (ANALISIS KONTRASTIF DALAM FUNGSI PENGAJARAN BAHASA ARAB)," *Jurnal Pemikiran Pendidikan Islam* 11 (2017): 134, journal homepage: <http://jurnaliainpontianak.or.id/index.php/atturats>.

<sup>31</sup> Siti Ruhani, "Rekonstruksi Metodologis Wacana Kesetaraan Gender Dalam Islam" (Yogyakarta: PSW IAIN Sunan Kalijaga dan McGill ICIHEP, n.d.), 82.

<sup>32</sup> Wilson H.T., *Sex Dan Gender Making Cultural Sense Civilization* (Leiden: New York Kobenhavn Koln E.J. Brill, 1989), 67.

<sup>33</sup> Gwendolyn Zoharah Simmons, "Transforming Feminism: Islam, Women and Gender," in *Muslim Progresif on Justice Gender Dan Pluralism* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2003), 240.

Globalization has had an impact on religious people's lives, making the world more visible. As a result, they need to have the appropriate perspective on religion and a constructive knowledge of differences.<sup>34</sup>

Here, plurality is referred to as the unadulterated link between diverse extant civilizations. Progressive Muslims view it as a significant problem from both a Muslim and a human perspective. According to QS. Al Maidah/ 64:

*Allah would have united you all if He had wanted to, but He needs to test you in order to give you His gift. Thus, strive to be good. What you have argued about will be revealed to Allah when you return to Him.*

In the standpoint of Islam, the quote above is both a test and a challenge to plurality. Can we advance to the point where we stop using exclusive groupings as a reference? Omid Safi responds by saying that if we can respect and include other individuals or groups at the core of something that puts all people in the same place, then plurality can be realized. When people may refer to themselves as "we," they mean all people, regardless of the distinctions and similarities that may exist.<sup>35</sup> Muslims need to start considering humanity as a priceless gift from Allah. As a result, in an effort to address the issues that are now present, both constructive criticism and an optimistic outlook are required. Thus, the desired outcome, which is the emergence of progressive Muslims, can be realized (progress).

### **Multiple Critique as a Method**

The knowledge that Islam is thought to be a progressive faith gives rise to progressive views. In light of this, it is this awareness that introduces people to the method of progressive *ijtihad* for understanding Islam itself. Progressive Islam is considered in the context of both the interpretation of *fiqh* law and the overall context of Islam. The objective is to create a generation of Muslims who are considered to be progressive and "conscious" of modernity. The author interprets the word "progressive" to signify a progression in many areas of life when used in this context. According to Barry Desker and Zainul Abidin Rasheed, the term "progressiveness" refers to the ongoing reformation of Islam that has taken place after the collapse of the independent dynasty in 1924. Rasheed asserts that a rational and reasonable attitude to thinking through issues and how they relate to the outside world is a key component of Islamic progressivism. outdoors.<sup>36</sup>

Alparsalan Acikgenc also asserts that the term "progressive Islam" is more closely associated with the harmony between the spiritual and rational parts of the basic human being.<sup>37</sup> Omid Safi gives a Multiple Critique or Multiple Critiques in viewing numerous topics as a leader who pioneered progressive Muslims. The simultaneous critique of the many communities and discourses in which we participate forms the basis of the multi-directional strategy known as dual critique.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>34</sup> Abdurrahman Wahid, *Tuhan Tidak Perlu Dibela* (Yogyakarta: LkiS, 2012), 65.

<sup>35</sup> Safi, *Progressive Muslim: On Justice, Gender, and Pluralism*, 14.

<sup>36</sup> M.Arfan Muammar, "Islam Progresif Dan Ijtihad Progresif: Membaca Gagasan Abdullah Saeed," in *Studi Islam Kontemporer Perspektif Insider/ Outsider* (Yogyakarta: IRCiSoD, 2017), 322.

<sup>37</sup> Muammar, "Islam Progresif Dan Ijtihad Progresif: Membaca Gagasan Abdullah Saeed," 323.

<sup>38</sup> Safi, *Progressive Muslim: On Justice, Gender, and Pluralism*, 2.



