

A Study of The Problematic Tradition and Modernity in Islamic Thought Based on A Contemporary Approach

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Abstract

This study is primarily concerned with the challenges posed by the Arab-Islamic revival and its relationship to the system of reason that is intrinsic to the Arab-Islamic tradition of thought. The object of this study can be traced through the dialectics of contemporary Islamic thought, as evidenced in the tenets of several dominant madhabs, including those espoused by fundamentalists, liberalists, Marxists and post-traditionalists. The data is studied and analysed through the lenses of hermeneutics and the sociology of knowledge. This study finds that one of the causes of the decline and stagnation of the revival of Islamic civilisation in terms of its epistemology is the unduly strong Arab-Islamic system of thought, which relies on the glory of the past without a critical reading of the past itself and of modernity as an achievement of Western civilisation.

Keywords: *turath, hadathab, contemporary*

Abstrak

Studi ini berfokus pada problematika kebangkitan Arab-Islam dan kaitannya dengan sistem nalar yang melekat pada tradisi pemikiran Arab-Islam. Objek kajian ini dapat ditelusuri datanya melalui dealektika pemikiran Islam kontemporer yang terdapat pada pemikiran beberapa madhab dominan antara lain, kelompok fundametalis, liberalis, marxis, dan postradisional. Data-data itu dikaji dan dianalisa melalui pendekatan hermeneutika dan sosiologi pengetahuan. Kajian ini menemukan bahwa salah satu penyebab mundur dan lamabtnya kebangkitan peradaban Islam, ditinjau dari sisi epsitemolginya adalah terlalu kuatnya sistem berpikir Arab-Islam yang mengandalkan pada kejayaan masa lalu tanpa pembacaan kritis terhadap masa lalu itu sendiri dan terhadap modernitas sebagai capaian dari peradaban Barat.

Kata kunci: *turath, hadatab, kontemporer*

INTRODUCTION

This study broadly reflects the intellectual anxiety of Arab-Islamic thinkers in response to perceived declines in various fields, particularly in the realms of science and technology. This anxiety emerged in the wake of the 1967 defeat of the Arabs by Israel.¹ Concurrently, Arab-Islamic civilization is

¹ See further some of Ibrahim Abu Rabi's writings, among others, *Contemporary Arab Thought: Studies in Post-1967 Arab Intellectual History* (London: Pluto Press, 2004.), pp. 43-45; "Contemporary Islamic Intellectual History: A Theoretical Perspective," *Islamic Studies*, Vol. 44, No. 4 (Winter, 2005), pp. 503-526. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20838990>. (accessed July 23, 2014); "Islamic Resurgence and the Problematic of Tradition in the Modern Arab World: The Contemporary Academic Debate," *Islamic Studies*, Vol. 34, No. 1 (Spring 1995), pp. 43-66. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20840194>. (Accessed June 16, 2014). Compare with, Israel Gershoni, "Trends and Issues in Contemporary Arab Thought by Issa J. Boullata," *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 28, No. 3 (Jul., 1992), pp. 609-616. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4283517>. (Accessed June 16, 2014); Yudian Wahyudi, The Slogan "Back to The Qur'an and Sunna: A Comparative Study of the Responses of Hasan Hanafi, Muhammad 'Abid al-Jabiri,

confronted with the reality of the advancement of Western civilization and its modernization project. The concept of modernity, as an achievement of Western civilization with its inherent advantages and disadvantages, becomes a source of contention when it is applied to Arab-Islamic civilization. The acceptance or rejection of modernism is an inevitable aspect of Islamic discourse. The debate surrounding this issue can be distilled to a discourse on "self-criticism," which poses the fundamental question of whether the *turath* (traditional Islamic knowledge) should be understood for the benefit of modernity or vice versa, with modernity being understood for the benefit of the *turath*. This discussion, within the context of contemporary Islamic thought, has led to the emergence of numerous variants, models, and approaches.

