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# Inclusive, Exclusive, Didactic: Typologies of Islamic Thought on Apostasy in Muhammadiyah

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## Abstract

This study explored the typologies of Islamic thought among Muhammadiyah elites in East Java concerning the discourse on apostasy. Responses vary, with the inclusive view treating apostasy as a private matter between the individual and God, a basic human right with no legal consequences, supported by the Qur'an and the 1945 Constitution. The exclusive view, however, sees apostasy as a public offense, where freedom of choice is conditional and legal repercussions are necessary. The didactic perspective understands apostasy as a moral error, best addressed through education and compassionate guidance to encourage a return to Islam. The findings indicate a dominant trend towards inclusive views but reveal inconsistencies, as elites may express inclusive views on religious freedom while adopting exclusive stances on legal aspects of apostasy. Despite these differences, all maintain a didactic approach when dealing with apostasy within families. This study underscored the dynamic nature of Islamic thought in Muhammadiyah, challenging the perception of rigidity and highlighting the influence of diverse sociological and intellectual backgrounds.

Keywords: Muhammadiyah, Apostasy, Inclusive, Exclusive, Didactic.

## Introduction

The discourse on apostasy has become a controversial subject in contemporary Islamic thought, discussed by both international and national Muslim scholars (including Muhammadiyah). The issue of apostasy often intersects with discussions on freedom of religion, human rights, religious pluralism, multiculturalism, gender issues, interfaith tolerance, and democracy.<sup>1</sup>

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Apostasy has been a contentious issue since the early days of Islam, from the time of Prophet Muhammad to the contemporary era. During the Prophet's time, the debate around apostasy primarily focused on matters of faith (*Aqidah*).<sup>2</sup> In the era of the Companions, the issue expanded beyond matters of faith (*Aqidah*) to include a commitment to the implementation of Islamic law, particularly the obligation to pay Zakat.<sup>3</sup> In the era of the Imams of the Islamic schools of thought, the debate evolved to include differences in fiqh rulings produced by the various Imams.<sup>4</sup> In the contemporary era, the categorization of apostasy has extended to differences in socio-religious thought (sociological perspectives).<sup>5</sup>

The controversy surrounding apostasy intensifies as a majority of Middle Eastern countries, members of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), impose the death penalty for apostasy. This enforcement has led to discrimination and is seen as a means of oppression by authorities, legitimizing violence against those who do not support or share the same views. Accusations of apostasy are serious threats to an individual's life, often used by certain groups to justify persecution, intimidation, and even murder. Such incidents have previously occurred against contemporary Islamic thinkers (Nashr Hamid Abu Zayd, et al).

### Apostasy Laws, 2012



Countries with an apostasy law, rule or policy at some level of government during calendar year 2012  
PEW RESEARCH CENTER

**Figure 1.** The Practice of the Death Penalty for Apostasy in OIC Countries<sup>6</sup>

In Indonesia, the case of Ulil Abshar Abdallah involved a death fatwa issued by some Indonesian scholars due to his progressive ideas in "Revitalizing the Understanding of Islam," which were deemed insulting to Islam.<sup>7</sup> The same fate befell Abd Aziz, an author of a dissertation examining the permissibility of sexual relations with milk al-Yamin (concubines) outside of marriage. This dissertation was responded to by Buya Yahya, who stated that it falls into the category of apostasy for those who legalize sex outside of marriage.<sup>8</sup>

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The portrayal of discrimination against apostasy is reinforced by Moqsih Ghazali, who highlights that apostates face serious challenges in contemporary society, which supports freedom of religion. Contemporary society tends to believe that an individual's choice to enter or exit a religion is a private matter that should not be interfered with by any authority. Meanwhile, among the majority of *'Ulama fiqh* (Islamic jurists), there is a tendency to criminalize apostasy.<sup>9</sup>

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The issue of apostasy has gained more attention as it relates to political interests. Some suspect that the death penalty for apostasy is part of a political strategy to maintain power against critics. As

noted by Rumadi, the criticism from Nasr Hamid suggests that the death penalty for religious blasphemy and apostasy is used more to prevent reform within the Muslim community than to address matters of faith. This critique is further supported by Abdullah Saeed, who argues that understanding the phenomenon of apostasy is crucial for comprehending the socio-political context of the early and post-Prophet Muhammad (SAW) era. The imposition of penalties for apostasy occurred in a context of conflict (war) between Muslims and non-Muslims, leading to the interpretation of apostates as individuals who leave Islam and collaborate against it. Thus, apostasy is equated with treason in wartime rather than being viewed solely as a matter of faith.<sup>10</sup>

Similarly, an-Naim criticizes that if apostasy is considered a crime under Islamic law that warrants the death penalty, it contradicts verses such as Surah Al-Baqarah: 217, Surah An-Nisa: 90, Surah Al-Maidah: 54-59, Surah Al-Nahl: 108, and Surah Muhammad: 25. The Quran indeed condemns apostasy but does not specify legal consequences. On the contrary, it clearly describes situations in which apostates live among the Muslim community, as noted in Surah An-Nisa: 137. However, jurists rely on Hadith to establish the death penalty for apostasy and other legal consequences, such as the forfeiture of inheritance rights for the apostate.<sup>11</sup>

The discourse on apostasy has also become a contentious topic of study among the elite thinkers within Muhammadiyah. Based on Biyanto's research, two streams of thought have emerged concerning the discourse on freedom of religion (pluralism and apostasy): the positive (appreciative) perspective, represented by figures such as Ahmad Syafi'i Ma'arif, Amin Abdullah, Abdul Munir Mulkhan, and the negative (non-appreciative) perspective, represented by figures such as Yunahar Ilyas and Samsul Hidayat.<sup>12</sup>

The character of positive thinking is reflected in the works of books written by the intellectual elite of Muhammadiyah, such as the book *Tafsir Tematik al-Qur'an Tentang Hubungan Sosial Antar Umat Beragama* (Thematic Exegesis of the Quran on Interfaith Social Relations).<sup>13</sup> This work is the result of the National Congress of the Council of Tarjih and Development of Islamic Thought (MTPPI) of the Central Leadership of Muhammadiyah, which presents Muhammadiyah's social stance toward non-Muslim communities and interfaith marriages in a positive light. There is also the book *Fiqh Kebinekaan: Pandangan Islam Indonesia Tentang Umat, Kewargaan, dan Kepemimpinan Non-Muslim* (Islamic Law of Pluralism: Indonesian Islamic Perspectives on Community, Citizenship, and Non-Muslim Leadership), which addresses contemporary global religious issues, freedom of religion, non-Muslim leadership, multiculturalism, and more.<sup>14</sup>

