POLITEA: Jurnal Kajian Politik Islam
Vol. 9, No. 3 2026
E-ISSN: 2715-1166 | P-ISSN: 2654-847X

When Fiqh Freezes: Muhammad `Abduh's Theory of Jumud and Nahdlatul Ulama's Halaqah Fikih Peradaban

Abdul Najib*
STAI Al-Anwar Sarang Rembang, Rembang, Indonesia
*Corresponding Author: abdulnajib@staialanwar.ac.id

Keywords:
Halaqah Fikih Peradaban; Muhammad `Abduh; jumud (intellectual stagnation); fikih siyasah; Nahdlatul Ulama

ABSTRACT

Since mid-2022, Nahdlatul Ulama's Halaqah Fikih Peradaban has asked pesantren clerics to rework Islamic political jurisprudence (fikih siyasah) for modern governance, but does that debate actually escape the intellectual stagnation (jumud) Muhammad `Abduh diagnosed a century ago? This article tests `Abduh's four-stage jumud theory against one halaqah session at Al-Anwar 3 Islamic Boarding School on contextualising citizenship in a modern state, using direct observation, event recordings, and discussion minutes. Three of `Abduh's four stages surfaced in the debate: linguistic rigidity, methodological patronage, and exclusivity of Sharia interpretation, while the fourth, truth-claiming and takfiri accusation, did not: participants closed by accommodating three divergent conclusions rather than declaring a winner. They also proposed two concrete fixes: commissioning research on contemporary political systems and building an updated fikih siyasah corpus from it. The halaqah shows `Abduh's reformist spirit still alive among pesantren clerics, and that reforming Islamic jurisprudence need not trade scientific inquiry against fidelity to Islamic principles.

1. Introduction

The encounter between Islamic tradition and modernity brought sweeping change within Islamic tradition itself. One turning point was Egypt's fall to the West: Napoleon Bonaparte's conquest of one of Islamic civilisation's most important centres made clear to many just how far that tradition had declined. An account of an Egyptian scholar's visit to the scientific institute Napoleon founded records his unease at the instruments and experiments he saw there, and his own admission that such scientific activity could bring great benefit to human life (Nasution, 1996).

This episode shows how far Islamic scholarship had declined, dazzled by the brilliance of Western learning. That awareness of decline is what drove many Muslim intellectuals to see reform as necessary, and their responses split broadly into two opposing camps (Abduh, 1991c). The first camp admired Western civilisation enough to treat it as the reference point and ideal model of civilisation. The second sought to revive a pure Islamic civilisation by calling for a return to the Qur'an and Hadith tradition (Esposito & Voll, 2000). In time, though the label simplifies things, the first camp became known as the "left" and the second as the "right" (Muslim, 2012).

Reforming Islamic scholarship and tradition is a problem not only in Egypt but in nearly every Muslim community worldwide, Indonesia included. In Indonesia, the reform debate that has drawn the most attention plays out most visibly in the Halaqah Fikih Peradaban. NU launched the series to mark the centenary of one of the world's largest Islamic organisations. Then-PBNU chairman Yahya Cholil Staquf convened pesantren clerics to rethink NU's scholarly repertoire and formulate recommendations for NU's engagement with today's global challenges (Staquf, 2022). This public participation was meant, in part, to answer critics who have argued that this very absence explains the Muslim community's halting response to global developments (Jahar, 2023).

The Halaqah Fikih Peradaban ignited sharp debate across NU, especially among local clerics, through sessions held from mid-2022 to early 2023. As this article shows, its central aim was to formulate a new conception of political jurisprudence (fikih siyasah) and its relation to citizenship in a modern, global context. Figures such as Yahya Cholil Staquf, Ulil Abshar, Afifuddin Muhajir, and Abdul Ghofur sat with local clerics to discuss contextualising fikih siyasah terms that rarely meet contemporary global politics (Fayyadl, 2022). That effort, however, drew considerable criticism, voiced both inside and outside the forum.

Criticism of the Halaqah largely targets its method: bahth al-masa'il, which reasons by analogy (ilhaq) from classical scholarly texts rather than qiyas, which draws directly on the Qur'an and Hadith. That reliance makes contextualization difficult, since the classical texts (kitab kuning) were written for a context very different from today's (Nasih, 2009). This mirrors a critique Muhammad `Abduh raised in his compiled works, al-A'mal al-Kamilah, on Muslim intellectual stagnation (jumud): he traces it to a scholarly tradition that relies on secondary rather than primary sources (Abduh, 1991c). He also points to a narrow authority over who

may speak and interpret, leaving alternative narratives rarely voiced, let alone studied, in Islamic scholarly tradition (Abduh, 1991c).