In order to address this fundamental issue, this study puts forth at least three hypotheses. Firstly, it is evident that the issue of Arab-Islamic revival is inextricably linked to the Arab-Islamic *turath*, which has its roots in a rich and diverse historical past. Secondly, *turath*, as defined by Muhammad 'Abid al-Jabiri, can be understood as "the legacy of intellectual culture, both distant and proximate, positive and negative, accompanying our present", which has shaped the way of thinking and behaving towards the contemporary reality. Thirdly, the relationship between *turath* and modernity (*al-Turath wa al-Hadath*) in the context of revival (*nabdab*) is not one of opposition, but rather a dialogical-dialectical relationship.

The term '*turath*' is a neologism that has been coined by contemporary Islamic thinkers, including Hasan Hanafi, Muhammad Abid al-Jabiri, Aisyah Abdurrahman, Adonis, Muhammad Arkoun, Fahmi Jad'an, and numerous other contemporary Islamic thinkers. These thinkers concur that the concept of *turath* does not correspond to the interpretation presented in classical Arabic thought, which emphasizes the principles of Islamic law in the form of property inheritance. Instead, it is more accurately understood as a legacy of intellectual tradition.²

In contemporary discourse, the issue of *turath* is employed in two distinct yet interrelated ways. The first is employed as a point of return, without any critical examination. The second approach makes it a place of return by revisiting it in the context of modernity. Therefore, objective

and Nurholish Madjid". Dissertation. (Canada: The Institute of Islamic Studies McGill University Montral, 2012), p. 120.

² See, Hasan Hanafi, *al-Turath wa al-Tajdid, Mauqifiina min al-Turath*, (Bairut: Al-Muassasah al-Jam'iyyah li al-Dirâsâh wa al-Nasyr wa al-Tauzi), h. 18., Muhammad 'Abid Al-Jabiri. *al-Turath wa al-Hadathab, Dirasat wa Munaqashat* (Beirut: Markaz Dirasat al-Wahdah al-'Arabiyah, 1991), 23, Aisyah Abdurrahman, *Turathuna Baina al-Madi Wa al-Hadir*, (Cairo, 1991), h. 43-44, Adonis, *Al-Thabit wa al-Mutabwil: Babth fi al-Ittiba' wa al-Ibda' 'inda al-'Arab*. Vols 1. (Beirut: Dar al-Saqi, 2002), 14., Muhammad Arkoun, "al-Turath: Muhtawah wa-Huwiyatuh, Ijabiyah wa Salbiyah." Dalam *al-Turath Tabaddiyat al-'Asr fi al-Watan al-'Arabi*, ed. Al-Sayyid Yasin, (Beirut: al-Mu'assasah al-'Arabiyah li al-Dirasat wa al-Nashr, 2000), 155-167, Fahmi Jad'an, *Nazriyat al-Turath wa al-Dirasat al-'Arabiyah wa al-Islamiyah Ukhra*, (Amman: Dar al-Shuruq, 1985), 17.

conditions that, on the one hand, can facilitate the development of the revival discourse, but on the other hand, have effectively transformed the mechanism and process of revival into a mechanism of apology and self-defense. The studies of Kate Zebiri, Aziz Al-Azmeh, Bernard Haykel, Basheer Nafi, Gilles Kepel, Roxanne L. Euben, and Muhammad Qasim Zaman substantiate the presence of a fundamentalist spirit.³

METHODOLOGY

This study will be guided by a qualitative writing model with a library method (library research) that relies on searching and reviewing a number of documents relevant to the focus of the study such as the Qur'an, Hadith, literature books, manuscripts, journals, and various articles.⁴ The documents will be reviewed as guided by literature writing by collecting, reviewing, analyzing, and concluding from the content of meaning. This review activity will be analyzed with a hermeneutical approach, which is a method of understanding to produce an objective understanding as explained by Emilio Betti. According to him, the hermeneutic task includes two things: first, the deciphering of the exact meaning-content of a word, verse, or text; second, the discovery of the purpose contained in symbolic forms.⁵

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study of turath (tradition) and its relation to modernity from the perspective of Islamic thought or rather Muslim scholars is quite rampant, especially since the *nahdah* era.⁶ Questions about how