In addition to books, the thoughts of Zakiyuddin Baidhawiy also reflect that apostasy is part of religious freedom and is guaranteed within the normative framework of Pancasila, specifically the principle of "Belief in One God." The issue of religion is crucial for humanity, as it involves the fundamental choice to believe (faith) or not believe (disbelief) in something perceived as "ultimate" in life. This ultimate choice is significant because the decision to believe or not is not merely about conviction; it also involves a faithful commitment to a way of life that ultimately leads to death and accountability.<sup>15</sup>

Apostasy is a personal and highly individual choice. The verse "Laa Ikraha fi 'addiin" (There is no compulsion in religion) guarantees each individual's privacy in choosing whether to follow a religion or not, depending on their own will and ability to make that choice.<sup>16</sup> Religious law is voluntary, as stated in Surah An-Nisa: 94, which reinforces an individual's freedom to believe or not to believe. This choice is not within human authority but is entirely the prerogative of Allah SWT. Takfir (declaring someone an unbeliever) and coercion regarding religious choices represent an infringement on God's authority. Khaled Abou el-Fadl refers to such individuals as "true secularists" and authoritarians.<sup>17</sup>

Khaled Abou El-Fadl asserts that the freedom to change one's religion (apostasy) is a natural right for all human beings, a gift from God, and a key element of the ability to surrender before Him. This

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view is echoed by Soroush, who argues that faith is a personal and private experience confronting death on an individual level. While the expression of faith may be public, the essence of faith is transcendent and private. True faith relies on individuality and freedom. A denial of either means rejecting faith; there should be no coercion in matters of belief.<sup>18</sup>

Meanwhile, the negative perspective on the discourse of apostasy is reflected in Yunahar Ilyas's thoughts, which suggest that the discourse on pluralism, liberalism, and the freedom to choose a religion (apostasy) is seen as too troubling or as obscuring religious beliefs (*aqidah*) among Muhammadiyah members.<sup>19</sup> As emphasized by Fakhurrozy, religious freedom is seen as a blend of right and wrong, which can lead to polytheism, heresy, and the potential to undermine Muhammadiyah's identity and divide unity.<sup>20</sup>

This phenomenon indicates that the study of apostasy continues to evolve and is dynamic among Islamic thinkers. A serious concern is the labeling of individuals as apostates, which is becoming prevalent in society. This labeling can be dangerous, as it may incite conflict and acts of violence between religious communities, especially in Indonesia, which is home to diverse faiths. Therefore, a deep reinterpretation of the dynamics of Islamic thought on apostasy is necessary, including a critical examination of the ideas circulating among the Muhammadiyah elite.

## Research Method

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This study employed a qualitative research approach with a phenomenological framework based on the sociology of knowledge. Qualitative research was applied to explore and interpret the meanings (*verstehen*) of several individuals or groups considered to stem from social or humanitarian issues.<sup>21</sup> This approach aimed to emphasize that the study of apostasy should not focus on the debate over its legal status in Islamic law (*fiqh*) but rather on the sociological awareness that is developing in society. The research approach employed phenomenology, a subjective mindset that not only examined phenomena at face value but also sought to uncover the meanings behind what is visible.<sup>22</sup> Thus, the task of phenomenology is to capture the process of meaning-making (interpretation).<sup>23</sup> This approach was used to understand the meanings behind the constructs of Muhammadiyah elite thought regarding apostasy.

The theoretical framework of the research utilized the sociology of knowledge theory. This theory explains the relationship between knowledge and social life, focusing on the idea that knowledge and ideas are bound to specific social structures and historical processes. According to Karl Mannheim, knowledge does not arise in a vacuum; rather, it is constructed by the social situations that surround it.<sup>24</sup> This theory was used to understand the socio-cultural background behind the differing characteristics of Muhammadiyah elite thought in East Java regarding apostasy.

Data collection was conducted using in-depth interviews and a literature review. Data analysis employed a descriptive phenomenological analysis method. The research informants were the leaders (elites) of Muhammadiyah in East Java. The selection of informants was based on the rationale that elites hold a strategic position within an organizational community (Muhammadiyah). The concept of elites is based on Wright Mills' elite theory, which posits that a group of individuals has significant influence and opportunities to transform religious thought, thereby making their views the official/formal perspective of the group or organization in society.<sup>25</sup> Wilfredo Pareto's elite theory divides elites into two categories: 1) governing elites, individuals who play a crucial role in manipulating political power, and 2) non-governing elites, individuals who achieve success not through positions of power.<sup>26</sup>

Based on the aforementioned theory, the elites of Muhammadiyah in East Java fall into the category of governing elites. These are individuals who hold structural power (managers/leaders) and control the movement of the organization, gaining high positions (privilege) and possessing authority in Islamic

religious knowledge. These positions include daily leaders (Chairperson-Vice Chairperson, Chairperson-Secretary), leaders of councils and institutions, and leaders of regional autonomous organizations (Ortom) in East Java. Below is the profile of the elite informants from Muhammadiyah in East Java.

**Table 1.** Sociological Background of Muhammadiyah Elites in East Java

No	Names of Muhammadiyah Elites in East Java	Structural Position of PW Muhammadiyah East Java	Genealogy of Religious Knowledge among Muhammadiyah Elites
1	Saad Ibrahim	Chairperson of PW Muhammadiyah East Java	Doctorate from IAIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta
2	A. Jainuri	Vice Chairperson of PW Muhammadiyah East Java	Doctorate from McGill University Canada - UIN Sunan Ampel
3	Najib Hamid	Vice Chairperson of PW Muhammadiyah East Java	Bachelor's Degree from Ma'had 'Aly Manarul Islam Bangil Pasuruan
4	Biyanto	Vice Secretary of PW Muhammadiyah East Java	Doctorate from IAIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya
5	Sholihin Fanani	Chairperson of the Tabligh Council of PW Muhammadiyah East Java	Bachelor's Degree from IAIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya
6	Najih Ihsan	Vice Chairperson of the Tabligh Council of PW Muhammadiyah East Java	Maskumambang Islamic Boarding School in Gresik,
7	Khoirul Abduh	Vice Chairperson of the Cooperation Agency of PW Muhammadiyah East Java	Bachelor's Degree at IAIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya.
8	Mukayat Al-Amin	Chairperson of PW Pemuda Muhammadiyah East Java	Bachelor's Degree at UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya
9	Maulana Masudi	Member of the Tabligh Council of PW Muhammadiyah East Java	Mualimin Islamic Boarding School Yogyakarta Bachelor's Degree at Al Azhar University.
10	Khoirul Warizin	Member of the Tabligh Council of PW Muhammadiyah East Java	Bachelor's Degree at UM Sidoarjo.

## Operational Definition

The typology of Islamic thought is a method for understanding Islam that develops within historical realities and in the context of the dynamics and dialectics of interpretation closely related to the dimensions of space and time. The typology of Islamic thought was used to map the construction of elite Muhammadiyah thought in East Java regarding the discourse on apostasy. The concept of apostasy as a socio-religious phenomenon is related to the ongoing activity of converting to another religion, which develops and intersects with socio-political-legal issues in society. Thus, the meaning of apostasy as a verb signifies an activity of turning back, reverting to disbelief, abandoning faith, and changing to denial or changing religions.<sup>27</sup> The activity of converting to another religion (apostasy) then develops into a socio-religious discourse taking place in society.

