

## The Scholarly Transformation of Nahdlatul Ulama: Fiqh of Civilization as a Step Towards Embracing the Future

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### Abstract

Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), under the leadership of Yahya Cholil Staquf, has taken significant steps in addressing global challenges and modernity through the concept of "Fiqh of Civilization". This concept aims to broaden the understanding of Islamic jurisprudence beyond the Muslim community scale, encompassing inter-civilizational interactions. This research investigates how NU integrates universal Islamic principles with contemporary social, economic, and political dynamics, creating new scholarly constructs relevant to the current era. By utilizing a qualitative-descriptive method based on a literature review, this study analyzes various NU initiatives and programs, such as the Civilization Fiqh Halaqah and the Thought Congress. Findings indicate NU's seriousness in fostering a dynamic and inclusive scholarly discourse, focusing on pluralism, social justice, and environmental sustainability. This study further explores the contributions of fiqh of civilization to "Al-Nahdlatul Ulama" reflecting a paradigmatic shift in religious understanding and practice. The results show that fiqh of civilization not only reinterprets religious texts but also enriches social interactions and strengthens Islamic identity in a global context. This concept underscores the importance of adapting religious texts to changing realities and highlights NU's strategic role in advancing progressive and responsive Islamic thought. The conclusion of this study asserts that fiqh of civilization has facilitated a productive dialogue between Islamic principles and contemporary challenges, essential for the development of a harmonious and sustainable civilization.

### Abstrak

Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), di bawah kepemimpinan Yahya Cholil Staquf, telah mengambil langkah penting dalam menanggapi tantangan global dan modernitas dengan gagasan "Fikih Peradaban". Konsep ini bertujuan untuk memperluas pemahaman fikih dalam konteks yang lebih luas, melampaui skala komunitas Muslim, hingga mencakup interaksi antar peradaban. Penelitian ini menginvestigasi bagaimana NU mengintegrasikan prinsip-prinsip Islam yang universal dengan dinamika sosial, ekonomi, dan politik kontemporer, menciptakan konstruksi keilmuan baru yang relevan dengan era saat ini. Dengan menggunakan metode kualitatif-deskriptif berbasis kepustakaan, penelitian ini menganalisis berbagai inisiatif dan program NU, seperti Halaqah Fikih Peradaban dan Mukhtamar Pemikiran. Temuan menunjukkan keseriusan NU dalam mendorong diskursus keilmuan yang dinamis dan inklusif, dengan fokus pada aspek pluralisme, keadilan sosial, dan kelestarian lingkungan. Studi ini juga mengeksplorasi kontribusi fikih peradaban terhadap "Al-Nahdlatul Ulama", yang mencerminkan pergeseran paradigmatik dalam pemahaman dan praktik keagamaan. Hasil temuan menunjukkan bahwa fikih peradaban tidak hanya mereinterpretasi teks-teks keagamaan, tetapi juga memperkaya interaksi sosial dan memperkuat identitas keislaman dalam konteks global. Gagasan ini menekankan pentingnya adaptasi teks-teks keagamaan terhadap realitas yang berubah, serta menggarisbawahi peran strategis NU dalam memajukan pemikiran Islam yang progresif dan responsif. Kesimpulan dari penelitian ini menegaskan bahwa fikih peradaban telah memfasilitasi dialog produktif antara prinsip-prinsip Islam dengan tantangan zaman, yang merupakan esensial bagi pembangunan peradaban yang harmonis dan berkelanjutan.

### Keywords

Transformation, Nahdlatul Ulama, Fiqh of Civilization, Yahya Cholil Staquf



## Introduction

Entering the second resurgence of *Nahdlatul Ulama* (NU), the Executive Board of NU (PBNU) has adopted the slogan "Nurturing the World, Building Civilization".<sup>1</sup> This slogan marks a new spirit in reflecting on NU's century-long journey,<sup>2</sup> serving both as a vision and an ideological guide for NU officials and members.<sup>3</sup> Through the vision embodied in "Nurturing the World, Building Civilization" under the leadership era of Gus Yahya, NU invites all elements to participate in fostering peace and a harmonious ecosystem of life. At a minimum, by positioning itself as a peace enforcer, every issue and conflict arising within community life can be localized proportionately and utilized as lessons to develop a better societal order.<sup>4</sup>

In this context, the slogan "Nurturing the World, Building Civilization" represents a moment of transmission and dissemination of the spirit of mercy encapsulated in the concept of civilization jurisprudence. Through civilization jurisprudence, NU, under the leadership of Gus Yahya, aims to emerge as a more massive and structured peace promoter on the global stage.<sup>5</sup> To manifest this concept of civilization fiqh, the Executive Board of NU (PBNU) has designed various activities on regional, national, and international scales. These include the Civilization Jurisprudence Halaqah, held in 250 regions across Indonesia,<sup>6</sup> the first volume of the Fiqh Civilization Mukhtamar taking place in Surabaya,<sup>7</sup> and the Religion Forum (R20) in Bali.<sup>8</sup> Additionally, several other forums intersecting with the grand ideas of Fiqh Civilization have been conducted to underscore the importance of PBNU's grand vision as articulated in the slogan "Nurturing the World, Building Civilization".