The Halaqah Fikih Peradaban has already been examined through the lens of modernism (Nasruddin, 2022), emancipation (Haq & Sari, n.d.), and the pesantren's role in public civility (Salsabila et al., 2023). Other, more descriptive studies map where the Halaqah sits within fikih siyasah scholarship (Fadil & Anwar, 2024). More discursive work by Latif and Mutawalli (2023) and by Latif, Mutawalli, and Paidi (2023) argues that Fikih Peradaban resolves the friction between national and religious interests. Fathorrahman and Sugitanata (2024a) show how NU's progressive thinking, still rooted in classical scholarship, can ground responses to challenges both domestic and global. None of this research, however, examines how the stagnation the Halaqah confronts actually arose, which is exactly where Muhammad `Abduh's thought becomes relevant to reading the process of stagnation in Islamic law as framed by NU's Halaqah Fikih Peradaban series.

Similarly, `Abduh's thought has been widely contextualised in education (Asifa, 2018), theology (Botz-Bornstein, 2022) and Qur'anic exegesis (Syauqi, 2020), but publications on his contribution to fiqh are rare: Mughniatul Ilma on nusyuz (Ilma, 2019) and Ismail Keri on qishash and polygamy (Keri, Misbahuddin, & Waddade, 2022). Work contextualizing `Abduh's thinking on fikih siyasah specifically is nearly absent from the literature I have surveyed. More striking still, existing studies stop at the level of practical fiqh (haḍarat al-‘ilm). Like other studies of the Halaqah Fikih Peradaban, they miss the second, philosophical-epistemological level of analysis (haḍarat al-falsafah) (Abdullah, 2006) that would explain how the stagnation actually occurs. This article aims to fill that gap by analysing the relevance of Muhammad `Abduh's epistemological framework to the stagnation (jumud) that surfaced in the Halaqah Fikih Peradaban convened by Nahdlatul Ulama. Concretely, it asks how, and to what extent, `Abduh's four stages of stagnation manifest in a single Halaqah Fikih Peradaban session, and what that pattern reveals about the mechanism, not just the fact, of stagnation in contemporary fikih siyasah. The article proceeds by setting out `Abduh's stagnation framework and the study's method, then reading that framework against the Al-Anwar 3 session before drawing out its implications for reform in Islamic political jurisprudence.

2. Method

This article grew out of my reading of one of Muhammad `Abduh's works, al-A'mal al-Kamilah li al-Imam al-Syaikh Muhammad `Abduh. Edited by Muhammad Imarah, the book compiles `Abduh's writings from outlets such as the journal al-Urwat al-Wuthqa and al-Waqa'i al-Mishriyyah (Imarah, 1991). By the third volume, I found a passage that struck me as directly relevant to the state of Islamic scholarship today, where `Abduh raises the problem of Islamic intellectual stagnation.

Why does stagnation occur? Is it inherent to religion, part of ushul al-din? Does religion itself resist knowledge? `Abduh's intellectual work sets out to answer these questions. He traces Islamic stagnation to the decline of Islamic scholarship itself. He locates its origin in the belief that only those fluent in classical Qur'anic Arabic (fushah) hold the truest understanding of Islam. This first stage is linguistic stagnation: language, which should serve as a medium for thought, instead becomes the primary object of study in itself, displacing the meaning it was meant to carry.

Out of this hardened linguistic debate grows the second stage: patronage within Islamic scholarship, marked by exclusive loyalty to one school's method (manhaj). That patronage triggers a cascading third stage: exclusivist readings of Sharia, disregard for reform even as context changes, and misunderstanding spreading at the grassroots. In its most extreme form, this misreading of Islam produces truth-claims that negate the other's existence and culminate in takfiri accusations, `Abduh's fourth and final stage of stagnation (Abduh, 1991c).

This summary of `Abduh's thought supplies the analytical frame for reading the Halaqah Fikih Peradaban. I purposively limited my object of study (Sugiyono, 2014) to the session held at Pesantren Al-Anwar 3, the only one, by my observation, conducted dialogically: participants argued their positions in the ta'bir style of bahtsul masa'il rather than simply fielding questions, as most other sessions do. I take this session to best represent the Halaqah's ideal aim of hearing peripheral clerics (Hasan, 2019) far from the centre of civilizational debate (Staquf, 2022). Sessions elsewhere run more like seminars with a mandatory Q&A rather than genuine debate. Atypical as it is, the Al-Anwar 3 session is therefore, in my view, the most representative case for showing how the stagnation of fiqh thinking I set out to examine actually occurs.