This dual criticism, which on the one hand blames both the West and Islam, is like a two-edged sword. based on the idea that all people, whether they are Muslims or not, male or female, wealthy or impoverished, have the same value since they are given what Omid Safi refers to as the "most valuable blessing we have been given by God." Therefore, it is important to uphold the value of individual human rights and justice.<sup>39</sup>

Simple application of multiple critique involves challenging discriminatory Islamic law and paying attention to Western policies that aim to divide Muslims.<sup>40</sup> Progressive Muslims reject secularism while also embracing a different interpretation of Islam than Wahhabis or neo-Wahhabis. Ayman al-Zawahiri, Sulaiman Abu Ghayt, and other prominent Muslim Westernmophobes are also harshly criticized and debated by progressive Muslims for their unrelenting hatred of and hostility against the West. Progressive Muslims do, however, also condemn Westerners who vehemently despise and persecute Islam (Western Islamophobes), such as Bernard Lewis, Samuel P. Huntington, Daniel Pipes, and Robert Spencer.<sup>41</sup> a strategy for Then, Safi offers multiple criticism, which is included in a number of concepts, such as:<sup>42</sup>

1. Reject simplistic and apologetic mindsets. Today's issues facing humanity and Muslims are too complicated to be solved by a straightforward approach. Safi opposes the movement toward "Pamphlet Islam," which alludes to straightforward and rigid Islamic doctrine. For instance, saying anything like "Islam says that" or "according to Islam" is a sign of sloppy thinking because Islamic tradition is incredibly diverse and varied.
2. Complete adherence to Islamic tradition. Even though he also criticizes secularism and rejectionism, which believe that Islamic tradition must be completely rejected and that we must cut off epistemology completely, progressive Muslims reject conservatism, which believes that Islamic tradition should be preserved in the same form as the legacy of the Prophet's time. According to Safi, Islamic tradition must be viewed as a tradition in transition, one that is still developing and looking for new forms to meet its changing needs. The plan is to make public concerns that Muslims are hesitant to discuss in public.<sup>43</sup>
3. The focus is on transformational initiatives and practical measures. Both activism and vision are valued by progressive Muslims. For instance, targeted specific social initiatives must include not just Muslims but all people.
4. Focus on adab and Islamic humanism. The intellectual foundation is humanism, and the code of conduct for interhuman interactions is adab. Safi now stresses the significance of exploring the Sufi tradition since at-tashawwuf kulluhu al-adab.
5. A readiness to accept wisdom and knowledge from all sources. The Qur'an and Hadith must be utilized in the 21st century; this is not sufficient. The likes of Rumi, Ibn Arabi, Plato, Ibn Sina, Chomsky, Gandhi, Edward Said, and others need to be familiar to him as secondary sources of wisdom. In a nutshell, progressive Muslim

<sup>39</sup> Safi, *Progressive Muslim: On Justice, Gender, and Pluralism*, 4.

<sup>40</sup> Ali Murfi and Rahmad Nursyahidin, "'MUSLIM PROGRESIF' OMID SAFI DAN ISU-ISU ISLAM KONTEMPORER," *Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam* 12, no. 2 (December 2, 2015): 238, accessed June 29, 2022, <http://ejournal.uin-suka.ac.id/tarbiyah/index.php/jpai/article/view/867>.

<sup>41</sup> Omid Safi, "I and Thought in a Fluid Word: Beyond Islam versus The West," in *Vincent Cornell and Omid Safi Eds, Voice of Change* (Westport: Praeger Publisher, 2007), 199–210.

<sup>42</sup> Safi, *Progressive Muslim: On Justice, Gender, and Pluralism*, 4–5.

<sup>43</sup> Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind of God: The Global Rise of Religious Violence*, 23.

epistemology is a pluralistic epistemology or, to use Amin Abdullah's phrase, a cross-reference epistemology.

### Reflection on the Pluralism Idea By Omid Safi

Plurality is a need that is almost certainly contained when discussing human communities. When seen as the abundance of God's grace, its existence can be made sweeter. However, it can also work the other way around when plurality is understood in conflicting ways, leading to a protracted argument that sparks conflict. Indonesia is referred to as a pluralistic nation, and its rich diversity in terms of language, culture, race, and religion is evidence of this. If diversity and diversity do not go hand in hand, diversity that distinguishes one another will lead to the establishment of exclusive truth claims that are "closed" to alternative facts.

This outlandish assertion of the truth gives rise to the attitude that what he believes is the only absolute truth, which is followed by the conviction that other people's beliefs must be false and should be disproved. To condition things to be how it should be, we require control. Religion is one method of control. It is difficult for religion to contribute to the resolution of societal issues, in part because the difficulties encountered daily grow more severe and the demands on humanity grow greater. Religion, with the help of the scriptures, must be able to offer practical solutions to issues in various civilizations.<sup>44</sup>

When it comes to religion, there are two key concepts that need to be defined. First, religion as it is described in the holy book's doctrine and teaching. Second, religion as the historical principles brought to life.<sup>45</sup> Both must be read together in order for the hanif religion's objectives to be fully achieved. Religion is essentially "discovered," which means that it was not something that was created by people; rather, religion is something that is held to be true that already exists. While fundamentally, religion is something that one obtains, as in, by instruction, study, and personal example as carried out by the prophets and handed down from generation to generation.<sup>46</sup>