## Discussion

### Apostasy Discourse: Concepts and Factors

Apostasy has become an important discourse in the realm of Islamic thought among contemporary Muslim thinkers. Etymologically, the term "murtad" comes from the Arabic words *radda* and *irtadda*, or from the word *ar-raddahu* (الردّه), which originates from the root word *radda* (رَدَّ), originally from *radada*

(ردد).<sup>28</sup> The word ردد means to return from something or to a remnant.<sup>29</sup> The word radda is interpreted as turning back, returning, or exiting. Radda means to return, divert, close, reject, rebuttal, or prevent.<sup>30</sup> The understanding of fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence) regarding *ridda* means that a person who has embraced Islam turns to disbelief either intentionally or due to certain implications.<sup>31</sup>

Apostasy in English is called apostasy. Apostasy is the act of giving up one's beliefs or faith and turning away from one's religion.<sup>32</sup> In classical Islamic law, apostasy is defined as turning away from Islam to adopt another religious belief or renouncing one's identity as a Muslim.<sup>33</sup>

The Qur'an and Hadith use the term apostasy both explicitly and implicitly. The term apostasy in the Qur'an is derived and repeated 60 times.<sup>34</sup> Nasaruddin Umar's mapping identifies various redactional derivatives of apostasy from the Qur'an. For example, apostasy means 'exchanging faith for disbelief.' وَمَنْ يَتَّبِدْ الْكُفْرَ بِالْإِيمَانِ found in the Qur'an 2:108.<sup>35</sup>

The term apostasy in Hadith studies is found in various redactional forms, but they share a common meaning, namely: 1) *Irtadda*, using the past tense verb, means 'has apostatized.' 2) *Irtadda 'anil Islam*, meaning 'to leave Islam.' 3) *Irtaddu 'anil zakat*, meaning 'to refuse to pay zakat.' 4) *Baddala Dinah*, meaning 'to change one's religion.'<sup>36</sup>

Terminologically, apostasy refers to a person who returns, meaning they go back to their original place, where there are still remnants, or leave a mark for those who are left behind.<sup>37</sup>

Apostasy is an action taken by an adult Muslim (*baligh*) with self-awareness or under coercion, leaving one's bond/faith in Islam, marked by a clear declaration of the two testimonies (Syahadatain) and turning away or converting to another faith or being non-religious (atheist) for various reasons. The status of apostasy cannot be assigned to all adherents of a religion who convert; it is specifically directed at Muslims. In this context, Imam Asy-Syafi'i has two views: 1) When a Muslim leaves and enters another religion, it is not accepted and must be punished by death. 2) If a non-Muslim converts to another religion, it is permissible.<sup>38</sup>

Saeed reinforces that apostasy applies only to those who leave the bond of Islam; therefore, someone who is born a non-Muslim cannot be called an apostate.<sup>39</sup> Thus, apostasy can be understood as a return from the practice of Islam or a Muslim leaving the religion of Islam.<sup>40</sup> This phenomenon is called Moqsith: 'In Islam, there is an entrance but no exit'.<sup>41</sup>

Apostasy occurs due to certain motivating factors. According to Maryam Yusuf, it is sociologically influenced by 1) the influence of interpersonal relationships, 2) the influence of work routines, and 3) the influence of propaganda and recommendations from friends.<sup>42</sup> Farahwahida divides the factors of apostasy into two categories. Internal factors: 1) Weak religious education and ignorance. 2) The consequences of love, marriage, and divorce. 3) The influence of parents. 4) The economic condition of the family. External factors: 1) Material temptations (debt). 2) Peers or friends. 3) Missionary movements and the process of liberalization of thought. 4) Leniency in laws. 5) Bureaucracy that restricts the role of Islamic scholars. 6) A strong Islamic education system. 7) Dawah (Islamic preaching) that lacks relevance. 8) Discrimination against new converts (*mu'alaf*).<sup>43</sup>

## The Discourse of Apostasy in the Historical Trajectory of Islamic Thought.

### 1. The Era of Prophet Muhammad

The incident of apostasy occurred several times during the era of Prophet Muhammad. For example, during the controversy in the Meccan society regarding the Isra' Mi'raj, some people did not believe in it and even accused the Prophet of being insane, leading them to return to their old religion and leave Islam.<sup>44</sup> Another historical account records that about 12 Muslim men, including al-Harith ibn Suwaid al-

Ansari and Ubaydullah ibn Jahsh, migrated to Abyssinia. Initially, they were all Muslims, but they later converted to Christianity and remained so until their deaths. However, Prophet Muhammad did not order them to be killed.<sup>45</sup> The incident of Abdullah bin Abi Sarh, a scribe of Qur'anic revelations, involved him reverting to polytheism and spreading rumors that he had fabricated the revelations. However, he was forgiven and not killed by Prophet Muhammad.<sup>46</sup> There was also an incident of apostasy during the conquest of Mecca, where some were sentenced to death, but most sought forgiveness and returned to Islam and thus were not executed.<sup>47</sup>

According to Allalwani, the command to kill apostates was more related to preventing those who had embraced Islam from reverting, as polytheists often opposed and obstructed the Prophet Muhammad's mission of spreading Islam.<sup>48</sup> In addition, the category of apostasy is more based on the aspect of faith in Allah and the prophethood of Muhammad.

### 2. *The Era of the Companions of Prophet Muhammad*

During the era of the Companions, a notable incident of apostasy was the emergence of false prophets, such as Musailimah Al-Kazzab, which led to the Battle of Yamamah.<sup>49</sup> This incident sparked rebellion against the leadership of Caliph Abu Bakr Ash-Shiddiq. This defiance stemmed from the understanding that Muhammad was not only a Prophet but also a tribal leader. In their tradition, tribal leaders received a portion of the tribute that was paid, so Zakat was also understood as a form of tribute.<sup>50</sup>

This practice was carried out by the tribes of Abs and Zubyan.<sup>51</sup> Caliph Abu Bakr rejected this understanding, as it was considered noncompliance with the teachings (pillars) of Islam and classified as apostasy, which permitted warfare against them. Abu Bakr stated, "By Allah, whoever separates the obligation of zakat from prayer, I will fight them."<sup>52</sup> This incident is known as the Wars of Apostasy (*Perang Riddah*).<sup>53</sup> The incident signifies that the execution of apostates was more of a strategy to maintain political stability than a matter of faith (*aqidah*), as they were still practicing Muslims. Thus, the categorization of apostasy shifted towards compliance with the implementation of Islamic law (pillars).