My primary data come from direct observation. As an insider, I positioned myself as a participant-as-observer, treating the data critically and reflectively wherever possible (Knott, 2005). Event recordings and discussion minutes served as supplementary sources to validate the observational data. I narrate this material descriptively and analytically, reading it against existing scholarship on Islamic reform treating the data not as bare textual fact but from an epistemic standpoint, to reconstruct participants' underlying thought-patterns and analyse their relevance to `Abduh's framework above.

3. Results and Discussion

Overall, the findings below show that Muhammad `Abduh's stagnation framework is highly relevant for reading the debate at the Halaqah Fikih Peradaban in Pesantren Al-Anwar 3. Three of the four stages linguistic rigidity, methodological patronage, and exclusivity of Sharia interpretation appear clearly in the arguments of participants who opposed contextualising the concept of citizenship. The final stage, truth-claiming and takfiri accusation, never appeared; the forum instead closed by accommodating three divergent conclusions. The Halaqah also produced two concrete recommendations: commissioning research to map contemporary political systems, and building a new corpus of political jurisprudence from those findings.

This finding aligns with Latif and Mutawalli (2023), and Latif, Mutawalli, and Paidi (2023), who conclude that Fiqh Peradaban resolves friction between national and religious interests, and it reinforces Fathorrahman and Sugitanata's (2024a) observation that NU's progressive thinking stays rooted in classical scholarship. Those studies, however, remain descriptive and stop at the level of practical fiqh (haḍarat al-'ilm); this article goes further by unpacking the mechanism of stagnation itself at the philosophical-epistemological level (haḍarat al-falsafah) explaining not just that stagnation occurs, but how and why, including why the takfiri stage was absent from a forum built on the bahtsul masa'il tradition.

Muhammad `Abduh: A Biographical Sketch

Muhammad `Abduh was born in 1849 into a farming community in the Nile Delta. His father, `Abduh Hasan Khairullah, had two wives, and the family moved often because of Egypt's tax-collecting political conditions at the time. His father was a Turkish immigrant, while his mother traced Arab lineage back to Sayyidina `Umar ibn al-Khattab (Nasution, 1996).

The family was modest and, like most families in the Nile Delta, worked as farmers, yet their commitment to religious practice and learning ran deep. `Abduh was taught to read and write from an early age and studied the Qur'an so intensively that he had memorised it by age twelve (Haddad, 1994).

`Abduh then began his formal education away from home at Shaykh Ahmad's mosque school in Tanta. Its harsh rote-memorisation tradition seems to have made him miserable enough to abandon his studies and marry at sixteen (Sedgwick, 2013). During this "flight," `Abduh studied Sufism under his uncle, Shaykh Darwish Khadr, of the Shadhili order. That exposure reignited his intellectual passion: he admitted that before studying with his uncle, he had despised books, but Shaykh Darwish's expansive teaching style turned him into someone who loved books and knowledge (Nasution, 1996).

That experience drove him back to Tanta to finish his schooling at Shaykh Ahmad's mosque. In 1866, he left his family to continue his studies at al-Azhar, where he met his most important teacher, Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, learning Islamic reformist ideas from him alongside logic, philosophy, theology, and Sufism. By 1877, Muhammad `Abduh had reached the rank of `alim and was assigned to teach logic, philosophy, ethics, and Sufism at al-Azhar; he also earned a history professorship at Dar al-`Ulum College, later renamed Cairo University.

`Abduh's intellectual and ideological closeness to Jamal al-Din al-Afghani shows in letters he wrote from exile in Beirut, addressing al-Afghani as his supreme teacher (mawlay al-a`dzam), the model he sought to emulate completely (nahnu salikun fi sunanika wa `ala sunnatika), and calling him a perfect human being (insan kamil), among other honorifics (Scharbrodt, 2022). The two also collaborated on a movement journal, al-`Urwat al-Wuthqa, during their exile in Paris. Though it ran only 18 issues over 10 months, the journal became famous and captured both al-Afghani's and `Abduh's thinking across many topics, written to unite a fractured Muslim community, warn non-Western societies of European intervention, and free Egypt from British control. Before that, `Abduh had already voiced much of his thinking through Egypt's official gazette, al-Waqa'i al-Mishriyyah, which he edited from 1880, covering Egyptian politics, religion, and social reform (Kerr, 1966). Despite being al-Afghani's intellectual protégé, `Abduh did not simply follow his teacher's every idea in later life: he opposed the pan-Islamism al-Afghani championed and developed his own influential critical

religious thought in Tafsir Juz `Amma, Tafsir al-Manar (with Rashid Rida), Risalat al-Tawhid, and much more.