Therefore, religion is the acceptance of principles derived from unchanging reality. People who come from different cultural origins, however, do not create variety out of their own volition but rather as a result of historical legacies. Humans do not exist for the purpose of religion. Similarly, religion is not for God because He is not in need of it. Therefore, religion must genuinely be for human freedom in order for people to be able to stand before God with dignity and creativity. The ocean was created by God, and people built ships to use it for their benefit.<sup>47</sup>

But in practical reality, religion takes on both a positive and a negative aspect, acting as both a force for good and harm. To put it another way, religion on the one hand promotes a happy, serene life while also moving society in the right direction. However, religion can also be divisive for those who practice it, which is the opposite of its constructive power. Because religious followers don't understand what is meant by the nature of religion, this occurs. People with a limited understanding of religion frequently

<sup>44</sup> Solikin AR, *Agama Dan Problem Mondial : Mengurai Dan Menjawab Problem Kemasyarakatan*, vii.

<sup>45</sup> Afif Muhammad, *Agama Dan Konflik Sosial* (Bandung: Marja, 2013), 17.

<sup>46</sup> Maskudin, *Paradigma Agama Dan Sains Nondikotomik* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2013), 61.

<sup>47</sup> Maskudin, *Paradigma Agama Dan Sains Nondikotomik*, 41.

view followers of other faiths as adversaries. A religion that is present and whose precepts are followed will lead its followers to a better, more structured way of life.<sup>48</sup>

Omid Safi believes that having a commitment to uphold and bear responsibility for issues of fairness and diversity in Muslim society is the most crucial component of becoming a progressive Muslim. In other words, it is out in the open to combat, oppose, and eradicate all manifestations of injustice in society.<sup>49</sup> Safi criticizes the idea of "tolerance" for this reason: it implies that the other is a poison that we can put up with for a while. Safi also attacked the statement "Islam as a religion of peace," saying that it has a tendency to make people forget that there are certain Muslims who do not value peace. Additionally, peace can be understood as remaining quiet, silent, and obedient in the face of injustice.<sup>50</sup>

In order to be able to approach the issue wisely, a Muslim must be progressive. Progressive Muslims are intelligent creatures who alter the world for the better by introducing new, constructive ideas. gives humanism considerable consideration and gets involved in social change on a hands-on basis. not just being negative and discussing the idea, mission, and vision.

Omid Safi's distinctive technique of multifaceted critique aims to examine the topic of plurality in addition to gender and human rights concerns. When there is diversity, people are free to practice their religions as they see fit without endangering other people, which might cause issues. The human struggle in the modern period is learning to view the numerous diversity positively.<sup>51</sup> Therefore, in order for plurality to have the spirit of bringing together disparate groups, a full understanding of religious actors is required.<sup>52</sup>

Progressive Muslims consider plurality as a single human being created by Allah rather than based on disparities in class or group. The son of Adam, the first human being that Allah created, is the only reference made to when it comes to mankind in the Qur'an. One of these may be found in QS. Al-Isra':70.

*And surely, We carried the kids of Adam on land and in the sea, provided for their nutritional needs, and honored them over many other animals that We created in flawless excess.*

The verse conveys the idea that all people are on an equal footing with God. Humans are a single species made up of all of God's creatures. This is Allah's will, despite the fact that there are numerous factions in reality. Of course, the goal is not to negate differences, but to help thinkers learn about one another and get to know one another.

In order to reach agreement on humanist thinking, people's ideas that view variations in beliefs and ideologies as differences that cause issues should need to be remedied by bringing these differences together and having discourse. Omid Safi contends that if people can respect and share a sense of purpose in life, plurality can

---

<sup>48</sup> Maskudin, *Paradigma Agama Dan Sains Nondikotomik*, 1.

<sup>49</sup> Safi, *Progressive Muslim: On Justice, Gender, and Pluralism*, 2.

<sup>50</sup> Safi, *Progressive Muslim: On Justice, Gender, and Pluralism*, 15.

<sup>51</sup> Wahid, *Tuhan Tidak Perlu Dibela*, 65.