### 3. *Contemporary Era*

The controversy surrounding apostasy in the contemporary era has become increasingly alarming, with the rampant labeling of individuals as apostates and the issuance of fatwas for their execution due to differing views from the majority of Muslims. One example is the fatwa issued by Egyptian scholars against Ali Abdur Raziq, which was based on his ideas about the abolition of the Islamic Caliphate system in Islamic politics.<sup>54</sup> In the case of Indonesia, Zuhairi Misrawi was accused of apostasy by Muhammad Abu Jibril (Deputy of MMI) for his opinion: "Islamist groups in this country should be grateful because we will not kill them; in Egypt, they are killed and humiliated #Unity in Diversity#."<sup>55</sup>

The impact of such radical attitudes has instilled fear of Islam, leading to a growing number of people apostatizing. They ultimately said "goodbye" to Islam. They choose to become Christians, agnostics, atheists, secularists, or free thinkers, opting to leave this religion after experiencing and witnessing tragic events in their lives (terrorism) in the name of God.<sup>56</sup> Supported by Sumanto al-Qurthuby, acts of violence in the name of Islam have led to low public sympathy and trust in Islam as a peaceful, tolerant, pluralistic religion and a "mercy to the world." Moving forward, Muslims must spread Islam in a courteous and "civil" manner, not through violent and "uncivil" actions that ultimately harm Islam itself.<sup>57</sup>

The meaning of the above study is as follows: First, from the era of Prophet Muhammad to the present, there has always been a struggle for the authority of the true understanding of the Qur'an and

Hadith concerning normative sources (apostasy). Second, this struggle has various motives, resulting in very flexible treatments regarding the legal status of apostasy, depending on the interests at stake. Third, a comprehensive and careful study is necessary concerning the attitudes toward apostasy in society, which are always dynamic.

### Discourse on Religious Freedom in Muhammadiyah

The discourse on religious freedom is not new in Muhammadiyah, although there are differences of opinion. As stated by Nashir, Muhammadiyah does not possess a tolerant and pluralistic theology because it adheres to a practical theological understanding.<sup>58</sup> Nashir's opinion is somewhat inaccurate; substantively, Muhammadiyah goes beyond mere ideological-theological concepts and has been practiced since its founding. This was evident when KH. Ahmad Dahlan collaborated with the Dutch-Christian authorities in the fields of social and educational initiatives, a practice that continues to this day.<sup>59</sup> Although some thinkers suggest there is a paradox, the early Muhammadiyah movement aimed to curb the tide of Christianization.<sup>60</sup> On the other hand, KH. Ahmad Dahlan's method of preaching incorporated Christian missionary techniques, which became known by the terms "White Christianity" or "subtle Christianity."<sup>61</sup>

This paradox can be understood as a clever strategy by KH. Ahmad Dahlan will accelerate the propagation of Muhammadiyah. The attitude of tolerance is a part of the values of religious freedom in the context of fostering cooperation in social and educational fields with non-Muslims. This means that the concepts of tolerance and religious freedom in Muhammadiyah are quite ordinary and commonplace, even though they are interpreted in various ways by Muhammadiyah thinkers today.

There are two streams of thought regarding the discourse on religious freedom among Muhammadiyah thinkers. The positive thinkers understand that religious freedom (apostasy) is a necessity from God and should be accepted as a divine decree. According to Syafi'i Ma'arif, intolerance toward the right to religious freedom (apostasy) can disrupt the historical flow toward a just and harmonious world amid all diversity, which is the Sunnah of Allah. The issue of violence related to apostasy is quite concerning; diversity should not be suppressed but rather managed and handled with an open heart so that the social fabric does not become shattered and chaotic.<sup>62</sup>

Apostasy is a personal free choice. According to Dawam Raharjo, changing one's religion is not apostasy; rather, it is about finding new awareness in practicing religion. Apostasy does not equate to being a non-believer; the term "non-believer" does not mean adhering to a different religion but rather opposing the teachings of God. Religious freedom means the freedom to change one's religion.<sup>63</sup> In agreement with Zuly Qodir, religious freedom has not yet become a part of everyday life, making the choice of apostasy unable to coexist peacefully. Religious communities tend to act as martyrs and spies, ready to stab each other based on the defense of their beliefs. If religious individuals pressure one another, how can they position religious freedom as being synonymous with non-belief or changing religions, which should be protected? Isn't this impossible in a multi-religious country?<sup>64</sup>

Qodir's critique is understandable; the reality of intolerance toward minority groups remains a burden for the Indonesian nation. Actions violating the human rights of the freedom to change religion (apostasy) reflect the pattern of the epistemological systems of religious knowledge that are upheld, as well as the weak state apparatus in protecting and implementing laws related to religious life, which are not yet solid.<sup>65</sup>

However, there are also elite thinkers within Muhammadiyah who view the discourse on religious freedom as too troubling or as obscuring religious beliefs (*aqidah*) among Muhammadiyah members.<sup>66</sup>

The argument from this line of thought suggests that the discourse on religious freedom is a misguided ideology, teaching that all religions hold equal and valid positions. Religious freedom is understood as a concept promoting the relativism of religious truth. There are concerns that this could lead to the adoption and development of liberalization and secularization programs.

Syamsul Hidayat stated that the discourse on pluralism and religious freedom (apostasy) is in conflict with Muhammadiyah's approach, which is characterized by a strong commitment to returning to the Qur'an and Sunnah. Muhammadiyah has not adopted such views since the time of KH. Ahmad Dahlan, Muhammadiyah has understood and firmly believed that Islam is Allah's message, which must be upheld comprehensively (*kaffah*) and deeply ingrained in the hearts of its leaders, members, and society.<sup>67</sup>

Similarly, Fakhurrozy believes that the discourse on religious freedom is part of a mixing of truth and falsehood, which can lead to idolatry, misguidance, and the destruction of Muhammadiyah's identity, as well as cause division within its unity.<sup>68</sup> The negative perception was reinforced by Adian Husaini, who labeled thinkers supporting the discourse on religious freedom (apostasy) as dangerously ignorant intellectuals.<sup>69</sup>

The dialectic of the above thoughts illustrates that the discourse on apostasy has become a serious study, showing a diversity of views yet maintaining an attitude of openness and mutual respect. This situation holds positive potential for the Muhammadiyah movement and the broader face of Islamic movements in Indonesia. Given the nation's diversity in terms of ethnicity, race, religion, and social groups (SARA), a positive and open (tolerant) attitude is needed.

### Three Typologies of Apostasy Thought from the Perspective of Muhammadiyah Elites

The discourse on religious freedom is not new in Muhammadiyah, although there are differences of opinion. This study employed a phenomenological approach, with the final stage being the process of understanding and uncovering the essence of meaning (essential being)<sup>70</sup> regarding a phenomenon (apostasy) as perceived by the East Java Muhammadiyah elites. Apostasy is part of religious attitudes that emerge within society. This means that attitudes toward apostasy are potentially diverse, influenced by differences in socio-cultural backgrounds, political ideologies, social environments, and the religious beliefs of the community (in this case, the East Java Muhammadiyah elites).