During his exile, he spent time in Beirut teaching young immigrants, drawing on his own work Risalat al-Tawhid; his engaging teaching style won him wide attention. After his years in exile, `Abduh appears to have chosen to prioritise his Egyptian nationalism, tolerating British involvement in Egypt's government enough to secure the Khedive's (the Egyptian viceroy title under Ottoman rule, 1867-1914) permission to return in 1888. He rejoined al-Azhar only in 1895, serving on its administrative board, and was appointed Mufti of Egypt the year before the turn of the millennium, using that authority to drive educational and political change in Egypt (Haddad, 1994). Given the range of his roles and intellectual activity, it is no overstatement to call Muhammad `Abduh a towering figure whose thought merits study and dissemination across Islamic civilisation worldwide, Indonesia included.

Scholarship on `Abduh has documented much about his thought. He held remarkably complex roles at once: scholar, educator, mufti, theologian, journalist, and reformer, while being simultaneously Sunni orthodox, a Sufi practitioner, and a free, critical, sceptical thinker (Scharbrodt, 2022). That complexity is part of what makes studying his thought difficult, though tracing the dynamics of his life eases the difficulty somewhat. Broadly, `Abduh's writings converge on identifying the causes of Islamic tradition's stagnation while planting hope and a path toward civilizational progress that still upholds Islamic principles (Haddad, 1994).

The full sweep of `Abduh's thought marks him as a reformist. He proposed reforms across Islamic tradition in politics, theology, education, and law needed to escape stagnation (Badawi, 2023). In his writing, `Abduh treats the stagnation of Islamic scholarly tradition as the most decisive factor keeping that tradition from competing on the global stage. Borrowing from Ernest Renan, he identifies Islamic civilisation's central problem as a lack of tolerance and openness in its social, traditional, and scholarly constructs. Muslim society, in effect, isolated itself from modernity, stigmatising modernisation's rational reasoning as an attempt to kill religion (Abduh, 1991c).

In Islamic studies terms, this is stagnation (jumud), and it took real root across Muslim educational institutions region by region. Education that should enlighten instead became an instrument for perpetuating stagnation, teaching methods out of step with the times and

preserving the status quo: students were fed condensed teacher-authored notes and taught to accept whatever they were told at face value, with questions or rebuttals treated as insolence to be punished. Abduh argued that this stagnation must be purged from Islamic education by breaking the tradition of venerating past generations and inheriting their views blindly, not to dishonour earlier scholars, but to recognise their work as the product of limited human capacity like anyone else's (Abduh, 1991c).

This dismantling of veneration does not mean dishonoring earlier scholars or disparaging them; it means placing what they did within the limited capacity of human knowledge like anyone else's. Nor does it mean opposing our forebears, still less opposing religion; accepting tradition through reason is itself a religious command. It is clear that God revealed the Qur'an as a source of wisdom and promised to preserve it, so humans must dare to explore the Qur'an's meaning to find the truth hidden behind the veil. The wise strive to tear that veil away to reach the light, while the foolish remain blind and deaf to it (Abduh, 1991c).

As he wanted applied in Egypt, especially at al-Azhar, modern education should no longer emphasise rote vocabulary memorisation, the first stage of stagnation (Abduh, 1991c). He proposed replacing it with an emphasis on students' comprehension and critical reasoning, insisting education be delivered universally regardless of whether a student was male or female (Haddad, 1994); or whether they came from a secular or religious school (Badawi, 2023). For `Abduh, education's chief purpose is to mature a person's mind and soul, raising them toward the fullest possible happiness in this life and after death (Badawi, 2023). Religious education, in this light, remained the core of his vision, yet he did not close himself off from Western knowledge, as shown in his defence of founding missionary schools in Egypt (Badawi, 2023) and in his admiration for General Garfield, then President of the United States (Abduh, 1991c).

The Halaqah Fikih Peradaban at Pesantren Al-Anwar 3

As noted, the Halaqah Fikih Peradaban is NU's attempt to formulate a response to current global challenges. It has run 275 times, rotating from one pesantren to another; pesantren were chosen as hosts because, in Kiai Yahya's words, they hold reservoirs of highly capable scholars who rarely get a platform before a global audience. The series therefore poses large themes of socio-political and civilizational concern for those clerics to answer (Staquf, 2022).