The ASEAN Intercultural and Interreligious Dialogue Conference (ASEAN IIDC) held in Jakarta, which adopted the format of the ASEAN Summit in Labuan Bajo, NTT, represents a significant event utilized by the Executive Board of NU (PBNU) to discuss the crucial role of religious leaders in ASEAN in manifesting the spirit of peace.<sup>9</sup> Similarly, the Thought Congress held in Jakarta brought

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<sup>1</sup> Muhammad Teguh Saputro Says, "Satu Abad NU: Menjemput Abad Kedua, Mendigdayakan Jemaah," *OMONG-OMONG* (blog), 9 Februari 2023, <https://omong-omong.com/satu-abad-nu-menjemput-abad-kedua-mendigdayakan-jemaah/>.

<sup>2</sup> Robingun Suyud El Syam dkk., "Refleksi Satu Abad Nahdhatul Ulama: Dialektika Capaian dan Tantangan," *Jurnal Riset Rumpun Agama dan Filsafat (JURRAFI)* 2, no. 1 (2023): 30–39.

<sup>3</sup> Bambang H. Irwanto, "Refleksi 1 Abad NU: Merawat Jagad, Membangun Peradaban - TIMES Indonesia," diakses 10 November 2023, <https://timesindonesia.co.id/kopi-times/445609/refleksi-1-abad-nu-merawat-jagad-membangun-peradaban>.

<sup>4</sup> Aru Lego Triono, "Gus Yahya Jelaskan Makna Visi PBNU dan Tema Harlah 1 Abad NU," *NU Online*, 1 Februari 2023, <https://www.nu.or.id/nasional/gus-yahya-jelaskan-makna-visi-pbnu-dan-tema-harlah-1-abad-nu-IGMyY>.

<sup>5</sup> "FIQH OF CIVILIZATION: THE CONSISTENCY OF NAHDLATUL ULAMA'S POLITICAL FATWA TOWARD A CENTURY | Proceedings," accessed October 2, 2023, <https://proceedings.uinkhas.ac.id/index.php/proceedings/article/view/85>.

<sup>6</sup> "HALAQAH FIQIH PERADABAN," NU Online, diakses 25 September 2023, <https://www.nu.or.id/prefix/HALAQAH%20FIQIH%20PERADABAN>.

<sup>7</sup> "PBNU Gelar Mukhtamar Internasional Fiqih Peradaban di Surabaya, Ini 3 Agenda Bahasannya," diakses 6 Desember 2023, <https://www.nu.or.id/nasional/pbnu-gelar-mukhtamar-internasional-fiqih-peradaban-di-surabaya-ini-3-agenda-bahasannya-6vBGv>.

<sup>8</sup> "Komunike R20 Bali: Upaya Memastikan Agama sebagai Sumber Solusi Global," diakses 6 Desember 2023, <https://www.nu.or.id/nasional/komunike-r20-bali-upaya-memastikan-agama-sebagai-sumber-solusi-global-U9lq4>.

<sup>9</sup> "Diadopsi Jadi Bagian ASEAN SUMMIT 2023, Gus Yahya Jelaskan Peran ASEAN IIDC untuk Kebijakan Politik Asia Tenggara," NU Online, diakses 6 Desember 2023, <https://jabar.nu.or.id/nasional/diadopsi-jadi-bagian-asean-summit-2023-gus>.

together numerous intellectuals from various social organizations and religious backgrounds.<sup>10</sup>

Among the various programs carried out by the Executive Board of NU (PBNU), each one is based on reinforcing the grand concept of fiqh civilization, demonstrating PBNU's commitment to adopting a dynamic religious perspective and a new responsive jurisprudential approach to global challenges.<sup>11</sup> Furthermore, PBNU's efforts to position the concept of civilization fiqh as a bridge that connects classical heritage with contemporary issues<sup>12</sup> represent a strategic method by NU to address and adapt to the evolving times in the era of globalization.<sup>13</sup> NU is poised to become a leading actor in promoting religion as a source of inspiration for civilization and a solution for peace on the global stage.<sup>14</sup> However, to realize this grand vision, NU must prepare an ideological trajectory that can connect the various layers of the NU community spread across different management levels (*jam'iyah*) and heterogeneous citizenship characteristics, especially given the annual increase in NU adherents.<sup>15</sup>

Scientific studies have elucidated and identified the significant role of the Halaqah Fiqh Civilization in strengthening values of religious moderation in Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*), particularly in the context of the centennial celebration of *Nahdlatul Ulama*.<sup>16</sup> Fiqh of Civilization can also be positioned as an apt approach, sitting at the intersection of local and global development paradigms, thus enabling mediation between the two.<sup>17</sup> On the other hand, Islamic boarding schools literacy often falls into the trap of textual and historical understanding of classical Islamic texts (*'kitab kuning'*), resulting in a static and less adaptive approach. Fiqh of Civilization is proposed as a solution for contextualizing these texts, making education in Islamic boarding schools more relevant to modern social issues and more inclusive.<sup>18</sup> Furthermore, Fiqh of Civilization is suggested to address and engage

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<sup>10</sup> "PBNU gelar muktamar pemikiran bahas corak masyarakat masa depan - ANTARA News," diakses 6 Desember 2023, <https://www.antaranews.com/berita/3848613/pbnu-gelar-muktamar-pemikiran-bahas-corak-masyarakat-masa-depan>. ANTARA News Agency, "Muktamar Pemikiran NU 2023 hasilkan 11 poin keputusan," ANTARA News Megapolitan, diakses 4 Desember 2023, <https://megapolitan.antaranews.com/berita/270831/muktamar-pemikiran-nu-2023-hasilkan-11-poin-keputusan>.