³ See, Ismael Hossein-zadeh, "The Muslim World and the West: The Roots of Conflict". <http://www.cbpa.drake.edu/hossein-zadeh/>. (Diakses, 15 Mei 2015), Kate Zebiri, "Mawdudi and the making of Islamic revivalism". *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, University of London, Vol. 61, No. 1 (1998), pp. 167-168. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3107335>. (Diakses, 13 April 2015), Aziz Al-Azmeh, "Islamist Revivalism and Western Ideologies". *History Workshop*, No. 32 (Autumn, 1991), pp. 44-53. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4289100>. (Diakses, 15 April 2015), Bernard Haykel, "On the Nature of Salafi Thought and Action & Appendix: Al-Qaeda's Creed and Path". dalam: Meijer, Roel (ed.) *Global Salafism: Islam's New Global Movement*. (London: C. Hurst & Company, 2009), pp. 33-57, Basheer Nafi, "The Rise of Islamic Reformist Thought and its Challenge to Traditional Thought". dalam: Taji-Farouki, Suha and Basheer M. Nafi (eds.) *Islamic Thought in the Twentieth Century*. London and New York: 2004), pp. 28-60, Kepel, Gilles, *Jihad: The Trail of Political Islam*, (Cambridge (Mass.): The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2002), Roxanne L. Euben, dan Muhammad Qasim Zaman (Eds.). *Princeton Readings in Islamist Thought: Texts and Contexts from al-Banna to Bin Laden*. (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2009).

⁴ Bogdan and Taylor define qualitative methodology as an assessment procedure that produces descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words from people and behaviors that can be observed. Quoted from, Drs. Sudarto, *Philosophy Research Methodology* (Jakarta: Rajawali Press, 1996), 62.

⁵ Emilio Betti dalam, Josef Bleicher (Ed.), *Contemporary Hermeneutics* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1980), 43.

⁶ Nahdah was a broad political and cultural movement that dominated the period 1850-1914 AD. Referring to Abdullah Laroui's opinion that the history of Arab intellectual thought is divided into four periods, namely, first, Nahdah-the period of the greatest Arab cultural renaissance in the 19th century (1850 AD) until 1914 AD), second, the period between the two world wars (WWI and WWII) until the mid-1950s, third, the period of the experimentation of Arab nationalism under the ideological umbrella of Nasser and the Ba'th Party after WWII until the 1967 Arab-Israeli War, fourth, the period of moral and political crisis after the defeat of the 1967 War (hazimah) which was later referred to as the second nahdah which is the second Arab awakening. See Abdullah Laroui, *The Crisis of the Arab Intellectual: Traditionalism or Historicism*, (University of California Press, 1976), p. vii-viii. Compare with, Ibrahim M. Abu Rabi', "The Arab World" in Seyyed Hossein Nasr and Oliver Leaman (eds.), *History of Islamic Philosophy*

Muslims should read and behave towards their own traditions and at the same time towards modernity as an achievement of civilization that is identical to the West have again strengthened in the midst of Muslims, especially after the defeat of the Arab nation by Israel in 1967.

Ibrahim Abu Rabi (1995) in 'Toward a Critical Arab Reason: The Contributions of the Moroccan Philosopher Muhammad 'Ābid al-Jābirī, attempted to explain the epistemological angle of Arabic reason using al-Jabiri's perspective. In this study, it is argued that Arabic reason relies too much on text (the past) as a proposition in seeing reality. The impact is the lack of respect for change. This research emphasizes the aspect of the philosophy of science, namely how the deductive method controls Arabic reasoning.⁷

Issa J. Boullata (1990) in 'Trends and Issues in Contemporary Arab Thought reviews the critical views of a number of contemporary Arab thinkers on issues of culture, heritage, history, and the role of Arab women that have recently received much attention. From a survey of these thinkers, Boullata concludes that the dominance of Western imperialism accompanied by Arab underdevelopment and defeat by Zionist Israel in 1948 and 1967 prompted Arab intellectuals to devote their attention to explaining the stagnation and failure of the (Arab) Islamic renaissance and then planning a desirable development model in the future. Boullata's historical-comparative approach can show the map of contemporary Arab-Islamic thought.⁸