My search of the series on YouTube found four themes discussed so far: Fikih Siyasah and the Nation-State, Fikih Siyasah and Minorities, Fikih Siyasah and Citizenship, and Fikih Siyasah and the New World Order, each an explicit attempt to bring political fiqh into conversation with contemporary problems. Fikih siyasah is the branch of fiqh addressing politics through the Qur'an, Hadith, and the practical politics of Islamic civilisation compiled centuries ago (Shodaqoh, 2023). Today's global concerns are, by definition, absent from that classical corpus. The Halaqah approaches these gaps by applying classical fiqh methods to contemporary problems.

This article examines the session on Fikih Siyasah and Minorities, with the added subtopic "Contextualising Citizenship in Modern State Governance." Held on 16 November 2022 at Pesantren Al-Anwar 3 under Dr KH. Abdul Ghofur, the fifth son of the late Kiai Maimoen Zubair, it featured PBNU chairman Kiai Yahya Cholil Staquf and PBNU Bahtsul Masail deputy chair Kiai Muhammad Najib Buchori as resource speakers, alongside local clerics from Rembang Regency, to address minorities' rights and obligations in a modern state, particularly in Indonesia.

The event ran in two sessions: an opening seminar and a discussion. Kiai Yahya opened by outlining NU's strength as the world's largest Islamic organization, weaknesses in contemporary Islamic civilisation, and the global crises NU's intellectual resources could address (Staquf, 2022). Kiai Najib followed with the intellectual crisis in fikih siyasah, frozen centuries ago, detailing the anomalies that surface when that classical corpus is applied (tatbiq) today, and the pesantren clerics' role in teaching those ancient texts wisely (Najib, 2022).

In the discussion, each invitee addressed the session's central question of applying citizenship to a modern state, reduced to one foundational question: "Is Indonesia an Islamic state?" That question matters because classical texts define citizenship entirely through this binary: daar al-Islam versus daar al-kufr/daar al-harb (Calasso, 2017). Citizens of daar al-kufr/al-harb are, by definition, kafir harbi, to be fought; citizens of daar al-Islam are the ummah, wholly Muslim. Non-Muslims residing within daar al-Islam are classed as kafir musta'man, mu'ahad, or dhimmi, valid citizens, but "second-class," with rights and obligations unequal to the ummah's.

Almost every participant answered that Indonesia is an Islamic state, citing the security guaranteed for Muslims to practice and propagate Sharia, reasoning that non-Muslims are kafir

mu'ahad. This entails the attendant legality of the jizyah tax and other limits on non-Muslims' access to public life. The host, Kiai Abdul Ghofur, along with Kiai Najib and Kiai Syakir, rejected this reasoning. They grounded their rebuttal in Indonesia's actual conditions (waqi'iyyah) rather than the classical references (ta'bir) the other side invoked. The other participants dismissed that rebuttal in turn, since the bahtsul masa'il convention only admits arguments built on textually-chained references (mu'tabar) recognised within the Sunni tradition (Abshor, 2016).

Other participants reached different answers by drawing on scholars less popular in pesantren circles. Kiai Najib invoked Ibn Taymiyyah's daar al-murakkab, a state with complex, hybrid social layers that resists reduction to daar al-Islam or daar al-harb. Kiai Muhammad Idror cited Wahbah al-Zuhayli's division into daar al-Islam, the governance system practised from the Prophet's era until the Ottoman dynasty's fall, and daar al-hadith, the term for the modern nation-state. Idror classed Indonesia as daar al-hadith, under which all citizens are simply syu'ub, regardless of religion, ethnicity, or race, with equal standing before the law.

The debate stayed heated throughout, with every side holding its ground until the moderator closed the session without consensus, accommodating all three conclusions at once: that Indonesia is an Islamic state, with the attendant unequal status of Muslim and non-Muslim citizens; that Indonesia, in fact and by law, is not an Islamic state, so all citizens are equal before the law and the classical citizenship framework no longer applies; and that Indonesia is daar al-hadith per al-Zuhayli's formulation, under which syu'ub denotes all Indonesian citizens regardless of faith (Notulensi hasil diskusi, 2022).