<sup>11</sup> IQBAL BASYARI, "Peran NU di Tingkat Global Diperluas," [kompas.id](https://www.kompas.id/baca/polhuk/2022/10/18/peran-nu-di-tingkat-global-diperluas), 18 Oktober 2022, <https://www.kompas.id/baca/polhuk/2022/10/18/peran-nu-di-tingkat-global-diperluas>. "FIQH of CIVILIZATION: THE CONSISTENCY of NAHDLATUL ULAMA'S POLITICAL FATWA TOWARD A CENTURY | Proceedings."

<sup>12</sup> Reza Fauzi Nazar dan Mohammad Fahmi Abdul Hamid, "Tracking the Genealogical Reasoning Reconstruction of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) Fiqh: From 'Social Fiqh' to 'Civilization Fiqh,'" *Tashwirul Afkar* 41, no. 2 (30 Desember 2022): 137–62, <https://doi.org/10.51716/ta.v41i2.74>.

<sup>13</sup> Rohmatul Izad, "Fikih Peradaban: Membawa Lokalitas Islam Nusantara ke Dunia Global," *IBTimes.ID* (blog), 25 Oktober 2022, <https://ibtimes.id/fikih-peradaban-membawa-lokalitas-islam-nusantara-ke-dunia-global/>.

<sup>14</sup> "NU Punya Visi Global untuk Peradaban Umat Manusia," diakses 22 November 2023, <https://www.nu.or.id/wawancara/nu-punya-visi-global-untuk-peradaban-umat-manusia-2HfN4>.

<sup>15</sup> "Ketum PBNU Ungkap Pertumbuhan Signifikan Konstituen NU," NU Online, diakses 6 Desember 2023, <https://www.nu.or.id/nasional/ketum-pbnu-ungkap-pertumbuhan-signifikan-konstituen-nu-U0Dhy>.

<sup>16</sup> Muhammad Nasruddin, "Halaqah Fikih Peradaban Dan Relevansinya Terhadap Penguatan Nilai Moderasi Beragama Di Pesantren," vol. 1, 2022, 1–13, <https://proceeding.iainkendi.ac.id/index.php/ansops/article/view/3>.

<sup>17</sup> Amanda tho Seeth, "Renegotiating the Islam and Development-Nexus in Indonesia: Fikih Peradaban as a Middle Ground between Local and Global Development Paradigms," *ISLAM NUSANTARA: Journal for the Study of Islamic History and Culture* 4, no. 2 (2023): 1–26, <https://doi.org/10.47776/islamnusantara.v4i2.690>.

<sup>18</sup> Akhmad Ghasi Pathollah dan Siti Masyarafatul Manna Wassalwa, "Pendampingan Program Pengembangan Literasi Pesantren dalam Kontruksi Fikih Peradaban di Pesantren Miftahul Ulum Randu Cangkring Pujer Bondowoso," *Salwatuna: Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat* 3, no. 3 (2023): 125–32, <https://doi.org/10.59106/salwatuna.v3i3.152>.

with The 21<sup>st</sup> century societal realities such as the gig economy, internet technology, and nurturing the minor nation-building units like families by offering counter-discourses to trending issues such as child-free choices, demographic jurisprudence, and others.<sup>19</sup> Additionally, *Nahdlatul Ulama* (NU) has consistently issued nationalistic-oriented political fatwas throughout its century, with the aim of developing a peaceful, tolerant, and moderate Fiqh of Civilization in the Indonesian archipelago.<sup>20</sup>

Based on the explanations above, besides examining the efforts of the Executive Board of *Nahdlatul Ulama* (PBNU) in introducing the concept of civilization jurisprudence as a bridge of knowledge that connects NU's jurisprudential traditions with global challenges, this study also offers novelty in the epistemological construction of fiqh civilization as promoted by Yahya Cholil Staquf, the chairman of PBNU. This research deeper focus on the epistemological aspects that previous studies have not extensively explored. It poses three main questions: How is the epistemological construction of fiqh civilization defined? What specific aspects of fiqh are the focus of development within fiqh of civilization? And, what are the contributions and relevance of fiqh civilization to the second Renaissance (*Al-nahdlah Al-tsaniyah*)? This study not only adds a new dimension to the understanding of fiqh civilization through the lens of NU but also links it to global and contemporary discourses, providing a more holistic and integrative perspective.