Another study is shown by Armando Salvatore (1995) in, 'The Rational Authentication of Turath in Contemporary Arab Thought: Muhammad al-Jabiri and Hassan Hanafi'. This research shows a comparison of thoughts between al-Jabiri and Hassan Hanafi on the issue of reading Islamic tradition (al-Turath al-Islami). Salvatore finds an anomaly when modernity as a European characteristic is used as an 'intellectual framework' to examine the Arabic *turath*. He proposes philosophical (especially philosophy of science) and political (especially political ideology) approaches and discourse analysis and frame analysis to reconstruct the Arab intellectual frame in matters of tradition.⁹

(London and New York: Routledge, 1996), 1085; "Islam, the West and the Challenges of Modernity by Tariq Ramadan." *Islamic Studies*, Vol. 41, No. 3 (Autumn 2002), pp. 507-515. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20837214>. (Accessed July 23, 2014). See also, Muhammad Mumtaz Ali, "The Concept of Modernization: An analysis of Contemporary Islamic Thought." *American Journal of Islamic Science*, Vol 14. No.1, (t.t), pp. 13-25. <http://www.iiit.org/>. (Accessed September 01, 2014).

⁷ Ibrahim Abu Rabi, "Toward a Critical Arab Reason: The Contributions of the Moroccan Philosopher Muḥammad'Ābid al-Jābirī," *Islamic Studies*, Vol. 42, No. 1 (Spring 2003), pp. 63-95. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20837251>

⁸ See, Israel Gershoni, "Trends and Issues in Contemporary Arab Thought by Issa J. Boullata," *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 28, No. 3 (Jul., 1992), pp. 609-616. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4283517>.

⁹ Armando Salvatore, "The Rational Authentication of Turath in Contemporary Arab Thought: Muhammad al-Jabiri and Hassan Hanafi," *Moslem World*, LXXXV, (Juli-Oktober, 199), 3-4.

Another research that should be mentioned here is Nadia Warden's dissertation (2008) entitled, *The Problematic of Turath in Contemporary Arab Thought: A Study of Adonis and Hasan Hanafi*. This study analyzes the thoughts of Hasan Hanafi, whom Nadia calls an 'Islamic-modernist', and Adonis, a 'secular-modernist'. Both agree that the turath must be reread for contemporary needs. The difference is that Hasan Hanafi is more moderate by making revelation an authoritative source while Adonis is more liberal by deconstructing verses that hinder creativity of thought. Warden uses political ideology and phenomenological approaches in discussing the modernist perspective (Hanafi and Adonis). According to him, the issue of turath is a dynamic issue that is influenced by various cultures and ideologies.¹⁰

Yasmeen Daifallah's dissertation entitled *Political Subjectivity in Contemporary Arab Thought: The Political Theory of Abdullah Laraoui, Hassan Hanafi, and Muhammad 'Abid al-Jabiri* describes aspects of the political thought of three contemporary thinkers including al-Jabiri. Although he reviews al-Jabiri's thoughts, his attention is not on the issue of turath. Daifallah takes an anthropology and post-colonial theory approach in dissecting the concept of Political Subjectivity in contemporary Arab thought. The result is that the product of political theory cannot be sterile from subjectivity.¹¹

Al-Turath wa al-Hadatah: Some Approaches

The reading of the main theme of this study, al-Turath wa al-Hadatah, is proposed by several intellectuals who can be categorized in several madhabs. In this section, several approaches will be reviewed in dealing with the problem of al-Turath wa al-Hadatah. This presentation wants to know, first, the diversity of approaches to turath, second, to know the weaknesses and advantages of each approach.

The Fundamentalist Approach

The first approach is the fundamentalist approach. The term fundamentalist¹² - a term whose meaning has always been debated - refers to a group that wants to restore the glory of the past and

¹⁰ Nadia Warden, *The Problematic of Turats in Contemporary Arab Thought: A Study of Adonis and Hasan Hanafi* (Canada: The Institute of Islamic Studies McGill University, 2008).