Komarudin Hidayat identifies five typologies of religious attitudes present in society: exclusivism, inclusivism, pluralism, eclecticism, and universalism. These five typologies are not entirely distinct or disconnected from one another, nor are they permanent. Instead, they should be viewed as dominant tendencies, considering that every religion or religious attitude inherently has the potential to manifest all five of these tendencies.<sup>71</sup>

2 The typology of thought proposed by Komarudin is highly relevant for mapping the views and attitudes of the East Java Muhammadiyah elites in understanding apostasy, particularly through the lenses of inclusivism and exclusivism. In addition to these two categories of thought, data analysis reveals a didactic typology of thought in addressing apostasy. These three typologies serve as tools for mapping the thoughts of the East Java Muhammadiyah elites in understanding the discourse of apostasy within society. Based on this mapping, three distinct constructions of thought among East Java's Muhammadiyah elites regarding apostasy were identified.

#### 1. The Typology of Inclusive Thought

Inclusive religious thought is characterized by openness, respect, and acceptance of differences in religious and belief choices. According to Alwi Shihab, the inclusive typology of thought reflects a

construction of religious thought marked by freedom, rationality, and a dynamic-contextual method of study. It embraces openness and tolerance toward others, thereby fostering acceptance and respect for differences within the socio-political and religious contexts of society.<sup>72</sup>

This conception was chosen because it aligns with the character of thought used as an indicator to understand the perspectives of East Java Muhammadiyah elites on apostasy. According to Alwi Shihab, one of the key traits of an inclusive typology is prioritizing openness and fostering dialogue with other religions. It should also be built upon the spirit of religious pluralism and tolerance.<sup>73</sup>

Komarudin Hidayat reinforces this view, stating that inclusivism recognizes that truth exists in religions other than one's own, although it may not be as complete as the truth in one's religion. This perspective allows for theological and faith-based tolerance.<sup>74</sup> Nurcholish Madjid adds that inclusivism sees other religions as implicit expressions of one's faith.<sup>75</sup>

The inclusive character is reflected in the thoughts of Muhammadiyah elites regarding the meaning of religious freedom as absolute freedom—a fundamental human right. Consequently, no religious or social institution, including NU, Muhammadiyah, or MUI, has the authority to intervene or prohibit someone's choice to change religions. Apostasy is viewed as a free choice, a private matter between an individual and their God. Apostasy is protected as a right by the Qur'an, international human rights law, and the Indonesian Constitution (Article 29 of the 1945 Constitution), making it part of the broader meaning of religious freedom.<sup>76</sup>

To comprehensively understand the inclusive typology of thought, this section explores the perspectives of East Java Muhammadiyah elites on apostasy, particularly their understanding of religious freedom. For instance, Prof. A. Jainuri states:

"Apostasy is part of the meaning of religious freedom. Sociologically, religious freedom means the freedom to change religions, as it is the social and theological right of every person. Practicing a religion is a free choice, and no one has the right to condemn another for their religious choice. Religious choices are subjective, based on the deepest convictions of the heart, known only to the individual and their God. It is a free and independent choice, not coerced by external forces, and most importantly, the individual must understand their own free choice, which is guaranteed in verse *La Ikraha fi 'addin*."<sup>77</sup>

The view of Prof. Biyanto:

"Islam is a very democratic religion; faith is the most fundamental concept in human rights. Therefore, if there is coercion in religion, it means violating human rights and contradicting the verse '*La Ikra ha fi 'addin*' (There is no compulsion in religion). In practice, there has never been anyone executed for apostasy in Indonesia, and there never will be. Thus, in the context of Indonesia, the death penalty for apostasy is less relevant because Indonesia is a multi-religious society."<sup>78</sup>

In line with the thoughts of Prof. Zainuddin Maliki:

"Freedom of religion means that everyone has the autonomy to make choices about their faith and beliefs. God has given us reason to exercise self-control, understand, and determine our stance, including in matters of faith and the choice to adhere to or abandon a religion. Therefore, God has granted humans the autonomy of religious freedom to choose a religion or to apostatize; thus, apostasy is a part of the autonomy of religious freedom."<sup>79</sup>

A firm stance rejecting the death penalty for apostasy and the need for a formal constitution on apostasy law rise. Mukayat al-Amin states that the practice of the death penalty for apostasy is in direct conflict with the 1945 Constitution and the First Principle of Pancasila: Belief in One God.<sup>80</sup> In line with the views of A. Jainuri:

"The application of the death penalty for apostasy is very dangerous, as the status of apostasy law still falls within the realm of Islamic law (Sharia) and has not yet become positive law in Indonesia. Although, in substance, the values of Islamic law serve as one of the sources of positive law in Indonesia. The death penalty for apostasy could be implemented if the law on apostasy were to enter and become positive law in Indonesia."<sup>81</sup>

### Reinforcing the views of Sholihin Fanani:

"The application of the apostasy law contradicts Article 29 of the 1945 Constitution regarding freedom of religion. The government only needs to regulate the public space of religion firmly. Issues of belief are matters of the heart. Furthermore, it strongly rejects the death penalty for apostasy, as it is not strategic for the development of Islamic propagation (Muhammadiyah). The principle of preaching is to invite others in a good manner, not through threats or frightening statements labeling individuals as heretics, infidels, or apostates, or threats justifying the shedding of blood for apostates, and so on."<sup>82</sup>

Based on the above perspectives, the inclusive mindset of East Java Muhammadiyah elites fundamentally reflects an understanding that apostasy is part of an individual's fundamental freedom of choice and a personal religious decision that must be respected rather than subjected to bullying. Such a decision is seen as a personal matter accountable only to God. In this context, according to Prof. A. Jainuri, apostasy represents a socially and theologically independent right for every individual.<sup>83</sup> A. Jainuri's perspective implies that no person or religious institution—such as NU, Muhammadiyah, or MUI should engage in discrimination, bullying, or even imposing the death penalty on individuals who choose apostasy, treating it as a religious crime.