Methodologically, this paper is a qualitative-descriptive research based on a literature review.<sup>21</sup> Through this study, the author aims to observe, examine, and explain the role of *Nahdlatul Ulama* (NU) in disseminating the concept of fiqh civilization as one of NU's service trajectories in its second century. The research employs a desk research method<sup>22</sup> relying on documents and reports on fiqh of civilization available on various websites, including NU Online and other portals. For the analysis of data obtained from these sources, the author uses the interactive model of Miles and Huberman, which includes data collection, data reduction, data display, and verification or conclusion drawing.<sup>23</sup>

Additionally, to analyze the three main issues presented, the author utilizes a sociological approach based on the theory of social roles in religion. Through this theory, the author seeks to depict NU's role in playing a strategic part in the global era. As a religious organization nurtured by the

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<sup>19</sup> Reza Fauzi Nazar dan Mohammad Fahmi Abdul Hamid, "Tracking the Genealogical Reasoning Reconstruction of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) Fiqh: From 'Social Fiqh' to 'Civilization Fiqh,'" *Tashwirul Afkar* 41, no. 2 (2022): 137–62, <https://doi.org/10.51716/ta.v41i2.74>.

<sup>20</sup> Muhammad Taufiq, "FIQH of CIVILIZATION: THE CONSISTENCY of NAHDLATUL ULAMA'S POLITICAL FATWA TOWARD A CENTURY," vol. 2, 2023, 33–44, <https://proceedings.uinkhas.ac.id/index.php/proceedings/article/view/85>.

<sup>21</sup> Eko Haryono, "Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif Di Perguruan Tinggi Keagamaan Islam," *An-Nuur* 13, no. 2 (31 Oktober 2023), <https://doi.org/10.58403/annuur.v13i2.301>.

<sup>22</sup> Aditya Wisnu Pradana dkk., "Analisis Desk Research Kebijakan Technology Transfer Office Sebagai Solusi Hambatan Teknologi Transfer di Lembaga Litbang Indonesia," *Matra Pembaruan* 5 (31 Mei 2021): 1–12, <https://doi.org/10.21787/mp.5.1.2021.1-12>.

<sup>23</sup> Matthew B. Miles, A. Michael Huberman, dan Johnny Saldana, *Qualitative Data Analysis: A Methods Sourcebook* (SAGE Publications, 2018).

ideology of *Ahlussunnah wa al- Jamaah' ala an-Nahdliyah*<sup>24</sup> and having devoted its organization to the welfare of the community for over a century, PBNU, under the leadership of Gus Yahya, has positioned fiqh of civilization as an epistemological and ideological pillar that strengthens NU's service on the global stage.<sup>25</sup>

### **Mapping The Epistemological Construction of The Fiqh of Civilization Idea**

*Nahdlatul Ulama* (NU), the largest religious organization in Indonesia, plays a significant role in advancing Islamic scholarly discourse through a jurisprudence lens relevant to contemporary challenges.<sup>26</sup> One intellectual conception developed under the leadership of Yahya Cholil Staquf is the "Fiqh of Civilization." This Fiqh of Civilization represents an intellectual effort to formulate an understanding of jurisprudence that extends beyond the regulation of worship and personal transactions, considering the complexities of global issues and inter-civilizational interactions.<sup>27</sup> Introduced by Gus Yahya, this jurisprudence seeks to address challenges arising in the contexts of globalization and modernity. The idea aims to redefine Muslim understanding of law and ethics on a broader scale, not limited to the Muslim community alone, but also concerning their interactions with the non-Muslim world. It requires an inclusive and dialogic approach to understanding Sharia, emphasizing the importance of harmony and coexistence among communities and faiths.<sup>28</sup>

The Fiqh of Civilization also considers the internal dynamics of the Muslim community, such as differences in schools of thought and interpretations. It facilitates a constructive internal dialogue that can strengthen the Muslim community's unity while respecting the plurality of opinions. Thus, the Fiqh of Civilization is not merely a theoretical proposal but also serves as a unifying and empowering tool for the Muslim community in addressing global challenges.<sup>29</sup>

Before Yahya Cholil Staquf's involvement, a pivotal figure in the development of the Fiqh of Civilization was Abdul Majid al-Najjar. This Tunisian activist, politician, and academic penned his monumental book, *Fikih al-Tahaddur al-Islami*<sup>30</sup> (The Jurisprudence of Islamic Civilization), in 1999.

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<sup>24</sup> Kholid Thohiri, "A PARADIGM SHIFT OF 'ASWAJA AN-NAHDLIYYAH,'" *Epistemé: Jurnal Pengembangan Ilmu Keislaman* 14, no. 2 (12 Desember 2019): 305–26, <https://doi.org/10.21274/epis.2019.14.2.305-326>. Hanik Yuni Alfiyah, "TRANSFORMASI SOSIAL NU BERBASIS ASWAJA," *AT-TURAS: Jurnal Studi Keislaman* 2, no. 2 (2015), <https://doi.org/10.33650/at-turas.v2i2.175>.

<sup>25</sup> Izad, "Fikih Peradaban."

<sup>26</sup> Greg Fealy dan Robin Bush, "The Political Decline of Traditional Ulama in Indonesia: The State, Umma and Nahdlatul Ulama," *Asian Journal of Social Science* 42, no. 5 (2014): 536–60, <https://doi.org/10.1163/15685314-04205004>.

<sup>27</sup> Devy Setya, "Gagasan NU Gelar Fikih Peradaban Dinilai Tebarkan Kontribusi Positif Bagi Kemanusiaan," *detikHikmah*, 5 Februari 2023, <https://www.detik.com/hikmah/khazanah/d-6552925/gagasan-nu-gelar-fikih-peradaban-dinilai-tebarkan-kontribusi-positif-bagi-kemanusiaan>.