¹¹ Yudian Wahyudi, *The Slogan "Back To The Qur'an and Sunna": A Comparative Study of The Responses of Hasan Hanafi, Muhammad 'Abid al-Jabiri, and Nurholish Madjid*. Dissertation. (Canada: The Institute of Islamic Studies McGill University Montreal, 2012).

¹² The term "fundamentalism" first appeared in *The Shorter English Dictionary* in 1923, following the publication of twelve theological treatises entitled, *The Fundamentals: A Testimony to Truth*. It was reported by its translators as taking a Scientific Critical Approach by Protestant scholars to the study of the Gospel. Thus, the term fundamentalism emerged from outside the historical tradition of Islam and was originally a religious movement that arose among Protestants in the United States in the 1920s. Given these origins, it could be argued that fundamentalism is in fact very typically Christian. However, despite its Protestant background, the term fundamentalism is often used

bring it totally to the present and those who reject the call of modernists such as Jamaluddin al-Afghani and Muhammad Abduh. Al-Jabiri defines a fundamentalist movement as one that carries the banner of 'authenticity' (al-Salah), an attachment to the roots of tradition as a mechanism for maintaining a particular individual identity, based on Islam's own values, i.e. 'pure Islam', and not Islam as practiced by Muslims today.

The term fundamentalism is also often paired with other terms such as 'revivalism' and 'Islamism'.¹³ In fact, fundamentalism itself has its own variants such as traditional fundamentalism, modern fundamentalism, and neo-fundamentalism. Regardless of the debate on the meaning of fundamentalism in Islam and its inherent positive and negative aspects, in the context of its response to the turath, it is almost universally agreed that they - as far as religious thought is concerned - share the common view that the 'basic teaching', the 'original' is the correct one. And that the original teaching can only be found in the literal text. In Islam, fundamentalism is usually equated with, al-Usuliyah al-Islamiyyah (Islamic fundamentalism), al-Salafiyah (heritage), Al-Shahwiyah al-Islamiyyah (Islamic revival), al-Ihya' al-Islami, (Islamic revival), al-Badil al-Islami (Islamic alternative).

In contemporary terms, fundamentalism, from Azyumardi Azra's definition, emphasizes a response to the West. Two major problems according to this movement are, first, rejecting Western secularism that separates religion and politics, second, many Muslims want their society to be governed using the Qur'an and Islamic sharia as the rule of state. In principle, the ideological views of revivalists such as Sayyid Qutb, Hasan al-Banna and al-Maududi, who are often categorized as the central figures of contemporary fundamentalism, have the following views; (1) Islam is a complete ideology for individuals, states and societies, (2) the Qur'an is the basis of Muslim life in

to designate religious phenomena that have similarities with the basic characteristics of Protestant fundamentalism. Therefore, fundamentalist thought, movements and groups can be found in all religions, such as Islamic fundamentalism, Judaism, Hinduism and Buddhism. See, William Shepard, "Christian and Islamic Fundamentalism," *Religion*, 17 (1987): 355-378. Compare with, William Shepard, "What is Islamic Fundamentalism," *Studies in Religion*, 17, 1 (1988): 5-25.

¹³ The term 'revivalism' can be paired with the terms 'reform', 'resurgence', renewal, tajdid. In the context of the history of Islamic thought, the revivalist movement can be divided into three stages: the first stage, is the stage of the movement called premodernist revivalism or also called early revivalism. The Revivalist (Pre-Modernist) group, began to emerge in the late 18th and early 19th centuries spearheaded by the Wahabiyah movement in Arabia, Sanusiyah in North Africa, Fulaniyah in West Africa; the second stage, known as classical modernism. This Modernist movement was spearheaded by Jamaluddin Al-Afghani (d.1897) throughout the Middle East, Sayyid Ahmad Khan (d.1898) in India, and Muhammad Abduh (d.1905) in Egypt; and the third stage, called postmodernist revivalism, or also called neorevivalist (new revivalist). This movement has a modern but somewhat reactionary style, with A'la al-Maududi and his Nation of Islam being a typical model for this movement. See, Abdul Hamid and Yaya, *Modern Thought in Islam*, (Bandung: Pustaka Setia, 2010), p. 183. 183. See also, Ira M. Lapidus, "Islamic Revival and Modernity: The Contemporary Movements and the Historical Paradigms", *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, Vol. 40, No. 4 (1997), pp. 444-460, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3632403>. (Accessed January 05, 2010). See also, Ibrahim Abu>Rabi', "Islamic Resurge.