The Relevance of Muhammad `Abduh's Thought to the Halaqah Fikih Peradaban

The Halaqah Fikih Peradaban brings fresh discussion to fikih siyasah (Fathorrahman et al., 2024b). This NU-led reform discourse continues scholarly efforts calling for an update to a fikih siyasah corpus no longer aligned with civilizational developments (Fathorrahman & Sugitanata, 2024a). The call for rereading fiqh recurs across the Halaqah Fikih Peradaban's many sessions elsewhere (Fayyadl, 2022).

The Al-Anwar 3 session shows plainly that Islamic scholarship is in genuine crisis, a crisis widely sensed but rarely admitted, rooted in scholarly fixation, scholars' isolation, and ideologization, which together trap Islamic reasoning in a textualist loop circling medieval

intellectual production. Against today's rapid change, that scholarship sits disrupted, fragile, and far from settled; the crisis at the level of application (tatbiq) is easy to spot.

Borrowing `Abduh's stages, the arguments against contextualising fikih peradaban reflect stagnation in fikih siyasah. The first stage, linguistic rigidity (Abduh, 1991c), appears in participants' continued reliance on classical fiqh terms in justifying their analysis. Terms like daar al-Islam, daar al-harb, ummah, kafir dhimmi, musta'man, mu'ahad, and others are still used to read a context utterly unlike the one that produced them. Fikih siyasah's vocabulary refers to early Islamic civilisation before European colonialism and mercantilism, ending with the Ottoman sultanate (Nasr, 2007). Today's governance, in Indonesia and globally, no longer recognises those terms; they have been superseded by the state-system, citizenship, and other political vocabulary nearly every modern state now uses.

The second stage of stagnation, patronage within Islamic scholarship (Abduh, 1991c), likewise shows up in the halaqah: participants opposing the contextualization built their arguments solely on canonical Ahlussunnah texts, al-Ahkam al-Sultaniyah, al-Kharaj, Ahkam Ahl al-Dhimmah, Sharh al-Jamal, Bughyat al-Mustarshidin, and the like (Live Halaqah Fikih Peradaban, 2023). This pattern betrays loyalty to a particular manhaj, visible in their restriction to only mu'tabar references.

I am not positioned to fault this way of thinking, but restricting one's references risks the next stage of stagnation: exclusivism in religious understanding. Participants' reasoning circles within past scholarly constructs, seemingly blind to factual realities absent from their reference literature- what Arkoun calls, in modern global terms, the unthought in Islamic thought (Arkoun, 2002). That blindness shows in the pro-contextualization camp's own underused sources, Ibn Taymiyyah and Wahbah al-Zuhayli: Ibn Taymiyyah is regarded by some classical scholars as at odds with mainstream Sunni thought for his controversial statements (Fata & Riduan, 2022). Al-Zuhayli, a contemporary thinker, is rarely read in pesantren, again because pesantren curricula presuppose tightly bounded scholarly networks (Bruinessen, 2015).

The one stage of `Abduh's framework that does not fit the Halaqah Fikih Peradaban is the last: truth-claiming and takfiri thinking (Abduh, 1991c). The term kafir does surface in the discussion, but only in its precise theological sense: someone who does not believe in God. The exclusivity of understanding is present, but it does not negate others' differing views

outright, as shown by the final conclusion accommodating three answers at once, orthodox and alternative alike (Notulensi hasil diskusi, 2022). Pesantren-trained clerics, in other words, did not become what `Abduh called mouthpieces of power afraid to stand on their own thinking (Abduh, 1991c). Even while holding to a strict textual manhaj, pesantren clerics proved able to offer alternative answers to fikih siyasah suited to the present context.

Finally, the Al-Anwar 3 session issued recommendations that are bold and consequential. First, commissioning scientific research from perspectives that complement fikih siyasah's normative tendencies. Second, drafting a new commentary (syarah) on fikih siyasah texts grounded in that research (Notulensi hasil diskusi, 2022). Both camps, pro- and anti-contextualization alike, repeatedly raised this call for updated scholarship in the session. This shows pesantren clerics are not blind to the need for reforming fiqh that no longer matches empirical reality (waqi'iyyah).

Scientific inquiry is indispensable here, not a narrative that merely deepens belief (Munitz, 1981), which would be counterproductive. As `Abduh argued, scientific progress never contradicts Islamic values (Abduh, 1991c). Muslims, in his view, drifted from science precisely as they drifted from Islam's own values. Ulama must honestly acknowledge the gap left by the collapse of Islamic scientific tradition after the fall of pre-modern Islamic civilisations. That candour is what today's global challenges demand, if the Muslim community is to become again the civilizational locomotive `Abduh envisioned (Abduh, 1991c). Muslim scholars, in other words, can contribute to world civilisation while holding fast to Islamic principles (Abduh, 1991c).