<sup>28</sup> Malik Ibnu Zaman, "Bagaimana Prospek dan Tantangan Fiqih Peradaban sebagai Solusi Krisis Tatanan Global?," *NU Online*, 28 Maret 2023, <https://www.nu.or.id/nasional/bagaimana-prospek-dan-tantangan-fiqih-peradaban-sebagai-solusi-krisis-tatanan-global-Y7bh1>.

<sup>29</sup> Ahmad Tholabi Kharlie, "Memahami Fikih Peradaban," *detikHikmah*, 5 Februari 2023, <https://www.detik.com/hikmah/khazanah/d-6555126/memahami-fikih-peradaban>.

<sup>30</sup> Abdul Majid Al-Najjar, *Fiqh Al-Tahadllur Al-Islami*, vol. 1, II (Beirut: Dar Al-Gharb Al-Islami, 2006), 6–7.

Published by the esteemed Middle Eastern publisher Dar al-Gharb al-Islami, al-Najjar's work laid on the groundwork for the concept, outlining its paradigms and characteristics and discussing various civilization projects previously designed by leaders, movements, and thinkers.

Al-Najjar divides the thematic segmentation of his book into three parts that systematically discuss issues framed within the discourse of the Fiqh of Civilization. In the first segment, al-Najjar explains the definition and aspects that shape civilization. In the second part, he discusses the factors that drive human roles in building civilization. In the third part, al-Najjar presents several civilization projects that have been previously conceived.<sup>31</sup> Both Yahya and al-Najjar aim to break the stagnation of Islamic civilization, at least at the level of discourse initially, to engineer a blueprint for contemporary Islamic civilization as a foundation for the Islamic world in building Islamic civilization in the era of 5.0 and beyond. For al-Najjar, the Fiqh of Civilization must begin with the tangible proof of Islam as a civilization religion capable of being present in every world change. Islamic civilization is a civilization of humanity. It represents a civilization achievement dedicated to humans, oriented towards the heights of human morality and the well-being of individuals and society.<sup>32</sup>

Muhammad Imarah, a member of the *Haiah Kibar al-Ulama al-Azhar* (Al-Azhar Committee of Senior Scholars) and the *Majlis A'la li Syuun al-Islamiyyah* (High Council for Islamic Affairs) authored a work on the Fiqh of Civilization titled "Fikih al-Hadlarah al-Islamiyyah," published in 2007. This work explores various themes of the Fiqh of Civilization, including foundational themes of statehood, prophetic missions, moderation, pluralism, the spirit of Islamic civilization, Islamic philosophy, and the relationship between reason and revelation as viewed by Imam al-Ghazali and Ibn Rushd.<sup>33</sup> General themes of Islamic civilization, elements of civilization, and factors contributing to the regression of a civilization are discussed by Husain Mu'nis in his book, "*Dirāsah fī Uṣūl wa Awāmili Qiyāmihā wa Taṭāwwurihā*."<sup>34</sup>

Therefore, the Fiqh of Civilization has emerged as a compelling topic for discussion in the late 1990s and has resurfaced today as Yahya Cholil Staquf rekindles interest in it.<sup>35</sup> The intensive and extensive changes in the world from the 1.0 era to the 5.0 era necessitate a solid stance from the Islamic world in responding to and anticipating these developments. The Fiqh of Civilization is expected to serve as the locomotive pulling the carriages of global Islamic civilization transformation, enabling it to observe, welcome, and anticipate changes. Thus, the epistemological construction of the Fiqh of

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<sup>31</sup> Abdul Majid al-Najjar, *Fiqh al-Tahadllur al-Islami*.

<sup>32</sup> <https://shuhoud.com/قراءة-في-سلسلة-التشهود-الحضاري-للعلامة>

<sup>33</sup> Muhammad Imarah, *Fi Fiqh al-Hadlarah al-Islamiyyah* (Kairo: Maktabah al-Syuruq al-Dauliyah, 2007).

<sup>34</sup> Husain Mu'nis, *Al-Hadlarah; Diratsah fi Ushul wa Awamil Qiyamiha wa Tathawwuriha* (Kairo: Alamul Ma'rifah, 1978).

<sup>35</sup> "Fikih Peradaban Gagasan Ketua Umum PBNU Dinilai Bisa Jadi Kunci Reformasi Agama di Indonesia," *tempo.co*, 28 Maret 2023, Nasional edisi, <https://nasional.tempo.co/read/1707864/fikih-peradaban-gagasan-ketua-umum-pbnu-dinilai-bisa-jadi-kunci-reformasi-agama-di-indonesia>.

Civilization offered by NU through Yahya Cholil Staquf seeks to bridge tradition and modernity, demonstrating how jurisprudence, as a branch of Islamic knowledge, can be interpreted and implemented on a broader and deeper scale, considering the complexity of issues faced by humanity in the current global era.