the literal sense, (3) Islamic law based on the Qur'an and al-Hadith is a 'blueprint' for Muslims. The studies of Ayyub, Cudsi and Dessouki, Esposito, Kepel, Mitchell, Nasr, Abu Rabi', Roy, Ruedy, and Sivan prove the same point as Azra's that contemporary fundamentalist movements are fueled more by Western modernism.¹⁴

Adherents of the fundamentalist approach, especially after 1967, view al-Nakbah (defeatism, defeat) of the Arab-Islamic nation from Israel as a symbol of the defeat of Arab socialism. Al-Nakbah is not the defeat of Arab states or armies but a symptom of the failure of Western ideological trends such as secularism, liberalism, socialism, and nationalism because they all contradict the basic principles of Islam. Al-Jabiri views the fundamentalist approach to *turath* as an ahistorical approach and can only provide one type of understanding of tradition, namely an understanding of tradition that is trapped and immersed in the tradition. In some ways, the method of authenticity developed by fundamentalists is the same as the traditionalist approach. It is an approach modeled on the "literal and traditional understanding of tradition" (*al-fahmu al-turathi li-al-Turath*). The common feature of this approach is its involvement in the problems of the past that the tradition faces and its surrender to it. This approach has two weaknesses: a lack of critical spirit and a loss of historical awareness.¹⁵

The Liberalist Approach

If fundamentalism makes the heritage of the past the authority to determine the present and the future, then the liberalist paradigm uses the Western tradition as a measure to define the Arab-Islamic *turath* as many orientalists did. The liberals' approach is at least similar to that developed by Orientalism.¹⁶ The liberalist method, which adopts an orientalist approach that uses a Western

¹⁴ Azyumardi Azra, *Pergolakan Politik Islam: Dari Fundamentalisme, Modernisme hingga Post-Modernisme*, (Jakarta: Paramadina, 1996), p. 11. And see, Sayyid Qutb, *Ma'alim fi al-Tariq*, (Kairo: Dar al-Shauq), Abu al-'Ala al-Mawdudi, *First Principles of The Islamic State*. (Islamic Publications LTD. Lahore, 1983), Ira M. Lapidus, "Islamic Revival and Modernity: The Contemporary Movements and the Historical Paradigms", *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, Vol. 40, No. 4 (1997), pp. 444-460, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3632403>, (diakses: 05/01/2010 15:08), N.M. Ayyub, "The Political Revival of Islam: The Case of Egypt", *International Journal of Middle East Studies*. 1980 12: 481-99., Cudsi, A.S. and A.E.H. Dessouki, eds. *Islam and Power* (London: Croom Helm, 1981), Esposito, J. *Voices of Resurgent Islam* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983), *The Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), G. Kepel, *Muslim Extremism in Egypt* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), R.P. Mitchell, *The Society of Muslim Brothers* (London: Oxford University Press, 1969), Seyyed Vali Reza Nasr, *The Vanguard of the Islamic Revolution: The Jama'at-i Islami of Pakistan* (Berkeley: University of California Press 1994). Lihat juga karyanya, *Mawdudi and the Making of Islamic Revivalism*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), Ibrahim M. Abu Rabi', *Intellectual Origins of Islamic Resurgence in the Modern Arab World* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996), Oliver Roy, *The Failure of Political Islam* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1994), John Ruedy, *Islam and Secularism in North Africa* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994), Emmanuel Sivan, *Radical Islam: Medieval Theology and Modern Politics* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985).