4. Conclusion

This article shows that Muhammad `Abduh's stages of stagnation are highly relevant for reading the stagnation of fikih siyasah on display in the Halaqah Fikih Peradaban. Three stages- linguistic rigidity, methodological patronage, and exclusivity of Sharia interpretation- are clearly visible in the Pesantren Al-Anwar 3 debate, while the final stage, truth-claiming and takfiri thinking, never appeared. `Abduh's reformist spirit also surfaces in the Halaqah's recommendations: research on contemporary political systems and a new corpus of political jurisprudence built from those findings. The reform effort that `Abduh and fellow Egyptian

intellectuals initiated has thus not remained a territorial discourse; it resurfaces dialogically in a pesantren scholarly forum in Indonesia.

This article's most striking finding is the absence of `Abduh's fourth stage, truth-claiming and takfiri thinking, from a forum otherwise marked by sharp debate and exclusive referencing. That departs from `Abduh's own framework, which treats methodological exclusivism as the direct antecedent of takfiri accusation. The gap is explained by the bahtsul masa'il mechanism the Halaqah practices: the forum restricts arguments to mu'tabar references, yet still obliges its moderator to accommodate every conclusion reached rather than declare a winner. This refines `Abduh's framework by showing that a scholarly forum's discursive etiquette (adab al-khilaf) can keep methodological stagnation from escalating into theological exclusivism, a nuance earlier, more descriptive studies of the Halaqah Fikih Peradaban have not highlighted.

This article is limited to a single session out of the 275 the Halaqah has held across NU-affiliated pesantren, so further research should test whether the same pattern of accommodating multiple conclusions holds across other sessions, or whether different participants and themes produce the takfiri stage absent here. Practically, these findings suggest NU and its affiliated pesantren should institutionalise a bahtsul masa'il mechanism that accommodates a plurality of conclusions as a safeguard against stagnation, while following through on the research and new fiqh corpus its own halaqah participants proposed. Academically, future work should extend `Abduh's epistemological framework to read similar dynamics in contemporary fiqh discourse beyond NU.

References

`Abduh, M. (1991a). Ikhtilaaf al-qawanin bi ikhtilaf ahwal al-imam. In al-A'mal al-kamilah li al-Imam al-Syaikh Muhammad `Abduh (Vol. 1). Daarus Syuruq.

`Abduh, M. (1991b). Kalam fi khata' al-'uqala'. In al-A'mal al-kamilah li al-Imam al-Syaikh Muhammad `Abduh (Vol. 1). Daarus Syuruq.

`Abduh, M. (1991c). Al-A'mal al-kamilah li al-Imam al-Syaikh Muhammad `Abduh (Vol. 3). Daarus Syuruq.

Abdullah, M. A. (2006). Islamic studies di perguruan tinggi: Pendekatan integratif-interkonektif. Pustaka Pelajar.

Abshor, M. U. (2016). Dinamika ijtihad Nahdlatul Ulama (Analisis pergeseran paradigma dalam lembaga Bahtsul Masail NU). Millati: Journal of Islamic Studies and Humanities, 1(2), 227–242.

Arkoun, M. (2002). The unthought in contemporary Islamic thought. Saqi Books.

Asifa, F. (2018). Pemikiran pendidikan Muhammad Abduh dan kontribusinya terhadap pengembangan teori pendidikan Islam. Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam, 15(1).

Badawi, Z. (2023). The reformers of Egypt: A critique of al-Afghani, `Abduh and Ridha. Taylor and Francis.

Botz-Bornstein, T. (2022). Nishida Kitarō and Muhammad `Abduh on God and reason: Towards a theology of place. Asian Philosophy, 32(2), 105–120.

Bruinessen, M. van. (2015). Kitab kuning, pesantren dan tarekat. Gading.

Calasso, G. (2017). Constructing and deconstructing the dār al-Islām/dār al-ḥarb opposition: Between sources and studies. In G. Calasso & G. Lancioni (Eds.), Dār al-Islām/Dār al-ḥarb: Territories, people, identities. Brill.

Esposito, J. L., & Voll, J. O. (2000). Islam and the West: Muslim voices of dialogue. Millennium, 29(3), 613–639.

Fadil, M. F., & Anwar, M. (2024). Revitalising Islamic jurisprudence: An analysis of the program Halaqoh Fikih Peradaban PB NU: an approach to contemporary challenges. Eureka Media Aksara.