### **Aspects of Jurisprudence in The Development of The Fiqh of Civilization**

Yahya Cholil Staquf, as the Chairman of PBNU (*Nahdlatul Ulama* Executive Board), has introduced the concept of "Fiqh of Civilization" as a response to the adaptation and transformation needs of Muslim societies facing increasingly complex global challenges. This concept not only addresses local issues but also global ones, integrating Sharia principles with the socio-political realities of the contemporary world.<sup>36</sup> The Fiqh of Civilization is articulated as an effort to reformulate an understanding of Islam that is more inclusive and universal, capable of engaging productively with various aspects of modern life.<sup>37</sup>

One of the main aspects of the Fiqh of Civilization is the emphasis on global insight, commitment to pluralism, and tolerance. Yahya Cholil Staquf emphasizes that in the current global context, Muslims need to develop a broader understanding of the ummah, which is not limited to the Muslim community but encompasses all of humanity. It certainly requires the reinterpretation and application of Islamic principles that support harmonious coexistence among various religions and cultures.<sup>38</sup> The second aspect is social justice. The Fiqh of Civilization considers the fair distribution of wealth and opportunities as part of implementing Islamic values, which includes efforts to improve the quality of life through education, health, and better economic opportunities. This focus reflects the recognition that social justice is a fundamental pillar in building a sustainable civilization.<sup>39</sup>

The third aspect relates to environmental sustainability. If revisited sociologically, this aspect is rooted and initiated from Yahya Chalil Staquf's argument in the tagline "Caring for the Universe, Building Civilization," where the phrase "caring for the universe" underscores a moral message and signifies maintaining tranquility, both in the natural environment and in its order of life. This action is crucial to prevent chaos and misery. This moral message is essential for every individual and group with responsibilities to treat the environment with grace and blessing.<sup>40</sup> As environmental damage increases due to societal behaviours,<sup>41</sup> NU seeks to position itself as an essential part of raising awareness and encouraging the state and various societal elements to care for the environment. At least,

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<sup>36</sup> tho Seeth, "Renegotiating the Islam and Development-Nexus in Indonesia: Fikih Peradaban as a Middle Ground between Local and Global Development Paradigms."

<sup>37</sup> Ahmad Tholabi Kharlie, "Memahami Fikih Peradaban."

<sup>38</sup> Nasruddin, "Halaqah Fikih Peradaban Dan Relevansinya Terhadap Penguatan Nilai Moderasi Beragama Di Pesantren."

<sup>39</sup> M Ngisom Al-Barony, "Halaqah Fiqih Peradaban; Muara Fiqih Terciptanya Keadilan Sosial," *NU Online Jateng*, Desember 2022, <https://jateng.nu.or.id/nasional/halaqah-fiqih-peradaban-muara-fiqih-terciptanya-keadilan-sosial-yuIMK>.

<sup>40</sup> Joni Tapingku, "TANGGUNGJAWAB MANUSIA TERHADAP LINGKUNGAN HIDUP: (KAJIAN LIVING TEOLOGI)," *Living Islam: Journal of Islamic Discourses* 5, no. 2 (27 Desember 2022): 207–30, <https://doi.org/10.14421/lijid.v5i2.4015>.

<sup>41</sup> "Kerusakan Lingkungan Hidup di Indonesia dan Penyebabnya," diakses 5 Desember 2023, <https://dislhk.badungkab.go.id/artikel/18289-kerusakan-lingkungan-hidup-di-indonesia-dan-penyebabnya>.

NU's long-standing role, which has extensively involved thought and social action in environmental sustainability, should continue as a national and global awareness in caring for the universe.<sup>42</sup>

The involvement of KH. Ali Yafie and KH. Sahal Mahfud, as the Rais 'Am of the Syuriah PBNU during the 1980s and 1990s, who dedicated their insights and thoughts to developing the concept of environmental fiqh from a religious perspective,<sup>43</sup> serves as evidence of NU's historical commitment to environmental preservation. Additionally, the leaders and founders of NU have demonstrated significant concern for environmental sustainability through both advocacy and exemplification. Moreover, NU's leaders and founders have shown significant concern for environmental sustainability through advocacy and exemplification.<sup>44</sup> Thus, when Gus Yahya's moral message emphasizes the importance of each person's responsibility towards their environment, there is an epistemological correlation between NU's historical figures and founders and the current NU leadership heirs.

Furthermore, NU's commitment to caring for the universe extends beyond merely preserving the physical environment. NU also emphasizes the importance of a social life order based on rules and moral values as well as inclusive public decency.<sup>45</sup> Moreover, when the interaction space of individuals and groups is not confined to the internal territories of a single country but spans across nations and is bound by global agreements, the significance of these principles increases.<sup>46</sup> Therefore, through the tagline of caring for the universe, NU asserts a responsibility that every individual and group must uphold. Genealogically, everyone is born as a leader who must be accountable in their leadership roles. Through this spirit of responsibility, each person and group can play a part in ensuring peace in both the environmental and social realms.

Finally, the Fiqh of Civilization also highlights the importance of technology and innovation in the context of modern Muslim life. Yahya Cholil Staqf recognizes that to thrive in a globally driven society of innovation, Muslims must integrate technology into daily life while steadfastly adhering to Islamic values. It is not just about technology adaptation but also about leveraging it to strengthen Islamic identity and enhance the well-being of the community.<sup>47</sup> Thus, the Fiqh of Civilization proposed

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<sup>42</sup> M. Huda, "KONTRIBUSI KOMUNITAS NU DALAM ISU KELESTARIAN LINGKUNGAN HIDUP DI INDONESIA," *Jurnal Dialektika Politik* 7 (30 Agustus 2023): 170–87, <https://doi.org/10.37949/jdp.v7i2.70>.