¹⁵ Muhammad 'Abid al-Jabiri, *Al-Turath wa al-Hadathab, Dirasat wa al-Munaaqasah*. Beirut: Markaz Dirasat al-Wahdah al-'Arabiyah, 1995, 14.

¹⁶ According to Edward W. Said, theoretically orientalism involves three interrelated phenomena, (1) an orientalist is a person who teaches, writes, and researches about the East, (2) orientalism is a mode of thought based

lens in reading the Turath, seeks to eliminate the identity of the Arab-Islamic Turath. The traditions of the Arab-Islamic past - in the interests of modernity - are considered irrelevant. In addition, the methodological views of orientalists contain a pattern of confrontation with certain cultures because they read traditions through other traditions. For example, the philological method, when used to read tradition, which Orientalists often use, will only be able to reconstruct an understanding of tradition that draws on several sources from Jewish, Christian, Persian, Greek, Indian, and other traditions.

Methodologically, Orientalists generally embraced a universalist view based on Hegel's historicist method.¹⁷ Some adhere to the assumption of particularism that is infused with philological fervor. Others adopted a subjective-phenomenological approach that empathized with one of the thinkers studied. All of this boils down to a spirit of Eurocentrism. The spirit of Western historicism that led to Hegel has the principle that "the philosophy that emerges later is the result of the achievements of previous philosophical traditions, and must still be related to the principles that the tradition refers to". Consequently, the historical method emerged as an imperialist and hegemonic force in the history of mankind as a whole by promoting what it wanted and silencing what it rejected.

The Orientalist approach for example treats Islamic philosophy not as part of the Islamic cultural framework itself, but rather as a distorted and misleading continuation of Greek philosophy. The Arabic grammatical tradition (*nahw*) and several schools within it are also seen as a continuation of the Hellenistic grammatical schools in the city of Alexandria. For example, the science of *nahw* was influenced by Aristotelian logic, and Islamic jurisprudence was influenced by Roman law.¹⁸

As a result of the Orientalist approach often used by liberals, it is suspected that it will have implications for the alienation of Muslims, including, first, they are alienated from their own history, second, Muslims will be alienated from their own constitution of reason, third, Muslims will be

on ontological and epistemological distinctions between East and West, (3) orientalism can be discussed and analyzed. In short, orientalism is the West's way to dominate, restructure and control the East. Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Penthon, 1978), p. 6-7.

¹⁷ For Hegel, the philosophy of history is the universal history of mankind. Hegel is also known for his expression that all history is the history of thought. See, R.G. Collingwood, *The Idea of History*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1956), pp. 113-114. In Hegel's method of historicism, it is said that first there is a thesis (positive), then an opposing force (antithesis, negative) emerges, and from the fight there is a synthesis (combination of positive and negative). The synthesis immediately becomes a new thesis, faced with a new antithesis and produces a new thesis. And so on the dialectical process occurs.

¹⁸ Jabiri, *al-Turath wa al-Hadathab: Dirasat wa Munaqasab*, pp. 28. For more details of al-Jabiri's views on Orientalism in the context of Islamic philosophy, see the chapter, *al-Istishraq fi al-falsafah: manhaj wa al-ru'yah* (Orientalism in Islamic Philosophy: Methodology and Perception), p. 63. 63.

alienated from their own language. The alienation in question is profoundly described by Althusser as the unconscious. An Orientalist named Joseph Schacht in *An Introduction to Islamic Law* once said, "Islamic law is an overview of Islamic thought, the most typical manifestation of the Muslim way of life and is the essence of the essence of Islam itself". This statement, from the insider's perspective, has created a sense of insecurity towards their own tradition. This is a form of alienation brought about by some Orientalist approaches.¹⁹

The Marxist approach

The Marxist approach is known for its "historical materialism" method. This approach contains, first, from the methodological side, Marx's materialism will lead to the motivation for the construction of history formulated by Hegel, which is based on Eurocentrism which is a tool for Western imperialism. This means that the Marxist approach is biased toward Western ideology, especially in Europe. Secondly, from the side of the users of this method who apply it to the *truth* do not criticize whether as a methodology, it is relevant and applicable or not.²⁰