<sup>52</sup> Madjid, *Islam Doktrin Dan Peradaban*, 112.

function well. Allah gave people color as a point of distinction. And we must comprehend the idea in order to be progressive Muslims.<sup>53</sup>

According to Safi, pluralism is more important than tolerance. Because it sends the message that "the other" is a poison that can be accepted from a tolerance standpoint. A person can only withstand the effects of consumption for a short while before they pass away. Furthermore, Safi criticized the idea that "Islam is a religion of peace" since it was seen as a type of ambivalence concerning the various oppressive practices that took place.<sup>54</sup>

The multiple criticism approach of Omid Safi helps to solve the issue of religious exclusivity. A progressive Muslim must be able to engage a large number of people in a double critique. The West is criticized on one side, while Islam is criticized on the other, like a two-edged sword. Humans' perceptions of injustice and liberal ideas are influenced by Western hegemony. Meanwhile, if progressive Muslims exhibit rigid, dogmatic, or authoritarian tendencies while dealing with pluralism, they must constantly face criticism from an Islamic standpoint.<sup>55</sup>

Safi offers a number of different alternatives as a development of his multiple critique methodology. One of them is how crucial it is to approach research with an open mind given how difficult the world's challenges are now. Progressive Muslims should not just rely on the Qur'an and Hadith as their primary sources, but also consider other sources, even if they originate in the West. based on what philosophers believe. Obviously, by taking into account how it is framed within Islamic principles. Safi also attacked the conservatism that upholds the legacy of the Prophet's time. Islamic tradition is viewed as having to change in order to respond to issues that are consistent with the difficulties that civilization faces.

## CONCLUTION

The goal of plurality is to provide people the freedom to practice their respective religious lives. The issue with plurality that typically arises is the exclusivist mindset of religion devotees who reject or even act anarchically against alternative facts. This circumstance, in Safi's opinion, can lead to the demise of a civilization. Therefore, it is vital to reform progressive Muslims' thinking, namely Muslims with open and sophisticated perceptions. The approach put forth by Omid Safi is one of double criticism, or double criticism, which calls for criticizing both Muslims and the West, particularly those Muslims whose viewpoints are still seen as rigid and static. It is vital to reform through the ideas of the figures because problems become more complex and cannot be resolved by referring to just one source of guidance from the Qur'an and Hadith. Safi views plurality as a need that Allah has created, hence its legitimacy should not be questioned. In Allah's eyes, all people are on an equal footing. When a person can use the pronoun "we" despite differences, they are said to be plural. People may view plurality as a normal occurrence that shouldn't cause any issues. In reality, it develops into a storehouse of information that broadens perspectives. Far from that, it would be preferable to devote energy to strengthen each other's nations rather than discussing disagreements. As a form that transcends tolerance, plurality is regarded (Beyond

<sup>53</sup> Safi, *Progressive Muslim: On Justice, Gender, and Pluralism*, 14.

<sup>54</sup> Safi, *Progressive Muslim: On Justice, Gender, and Pluralism*, 15.

<sup>55</sup> Safi, *Progressive Muslim: On Justice, Gender, and Pluralism*, 4.

Pluralism). Tolerance is like thinking of "the other" as a poison that can be handled up to a point. As a result, Safi disapproves of the idea because it raises the possibility of human separation.

## REFERENCES

- Aminudin, Aminudin. "Islam Progresif: Telaah atas Pemikiran Omid Safi." *Farabi* 16, no. 2 (December 31, 2019): 147–160. Accessed June 29, 2022. <https://journal.iaingorontalo.ac.id/index.php/fa/article/view/1085>.
- Aminudin, Aminudin. "Pemikiran Abdullah Saeed Tentang Muslim Progresif Sebagai Jalan Alternatif Tantangan Era Modern." *Rusydiah: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam* 2, no. 1 (August 4, 2021): 40–52. Accessed June 28, 2022. <http://ejournal.stainkepri.ac.id/index.php/rusydiah/article/view/267>.
- Ardiansyah. "Morfologi Gender dalam Bahasa Arab dan Inggris (Analisis Kontrastif Dalam Fungsi Pengajaran Bahasa Arab)." *Jurnal Pemikiran Pendidikan Islam* 11 (2017): 133–145. [journal homepage: http://jurnal.iainpontianak.or.id/index.php/atturats](http://jurnal.iainpontianak.or.id/index.php/atturats).
- Busyro, Hanif Aidil Alwana, Arsal, Shafra, and Gusril Basril. "Implementasi Islam Progresif Pada Permendikbud Ristek No.30 Tahun 2021 Dalam Kajian Filsafat Hukum Islam." *Al-Manahij: Jurnal Kajian Hukum Islam* 16, no. 1 (June 2022): 149–164.
- Fauzi, M. Sya'dullah. "Gagasan 'Muslim Progresif' Omid Safi: Antara Tasawuf Dan Humanisme." *Arrahim.Id*, January 13, 2021. <https://arrahim.id/msf/gagasan-muslim-progresif-omid-safi-antara-tasawuf-dan-humanisme/>.
- H.T, Wilson. *Sex Dan Gender Making Cultural Sense Civilization*. Leiden: New York Kobenhavn Koln E.J. Brill, 1989.
- Juergensmeyer, Mark. *Terror in the Mind of God: The Global Rise of Religious Violence*. 3rd ed. England: University of California Press, 2003.
- Kaelan. *Metode Penelitian Kualitatif Bidang Filsafat*. Yogyakarta: Paramadina, 2005.
- Madjid, Nurcholis. *Islam Doktrin Dan Peradaban*. Jakarta: Paramadina, 2008.
- Maskudin. *Paradigma Agama Dan Sains Nondikotomik*. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2013.
- Muammar, M.Arfa. "Islam Progresif Dan Ijtihad Progresif: Membaca Gagasan Abdullah Saeed." In *Studi Islam Kontemporer Perspektif Insider/ Outsider*. Yogyakarta: IRCiSoD, 2017.
- Muammar, M.Arfa, and Wahid Hasan. *Studi Islam Perspektif Insider/ Outsider*. Yogyakarta: IRCiSoD, 2013.
- Muhammad, Afif. *Agama Dan Konflik Sosial*. Bandung: Marja, 2013.
- Mukhlis, Mukhlis. "Metodologi Muslim Progresif dalam Memahami Pesan Sejati Al-Qur'an." *Al-Tahrir: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam* 11, no. 1 (May 1, 2011): 29. Accessed