<sup>43</sup> Muhammad Afwan Romdloni dan Muhammad Sukron Djazilan, "Kiai Dan Lingkungan Hidup; Revitalisasi Krisis Ekologis Berbasis Nilai Keagamaan Di Indonesia," *Journal of Islamic Civilization* 1, no. 2 (28 Oktober 2019): 119–29, <https://doi.org/10.33086/jic.v1i2.1322>.

<sup>44</sup> "Muktamar 1994 dan Jihad Lingkungan Hidup," diakses 5 Desember 2023, <https://www.nu.or.id/fragmen/muktamar-1994-dan-jihad-lingkungan-hidup-EkV9O.Sapariah> Saturi, "Meneladani Gus Dur Dalam Membela Lingkungan Hidup," *Mongabay.co.id*, 17 Juni 2020, <https://www.mongabay.co.id/2020/06/17/meneladani-gus-dur-dalam-membela-lingkungan-hidup/>.

<sup>45</sup> "5280.pdf," diakses 5 Desember 2023, <http://repository.uin-malang.ac.id/5280/1/5280.pdf>.

<sup>46</sup> Cahyo Pamungkas, "Global Village Dan Globalisasi Dalam Konteks Ke-Indonesiaan," *Global Strategis* 9, no. 2 (2015): 245–61, <https://doi.org/10.20473/jgs.9.2.2015.245-261>.

<sup>47</sup> Wawan Sutaji, "Fiqh Peradaban: Reaksi terhadap Zeitgeist atau sebagai Zeitgeist Itu Sendiri," *NU Online Banten*, 22 Januari 2024, <https://banten.nu.or.id/opini/fiqh-peradaban-reaksi-terhadap-zeitgeist-atau-sebagai-zeitgeist-itu-sendiri-zqu9e>.

by Yahya Cholil Staquf offers new insights into the practice of Islam that align with the challenges of the times. This concept seeks to unite traditional Islamic wisdom with contemporary needs and challenges, leading to a synthesis that encourages Muslims not only to adapt but also to contribute to the development of a global civilization actively.

### ***Al-Nahdlah al-Tsaniyah*: Building Bridges between Classical Islamic Legal Traditions and Modern Challenges through The Fiqh of Civilization**

*Al-Nahdlah Al-Tsaniyah*, or what can be translated as the second awakening, encompasses a period of revitalization of Islamic thought and practices aimed at addressing the challenges of modernity.<sup>48</sup> In this context, the Fiqh of Civilization proposed by Yahya Cholil Staquf becomes relevant. This concept facilitates a bridge between the classical Islamic legal tradition and the demands of socio-economic, political, and technological change faced by Muslim societies today.<sup>49</sup> Yahya Cholil Staquf argues that a rigid and textual understanding without considering contextual variables will lead to the application of laws that are not only irrelevant but also potentially hinder social and humanitarian progress.<sup>50</sup> Therefore, the idea of the Fiqh of Civilization seeks to integrate universal values such as justice, freedom, and equality within the framework of Islamic law. It is achieved through constructive dialogue between scholars and other stakeholders to produce legal interpretations that enrich communal life, both locally and globally. This concept encourages adaptation and flexibility in the application of Islamic law, recognizing the need to respond effectively to changing times and environments.

On the other hand, the Fiqh of Civilization becomes a crucial key in the renewal of Islamic legal thought and practices, emphasizing adaptation to the challenges of the times.<sup>51</sup> This effort receives significant continuation in the works of thinkers like Hasan Hanafi, who introduced the concept of Occidentalism as a response to the dominance of Western thought.<sup>52</sup> This connection reveals how the Islamic world, rooted in its traditional values yet open to global realities, strives to formulate an attitude that is not only responsive but also progressive towards global dynamics. For example, the attitude towards Israel should be viewed from the perspective of the Fiqh of Civilization, which teaches a vision of humanism as exemplified by the Prophet Muhammad, avoiding harm and striving for the welfare of humanity as a manifestation of the doctrine of *rahmat li al-‘ālamīn* (mercy to the worlds) as well as the

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<sup>48</sup> Jamal Ma'mur Asmani, "Menyongsong Kebangkitan Kedua NU," *detikNews*, 31 Januari 2021, <https://news.detik.com/kolom/d-5355427/menyongsong-kebangkitan-kedua-nu>.

<sup>49</sup> Taufiq, "FIQH OF CIVILIZATION: THE CONSISTENCY OF NAHDLATUL ULAMA'S POLITICAL FATWA TOWARD A CENTURY."

<sup>50</sup> Nuriel Shiami Indirapasha, "Gus Yahya Ungkap Perlunya Rekontekstualisasi Fiqih untuk Cegah Konflik," *NU Online*, Mei 2023, <https://www.nu.or.id/nasional/gus-yahya-ungkap-perlunya-rekontekstualisasi-fiqih-untuk-cegah-konflik-TZn3L>.