The Marxist approach referred to here refers to Karl Marx (1818-1883) who is seen as one of the adherents of the social tendency in interpreting history. As a follower of Left Neo-Hegelianism, Marx had converted Hegel's dialectic of idealism into a dialectic of materialism. In relation to Marx's historical method, it is necessary here to emphasize the stance of classical Marxism as formulated by Karl Marx: "In the process of the social production of their existence, human beings enter into definite and necessary relations, independent of their will, namely those relations of production which correspond to the stage of development which determines the forces of material production. The totality of these relations of production gives rise to the structure of economic society, the real foundations of which give rise to the legal and political superstructures, and which in turn are linked to certain forms of social consciousness."²¹

Post-traditionalist approach

The tendency of fundamentals that rely on the past and Western-biased liberals and Marxists is not satisfactory enough for those who want to respect tradition on the one hand and appreciate ideas that come from outside the Arab-Islamic tradition. Thus, a new trend, post-traditionalism, was born. It is a new term and the full idea is yet to be discovered. However, its philosophical traces can be found in thoughts that carry the theme of tradition and modernity.

¹⁹ Joseph Schacht, *Pengantar Hukum Islam*, ter. Moh. Said, dkk. (Jakarta: Ditbinperta, 1985), h.1.

²⁰ Jabiri, *Kritik Kontemporer*, 17.

²¹Karl Marx, "Preface" dan "Introduction" untuk *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1976), p. 3.

At least, in Zuhairi Misrawi's observation, there are three groups of contemporary Islamic thinkers who can be classified as the post-traditional wing. First, the eclectic wing (*al-qira'ah al-intiqiyah*). This group tries to connect originality (*al-asalah*) and modernity (*al-mu'asirah*) in building traditional theories. The principle used is to remove negative elements in the tradition and take the positive side of the tradition to solve contemporary problems. Among its figures are Fahmi Jad'an and Zaky Naqeb Mahmud. Second, the revolutionary wing (*al-qira'ah al-thauriyah*). The project is to revolutionize and liberate religious thought that has been going on for centuries. And also reconstruct classical thought by including humanistic values in religious studies. Hassan Hanafi can be said to be the key figure of this model. And Third, the deconstructive wing (*al-qira'ah al-tafkikiyah*). The effort made is to dismantle the tradition comprehensively, thus causing controversy. Even to deconstruct religious discourse, they use modern thoughts and methodologies from post-modernists, post-structuralists, hermeneutics, and semantic analysis or semiotics. The figures are Muhammad Abid al-Jabiri, Muhammad Arkoun, Nasr Hamid Abu Zayd, Aliya Harb, Muhammad Shahrur, and so on.²²

CONCLUSION

The various approaches in understanding turath and modernity are actually intellectual efforts to revive Islamic civilization, especially in science and technology civilization vis a vis the progress of modern Western civilization. The various approaches are not to weaken and even negate each other. But to see the most possible sides as an intellectual base in formulating their respective paradigms. As theoretical steps, scientists engaged in intellectual debate cannot escape the context of space and time in which thinkers produce their thoughts. In the midst of intellectual efforts in understanding the reality of the times with all the diversity of approaches presented, the formulation of conclusions can be mapped, among others, first, how important it is to place the Islamic tradition/*turath* as the basis of the identity of Islamic civilization that distinguishes it from other knowledge systems and civilizations, second, how important it is to understand the tradition of the past as something that is open for the benefit of the future without having to discard it, third, critical sharpness in viewing tradition/*turath* and modernity is a common historical event as part of the scientific tradition in Islam. And, all contemporary approaches that come from various points of view of these thinkers are in the context of a scientific spirit that is maintained and inheriting its predecessors.

²² Zuhairi Misrawi, "Dari Tradisionalisme Menuju Post-Tradisionalisme Islam, Geliat Pemikiran Islam Arab", *Jurnal Taswir al-Afkar*, No. 10, Tahun 2001, 58-59.

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