Religion is a free choice based on faith in God, which is believed to bring salvation and happiness in both this world and the hereafter. According to Baydhwawi, religion is an ultimate and fundamental choice intimately tied to personal decisions that one carries until death before facing God. Therefore, this choice cannot be interfered with by anyone, as it pertains to an individual's relationship (faith) with God. Abdul Karim Soroush emphasizes that faith resides in the heart and cannot be fully known by others, although its expressions can be recognized and evaluated.<sup>84</sup> This view is reinforced by Syamsuddin, who notes that in the context of Indonesia's formal constitution, there is no provision for the death penalty for apostasy. Hence, implementing such a law in Indonesia would be both unnecessary and impractical.<sup>85</sup>

### 2. Typology of Exclusive Thought

The exclusive typology of religious thought stands in contrast to the foundational concept of inclusive religious thought. The exclusive mindset is characterized by a closed attitude, difficulty in accepting differences, and suspicion toward others. According to Abu Bakar, the construction of exclusive thought is rigid, oriented toward historical traditions, employs a literal-textual method of interpretation, and adopts a closed attitude toward those outside the group. It tends to highlight differences rather than commonalities, assumes its perspective to be the absolute truth, and finds it challenging to accept differing socio-political and religious views.<sup>86</sup>

Komarudin Hidayat supports this notion, describing exclusivism as a religious attitude that considers its teachings as the sole truth while deeming other religions misguided. Exclusivist groups often encourage their adherents to isolate themselves from social interactions with followers of other religions. This is based on the belief that non-Muslims are misguided, malevolent, and constantly seeking to harm the Muslim community.<sup>87</sup> Such views are often derived from interpretations of verses like QS Al-Baqarah (120):

وَلَنْ تَرْضَىٰ عَنْكَ الْيَهُودُ وَلَا النَّصَارَىٰ حَتَّىٰ تَتَّبِعَ مِلَّتَهُمْ ۗ

"The Jews and the Christians will never be pleased with you until you follow their religion."

The exclusive mindset is used as a framework because it aligns with certain characteristics of the thought patterns among the East Java Muhammadiyah elites. This typology serves as an indicator for analyzing and mapping their understanding of apostasy. Exclusive tendencies among these elites are evident in their interpretation of the verse *La Ikraha fi'd-din* ("There is no compulsion in religion"), where it is understood that compulsion should not be used at the initial stage of religious choice. However,

21 once a religion is chosen, there must be unwavering commitment, and leaving the religion (apostasy) is not permitted. This understanding is rooted in the belief that Islam is the only true religion (*diridhai/accepted*), while other religions are deemed misguided.

To comprehensively understand the typology of exclusive thought, the perspectives of East Java Muhammadiyah elites on apostasy, particularly regarding the discourse on religious freedom and the status of apostasy in society, will be further elaborated. Biyanto's thoughts:

"Religion is not like wearing clothes that can be easily removed or discarded when one gets bored. In religion, there are principles of faith (*aqidah*), worship (*ibadah*), and social interactions (*muamalah*) that must be upheld until death. The meaning of religious freedom is not the freedom to change religions at will; even if someone chooses apostasy, it must be based on deep, fundamental considerations. This is because religion involves emotions, experiences, and beliefs that are held as truth until death (ultimate) or the 'final destination' and will be defended with one's life.<sup>88</sup>

Najib Hamid states:

"Religious freedom applies only before one has found the truth, but once the truth of a religion is found, one must submit to its teachings. The meaning of religious freedom is the freedom to choose a religion that one prefers and considers true, but once a choice is made, one is no longer free and becomes bound. Therefore, the concept of switching religions (apostasy) in the context of religious freedom is inaccurate.<sup>89</sup>

Mahsun reinforces this view:

"Religious freedom is not recognized in Islam because religion dictates one's attitude and life guidance, so it cannot be treated lightly by arbitrarily entering and leaving a religion (apostasy). Given Indonesia's pluralistic nature in terms of ethnicity, religion, and race (SARA), regulations that are acceptable to all segments of society are necessary. Therefore, an Apostasy Law is needed to manage the interests of different religious groups in Indonesia.<sup>90</sup>

A constitution (Apostasy Law) is necessary as a guarantee for regulating religious life in Indonesia. According to Maulana Mas'udi:

"This regulation is important for officially and formally knowing, managing, and controlling the religious status of citizens so that religion is not treated lightly, allowing people to arbitrarily enter and leave a religion (apostasy), as this could potentially lead to societal intolerance. The formal implementation of Islamic law through a formal constitution holds a strategic position in Indonesia. Therefore, an Apostasy Law is still needed to maintain harmonious relations among religious communities in Indonesia.<sup>91</sup>

The above framework can be understood to mean that the exclusivist intellectual character of the Muhammadiyah elite in East Java is influenced by various factors, including the pesantren educational background, domestic Islamic education (IAIN), a literalist religious understanding, and a tendency to reject multiculturalism and pluralism, which are perceived as threats to Muslim faith (read: Muhammadiyah congregation). This suggests that the socio-cultural background of the Muhammadiyah elite significantly shapes their understanding of apostasy (*murtad*), making them more closed-off and resistant to differences with other groups, including individuals who convert to another religion.

This analysis is based on the social construction theory of Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, which posits that social reality is the result of human interaction and construction. Social reality has a dual nature, being both objective and subjective; society is not an objective entity that evolves in a predetermined and immutable manner.<sup>92</sup> In other words, the intellectual character of individuals or social groups is heavily influenced by their social background (education, political ideology, religious beliefs, economy, family environment, etc.), while these individuals or groups, in turn, influence the social constructs prevalent in society. According to Berger, this dynamic occurs through several stages: Externalization: Adapting to the socio-cultural world as a human product. Objectivation: Interaction with the intersubjective world, which becomes institutionalized. Internalization: Individuals identify with the social or organizational institutions to which they belong.<sup>93</sup>

This perspective illustrates an exclusivist character, wherein they cannot accept choices different from their own. They aspire for everyone to align with their choices and close themselves off from differing perspectives, resulting in a phenomenon that can be termed religious homogeneity. According to Komaruddin Hidayat, such an attitude fosters the belief that their religion is the only true one, while others are misguided and must be eradicated, or their adherents converted, as other religions and their followers are deemed accursed in the eyes of God.<sup>94</sup>

Furthermore, the status of apostasy, for them, falls into the public domain. Apostasy is not seen as a private matter between an individual and their God but rather a public concern. They perceive apostasy as disruptive to the stability of religious harmony and, more severely, as a form of religious crime. Apostasy is viewed as deviant behavior that violates a sacred covenant with God, warranting the death penalty. For them, the blood of an apostate is lawful to shed, based on their understanding of the Hadith:

(رَوَاهُ الْبُخَارِيُّ) مَنْ بَدَّلَ دِينَهُ فَاقْتُلُوهُ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: وَعَنِ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا قَالَ

*"Narrated by Ibn 'Abbas radhiyallâhu 'anhumâ, he said: The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him) said: Whoever changes their religion, kill them (HR. Al-Bukhari)."*

Based on the above construct, apostasy is seen as a threat to public life, necessitating formal legal regulations. This means that apostasy laws could be incorporated into Islamic criminal law (*jinayah*) to regulate religious practices, preventing individuals from switching religions arbitrarily and protecting Islam from perceived threats. Religious diversity poses the potential for influence and conversion (apostasy). Therefore, to protect religion (Islam), formal and official legal frameworks, such as Apostasy Laws or regional regulations (Perda), are required, especially since evidence suggests that conversions from Islam outnumber conversions into Islam.<sup>95</sup>