<sup>51</sup> Beberapa proyek Fiqih Peradaban yang telah digagas oleh para pemikir dan tokoh Islam dijelaskan dengan baik dalam serial buku *Fiqh Al-Tahadlur* oleh Abdul Majid Al-Najjar. Paling tidak, Al-Najjar menjelaskan tiga bentuk proyek Fiqih Peradaban; *Masyru Al-Salafi*, *Masyru' Al-Taharruri*, *Masyru Al-Ihya Al-Imani Al-Syamil*. Abdul Majid Al-Najjar, *Masyari' Al-Isyhad Al-Hadlari*, 3:10–13.

<sup>52</sup> Hasan Hanafi, *Muqaddimah fi 'Ilm Al-Istighrab*, II (Beirut: Al-Muassasah Al-Jami'iyah li Al-Diratsat wa Al-Nasyr wa Al-Tauzi', 2000), 28.

principle of *hifdh al-nafs* (protection of life) in the objectives of sharia (*maqāṣid al-sharīah*). The American veto, which has been used dozens of times to block ceasefires by Israeli military forces against Palestine, underlying the workings of the United Nations (UN), must be revoked for the sake of humanistic welfare. Humanity has been oppressed by a UN system that opens the possibility of injustices such as the confiscation of land, rights, and human lives.

From the perspective of the Fiqh of Civilization, global humanism is about formulating the Islamic world's attitude towards global developments based on the principles of *maqāṣid al-sharīah* (objectives of Islamic law) and the geopolitical strategies employed by Prophet Muhammad. In this regard, Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jauziyyah emphasizes that the foundation of Sharia is the welfare of this world and the hereafter. It is all based on the principles of justice (*adl*), compassion (*rahmah*), welfare (*maṣlahah*), and wisdom (*hikmah*). Any Sharia that deviates from the principle of justice towards injustice, compassion towards cruelty and wisdom towards futility is not considered Islamic Sharia, even if it is executed through the process of interpreting the evidence from the Quran and Sunnah.<sup>53</sup>

The primary goal of *maqāṣid al-sharīah* (objectives of Islamic law) is to avoid harm and realize welfare (*dar'u al-mafāsīd wa jalb al-maṣāliḥ*). It involves two aspects that must be pursued: abstention (*al-tark*) and action and advocacy (*al-fi'l*), specifically abstaining from harm and advocating for welfare. Generally, the welfare and harm of the world can be discerned through human reason. Reason universally operates with axioms, experiences, customary practices, and credible conjectures. When these welfare interests conflict with one another, reason works to prioritize one over the other, as in the principles of fiqh (*al-qawā'id al-fiqhiyyah*) that exist.

Positioning *maqāṣid al-sharīah* (objectives of Islamic law) as the foundation of the Fiqh of Civilization requires Muslims to understand the workings of Islamic legal methodology (*uṣūl fiqh*) that directs the interpretation of religious texts. It is to ensure that the Fiqh of Civilization does not end with ideas that are counterproductive to the objectives of Sharia. Thus, the Fiqh of Civilization, grounded in *maqāṣid al-sharīah*, can begin by considering religious texts as historical arguments (*al-wa'y al-tarīkhī*) and testing their validity. Efforts to pursue linguistic interpretation (*al-wa'y al-naẓarī*) syntactically, semantically, and semiotically are carried out in conjunction with observing the realities of the world, changes in global social and political orders, and so forth (*al-wa'y al-'amālī*). This process of linguistic observation and praxis converges at a nexus of welfare (*maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*).<sup>54</sup> The Fiqh of Civilization must consider the humanistic welfare contained in the texts as the enduring spirit of the messages from the text owner (Allah Swt.) and the humanistic welfare found in realities that often change with the shifts in time, space, and circumstances (*taghayyur al-aḥkām bi taghayyur al-azminah wa al-amkinah wa al-*

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<sup>53</sup> Ibn Al-Qayyim Al-Jauziyyah, *I'lam Al-Mauqūfīn an Rabbil Al-Alāmin*, vol. III (Beirut: Dar Al-Kutub Al-Ilmiyyah, 1991), 11.

<sup>54</sup> M. Anis Mashduqi dkk., *Fikih Peradaban dan Isu-Isu Global* (Yogyakarta: Istana Agency, 2023), 8.

*ahwāl*).

## Conclusion

*Nahdlatul Ulama* (NU) has strategically positioned the concept of "Fiqh of Civilization" to respond and adapt to global challenges and modernity. NU has successfully constructed an epistemology of civilization fiqh by integrating universal Islamic principles with contemporary issues, demonstrating the adaptation of religious texts to the dynamic realities of social, economic, and political life. The development focus within civilization fiqh includes pluralism, social justice, and environmental sustainability, emphasizing the importance of fair wealth distribution, environmental conservation, and intercultural harmony. Finally, the contributions and relevance of civilization fiqh to *Al-Nahdlah Al-Tsaniyah* (the second awakening) signify a paradigmatic shift in religious understanding and practice, supporting the formation of a bridge between classical Islamic legal traditions and modern challenges, offering a new perspective that is more inclusive and oriented towards renewal appropriate to the demands of the times. This piece effectively highlights how NU, through the concept of fiqh of civilization championed by Yahya Cholil Staquf, the chairman of the Executive Board of *Nahdlatul Ulama*, not only delves into its traditional roots but also actively participates in the global discourse, promoting adaptation and innovation in contemporary Islamic practices.

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