- June 29, 2022.  
<http://jurnal.stainponorogo.ac.id/index.php/tahrir/article/view/25>.
- Murfi, Ali, and Rahmad Nursyahidin. "Muslim Progresif Omid Safi dan Isu-Isu Islam Kontemporer." *Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam* 12, no. 2 (December 2, 2015): 229–242. Accessed June 29, 2022. <http://ejournal.uin-suka.ac.id/tarbiyah/index.php/jpai/article/view/867>.
- Noor, Farish. *Islam Progresif: Peluang, Tantangan, Dan Masa Depan Di Asia Tenggara*. Yogyakarta: SAMHA, 2006.
- Ramadan, Tariq. *Western Muslims and the Future of Islam*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2004.
- Ruhani, Siti. "Rekonstruksi Metodologis Wacana Kesetaraan Gender Dalam Islam." Yogyakarta: PSW IAIN Sunan Kalijaga dan McGill ICIHEP, n.d.
- Saeed, Abdullah. *Pemikir Islam: Sebuah Pengantar*. Yogyakarta: Kaukaba, 2017.
- Safi, Omid. "I and Thought in a Fluid Word: Beyond Islam versus The West." In *Vincent Cornell and Omid Safi Eds, Voice of Change*. Westport: Praeger Publisher, 2007.
- Safi, Omid. *Progressive Muslim: On Justice, Gender, and Pluralism*. Oxford: Oneworld, 2003.
- Safi, Omid. *The Politics of Knowledge in Premodern Islam*. Chappel Hill: UNC Press, 2006.
- Shihab, Quraish. *Wawasan Al-Qur'an*. Bandung: Mizan, 1998.
- Simmons, Gwendolyn Zoharah. "Transforming Feminism: Islam, Women and Gender." In *Muslim Progresif on Justice Gender Dan Pluralism*. Oxford: Oneworld, 2003.
- Solikin AR, Nur. *Agama Dan Problem Mondial: Mengurai Dan Menjawab Problem Kemasyarakatan*. 1st ed. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2013.
- Syafi'i, Muhammad. "Ijtihad Epistemologis Muslim Progresif Omid Safi dan Respon Atas Tantangan Global." *NALAR: Jurnal Peradaban dan Pemikiran Islam* 2, no. 1 (August 30, 2018): 57. Accessed June 29, 2022. <http://e-journal.iain-palangkaraya.ac.id/index.php/nalar/article/view/740>.
- Tohis, Reza Adeputra. "Islam Progresif dan Tan Malaka (Reposisi MADILOG Sebagai Metode Pemikiran Islam Progresif)." *Aqlam: Journal of Islam and Plurality* 6, no. 2 (October 21, 2021). Accessed June 29, 2022. <http://journal.iain-manado.ac.id/index.php/AJIP/article/view/1%20-%202022>.
- Vincen. "Voice of Change." In *Voice of Islam*. 1st ed. London: Praeger Publisher, 2007.
- Wahid, Abdurrahman. *Tuhan Tidak Perlu Dibela*. Yogyakarta: LkiS, 2012.