### 3. Didactic Thought Typology

The typology of didactic thinking (read: teaching) originates from the Greek word *didáskein*, which means "to teach." The term "didactic" or "didactical" can imply being educational, instructive, or formative. The didactic method is a scientific discipline that examines how teachers convey knowledge, skills, and attitudes to students in schools (or higher education institutions). In didactics, several principles must be observed, including the principle of motivation, the principle of activity, the principle of individuality, the principle of demonstration, the principle of apperception, the principle of cooperation, the principle of repetition, and the principle of evaluation.<sup>96</sup>

Based on this concept, the character of didactic thinking is a construct aimed at reorganizing, improving, and renewing through educational processes with strategies that involve advising, embracing, fostering, and providing solutions to social, political, cultural, and religious issues occurring in society.<sup>97</sup>

In the context of this study, the typology of didactic thinking is understood as a character of thought that embodies an educational, inclusive, supportive, motivational, and respectful attitude toward different choices, including religious conversion (*murtad*) made by individuals within or outside the family. Thus, the didactic construct is selected because it aligns with the indicators of thought and serves as a tool to analyze and map the thinking patterns of the Muhammadiyah elite in East Java in understanding apostasy, particularly their attitudes toward those who apostatize within or outside their families.<sup>98</sup>

The construction of this didactic typology is depicted in the thoughts of several Muhammadiyah elites in East Java.

Nur Cholis Huda states:

"The Muhammadiyah da'wah strategy must be renewed by mapping out da'wah efforts, especially among vulnerable communities. Additionally, strengthening Islamic teachings through guidance is essential, as Islam fundamentally teaches justice and humanity. Furthermore, enhancing the study of Christology within the framework of Muhammadiyah da'wah is crucial, and if necessary, analyzing the strategies of Christian missionary da'wah should be undertaken.<sup>99</sup>

Mapping and analyzing strategies against the movement of apostasy is essential and strategic for Muhammadiyah's da'wah efforts. As Biyanto suggests:

"In facing the apostasy movement, an in-depth study is necessary to identify the factors contributing to apostasy. Therefore, Muhammadiyah campuses and research institutions can collaborate to conduct research and mapping related to apostasy in society so that Muhammadiyah can have a clear understanding of the apostasy movement in East Java.<sup>100</sup>

In addition to strengthening the study of Islam, a special da'wah bureau is needed to address apostasy. According to Prof. Jainuri's thoughts:

"Muhammadiyah needs to develop community da'wah by establishing a dedicated da'wah bureau tasked with protecting Muslims from apostasy. Furthermore, it is essential to build a model of enlightening da'wah that provides solutions to the problems faced by the community, especially those who are socially, economically, politically, and religiously marginalized. These issues are often used as tools to influence society to convert (apostasy). Additionally, a change in the paradigm and methodology of Muhammadiyah da'wah is necessary through re-Islamization, which refers to the religious reform within Muhammadiyah rather than Islamization or converting others.<sup>101</sup>

In line with Khoirul Warizin's thoughts:

"Strengthening faith through the study of Christology, comparative religion, improving the quality of preachers, enhancing specific da'wah efforts, and establishing an anti-apostasy institution called the 'Mualaf Center Muhammadiyah (MCM)' is essential. Additionally, expanding the model of *da'wah bil hal* (da'wah through action) by reinforcing Muhammadiyah's social-philanthropic movement serves as a counter or anticipation against apostasy da'wah that employs a philanthropic model.<sup>102</sup>

With the renewal of the da'wah strategy in Muhammadiyah, it is hoped that there will be a change in attitudes and treatment toward apostasy within families or among others.

According to Najih Ihsan:

"Regarding family members or others who have apostatized, it is necessary to provide proper guidance (education) because it is their right. This education aims to prevent them from reverting to apostasy; however, if they are unwilling, they should not be forced. Therefore, it is essential to provide education about the true religion, and our stance must be firm—not softened by human rights considerations in a way that makes us lenient toward attempts at apostasy.<sup>103</sup>

In line with Sholihin's thoughts:

"The attitude of embracing and engaging in dialogue with family members or others who have apostatized is a wiser and more positive approach for the development of da'wah. If there are religious organizations loudly declaring that apostates should be condemned to death, this is a less strategic stance and creates fear among the community about returning to Islam. They should be treated well, advised, engaged in dialogue, and have their motives for converting explored. Essentially, an apostate is a lost person; how can we hate, insult, or even kill someone who is lost? They should be helped to find the straight path away from their misguided choices.<sup>104</sup>

In line with Nur Choliz Huda's thoughts:

"The attitude toward family members or others who have apostatized should remain respectful. Apostasy is a free choice, and the consequences are borne by the individual. The relationship with family should still be maintained and not treated with hostility or avoidance. The prevailing understanding has been that apostasy should be met with animosity or expulsion, whereas it is fundamentally their right and choice.<sup>105</sup>

Reinforcing Najib Hamid's thoughts:

"If a family member chooses to apostatize, that is their right, as we have no authority to force them not to convert because religion is a matter of personal authority and God's will. Although there may be personal disappointment in the sense that we have not been able to protect our family from external influences and

the torments of hell, it is necessary to engage in preventive da'wah by guiding, advising, and inviting them to the true teachings, rather than discriminating against them, expelling them, or avoiding them. We can only make efforts (*ikhthiar*) in our da'wah toward family and others. Ultimately, the authority of guidance belongs only to Allah SWT, as seen in the history of the family of the Prophet Muhammad SAW, who was also unable to convert all of his family members because religion is a matter of divine guidance.<sup>106</sup>

The study above illustrates that the pattern of Muhammadiyah's proselytizing efforts should ideally be reformed to address the phenomenon of apostasy. According to Prof. A. Jainuri, this reform requires a shift in the paradigm and methodology of Muhammadiyah's da'wah by pursuing Islamization—a reformation of Muhammadiyah's religious practices—rather than the Islamization or conversion of others. Alternatively, Muhammadiyah should strengthen its social da'wah movement by expanding the da'wah bil hal model and bolstering its philanthropic efforts as a countermeasure against apostasy campaigns that use philanthropy as their tool. As Supriadi observes, philanthropic practices can serve as a bridge to understanding the deeper meaning of religious life.<sup>107</sup>

This approach implies the development of strategies that embrace, nurture, educate, and exhibit openness and maturity in addressing societal differences, including differences in religious choices or apostasy. As Sholihin states, "An apostate is essentially someone who is lost. How can we hate, insult, or kill someone who is lost? Instead, they should be helped to return to the right path through education, guidance, and attention."<sup>108</sup>

Despite this, there appears to be a difference in attitudes towards apostates between internal and external family contexts. While there is a tendency to be open, respectful, and accepting of apostates outside the family, a family member who leaves Islam is often viewed as a failure to protect the family. This situation brings personal disappointment, as it reflects an inability to safeguard one's family from external influences and the torment of hell. However, as family members, the response should be to protect, and lead the individual towards the right path, rather than discriminating against, ostracizing, or abandoning them recognizing that all efforts are ultimately a matter of human endeavor (*ikhthiar*).<sup>109</sup>

This emotional turmoil is natural, as families, from a psychological perspective, always aspire for their closest kin to live in harmony, share common aspirations, and achieve the best outcomes together.<sup>110</sup> When a family member changes religion (apostatizes), it is perceived as a disruption of shared destiny and a spiritual failure, as they are considered at risk of entering hell. This contrasts with the shared hope of entering paradise together, which symbolizes ultimate happiness. Nevertheless, it is crucial to note that, in general, Muhammadiyah elites are very open and respectful towards those who choose to leave Islam.

### **Multiple Facets: Responses to Thoughts on Apostasy in Muhammadiyah**

The mapping of thoughts above shows the inconsistency of the elite Muhammadiyah's thinking in East Java. The fact is that some responses from the elite Muhammadiyah reflect an inclusive perspective on one discourse (such as religious freedom), while in another discourse (such as the legal status of apostasy), they tend to have an exclusive viewpoint and on a single issue (such as attitudes toward apostasy), all adopt a didactic approach. The reality of this inconsistency in the thinking of Muhammadiyah elites is quite natural, as individuals tend to be inconsistent in many aspects, including their thoughts. People generally have the potential for both inclusive and exclusive thinking, so in the context of socio-religious thought, there is no permanent inclusive or exclusive mindset; it all depends on the context and is always dynamic.

Furthermore, this diversity of thought is due to the differences in the socio-cultural backgrounds (sociology of knowledge) of the elite Muhammadiyah in East Java. This aligns with Karl Mannheim's view

that "human knowledge cannot be separated from its social existence."<sup>111</sup> Thus, according to Peter L. Berger, any product of thought (knowledge) cannot be separated from the influence of language and history (social context)<sup>112</sup> This means that the different socio-cultural existences among the Muhammadiyah elite can influence their thought construction.

The differences in socio-cultural existence among the Muhammadiyah elite in East Java are reflected in various aspects, starting from educational backgrounds, which include those from pesantren (Islamic boarding schools) and non-pesantren, as well as graduates from both domestic and international institutions. These differences in social existence significantly impact the diverse constructions of thought among the Muhammadiyah elite in East Java regarding the phenomenon of apostasy, resulting in three typologies of thought: inclusive, exclusive, and didactic.

These three typologies of thought exhibit distinct characteristics, which also influence the nature of Islamic thought within Muhammadiyah. This is because the thought patterns of a religious community (such as Muhammadiyah) are significantly influenced by the perspectives of its members, particularly the elites. This aligns with Wright Mills' view that "elite groups have a significant influence and opportunity for the transformation of their religious thought, thus making their views the official or formal perspectives of the group or religious organization in society."<sup>113</sup> Based on the above theory, the three typologies of thought among the Muhammadiyah elite in East Java impact the socio-religious realities in society. This means that the thoughts of the Muhammadiyah elites affect the nature of Muhammadiyah's religious thinking and the face of Islam in Indonesia.

## Conclusion

There are three typologies of thought among Muhammadiyah elites in East Java regarding apostasy. First, inclusive thought perceives freedom of religion as an individual's autonomy to choose their faith, without any authority having the right to impose it. Within this perspective, apostasy is regarded as part of religious freedom. Second, exclusive thought asserts that religious freedom is conditional rather than absolute. While individuals are free to choose their religion, they are expected to commit to it once a choice is made. Violating this commitment incurs legal consequences, as apostasy is viewed as both a betrayal of a sacred vow to God and a form of religious transgression. Third, didactic thought takes an open and nurturing approach, aiming to engage apostates through dialogue and guidance, hoping to bring them back to the right path. Apostasy, in this perspective, is seen as a deviation that requires assistance. Despite religious differences, all humans are considered brothers and sisters.

However, there is inconsistency in how Muhammadiyah elites understand apostasy. Some exhibit inclusive thinking in one context but adopt an exclusive stance in another. Nevertheless, all elites tend to apply didactic thinking in their approach toward family members who have apostatized. Overall, the dominant tendency among Muhammadiyah elites leans toward inclusive thinking.

In conclusion, Muhammadiyah is a socio-religious organization in Indonesia that is highly open and progressive in fostering intellectual development. The dialectic of Islamic thought within Muhammadiyah is dynamic and diverse rather than monolithic. This diversity is evident in the varying perspectives among Muhammadiyah elites in East Java, encompassing inclusive, exclusive, and didactic typologies in understanding apostasy. Muhammadiyah embraces the dynamic nature of Islamic thought, earning it the characterization of "Muhammadiyah Dzuwajhin," which signifies its openness to diverse perspectives and approaches.

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Charles Kurzman, "Pengantar Islam Liberal dan Konteks Islaminya", dalam Charles Kurzman (editor), *Wacana Islam Liberal Pemikiran Islam Kontemporer Tentang Isu-Isu Global*, terj. Bahrul Ulum dan Heri Junaidi, (Jakarta: Paramadina, 2003), xiv-ix.
- <sup>2</sup> Taha Jabir Alallwani, *Apostasy in Islam: A Historical and Scriptural Analysis* (London: The International Institute of Islamic Thought, 2011), 34-41.
- <sup>3</sup> Muhammad Husein Haykal, *Abu Bakar As-Siddiq; Sebuah Biografi* (Jakarta: Pustaka Litera Anatrnsusa, 2012), 98-106.
- <sup>4</sup> Taha Jabir Alallwani, *Apostasy in Islam: A Historical and Scriptural Analysis* (London: The International Institute of Islamic Thought, 2011), 42.
- <sup>5</sup> Retno Wulandhari. "Pengikut Gafatar Dianggap Murtad". [https://khazanah.republika.co.id/diakses 18/11/2023,](https://khazanah.republika.co.id/diakses%2018/11/2023).
- <sup>6</sup> Negara-negara tersebut tergabung di Organisasi Kerjasama Islam (OKI), dalam Angelina E. Theodorou, "Which Countries Still Outlaw Apostasy and Blasphemy", [www.pewresearch.org/](http://www.pewresearch.org/), diakses tanggal 10/12/ 2023.
- <sup>7</sup> Athian Ali: 'Kita Sudah Pernah Keluarkan Fatwa Mati Bagi Penghina Islam Seperti Ulil Abshar Abdalla', <https://www.panjimas.com/News/2014/10/13>, diakses, 17/8/2023.
- <sup>8</sup> Buya Yahya, "Murtad, Bagi Yang Legalkan Seks Di Luar Nikah," 2019. <https://faktabanten.co.id/>.
- <sup>9</sup> Abd. Moqsith Ghazali, "Tafsir Atas Hukum Murtad Dalam Islam" *Jurnal Ahkam*, 13 no.2 (2013), 283-284.
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