Fata, B. S., & Riduan, I. M. (2022). Questioning the position and status of Ibn Taimiyyah in the Hanbali school of thought. Al-A'raf: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam dan Filsafat, 19(1).

Fathorrahman, Masduqi, A., & Sugitanata, A. (2024a). The scholarly transformation of Nahdlatul Ulama: Fiqh of civilisation as a step towards embracing the future. Al-Tahrir: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam, 24(1).

Fathorrahman et al. (2024b). Dynamics of thought in the Fiqh of Civilisation Halaqah at pesantren affiliated with Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) in Yogyakarta. Ijtihad: Jurnal Wacana Hukum Islam dan Kemanusiaan, 24(1), 71–95.

Fayyadl, M. A. (2022, October 2). Fiqih siyasah dan tatanan dunia baru [Conference paper]. Halaqah Fikih Peradaban, Pesantren Nurul Jadid, Paiton, Probolinggo. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5c792Ev0iK0

Haddad, Y. (1994). Muhammad Abduh: Pioneer of Islamic reform. In A. Rahnema (Ed.), Pioneers of Islamic revival. Zed Books.

Hasan, N. (Ed.). (2019). Ulama dan negara bangsa: Membaca masa depan Islam politik di Indonesia. Puspidep.

Ilma, M. (2019). Kontekstualisasi konsep nusyuz di Indonesia. Tribakti: Jurnal Pemikiran Keislaman, 20(1).

Imarah, M. (1991). Muqaddimah. In M. `Abduh, al-A'mal al-kamilah li al-Imam al-Syaikh Muhammad `Abduh (Vol. 1). Daarus Syuruq.

Jahar, A. S. (2023, June 15). Kontekstualisasi keberagaman melalui fikih peradaban. Media Indonesia. https://mediaindonesia.com/opini/557049/kontekstualisasi-keberagamaan-melalui-fikih-peradaban

Keri, I., Misbahuddin, & Waddade, W. (2022). Kontekstualisasi teologi keadilan dalam hukum qishash dan poligami. Al-Syakhshiyyah: Jurnal Hukum Keluarga Islam dan Kemanusiaan, 4(2).

Kerr, M. H. (1966). Islamic reform: The political and legal theories of Muhammad `Abduh and Rashid Ridha. University of California Press.

Knott, K. (2005). Insider/outsider perspectives. In The Routledge companion to the study of religion (pp. 255–270). Routledge.

Latif, M., & Mutawalli, M. (2023). Fiqh of civilization in building a legal state: The relevance of Muhammad Arkoun's thought. Al-Ahkam, 33(2), 207–230. https://doi.org/10.21580/ahkam.2023.33.2.16643

Latif, M., Mutawalli, M., & Paidi, Z. (2023). Fiqh peradaban and the actualisation of religious and state life in modern society. Fikrah: Jurnal Ilmu Aqidah dan Studi Keagamaan, 11(1), 151–175.

Live Halaqah Fikih Peradaban "Fiqih Siyasah dan Kewarganegaraan" di PP. Al Anwar 3 Sarang, sesi II. (2023, June 16). [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lkfZcGqGNrc&t=1890s

Munitz, M. K. (1981). Contemporary analytic philosophy. Macmillan.

Muslim, M. (2012). Islam kanan versus Islam kiri di Indonesia. Jurnal Al-'Adalah, 16(2).

Najib, M. (2022, November 16). Seminar pendahuluan [Conference presentation]. Halaqah Fikih Peradaban, Pesantren Al-Anwar 3.

Nasih, A. M. (2009). Bahtsul masail dan problematikanya di kalangan masyarakat Muslim tradisional. Al-Qanun, 12(1).

Nasr, S. H. (2007). Islam: Religion, history and civilisation. HarperCollins.

Nasruddin, M. (2022). Halaqah Fikih Peradaban dan relevansinya terhadap penguatan nilai moderasi beragama di pesantren. Prosiding AnSoPS (Annual Symposium on Pesantren Studies).

Nasution, H. (1996). Pembaharuan dalam Islam: Sejarah, pemikiran dan gerakan. Bulan Bintang.

Notulensi hasil diskusi pada Halaqah Fikih Peradaban di Pesantren Al-Anwar 3. (2022, November 16). [Unpublished meeting minutes].

Salsabila, S., et al. (2023). Fiqih peradaban dalam bidang zakat untuk korban KDRT: upaya mewujudkan civil society well-being. Indonesian Proceedings and Annual Conference of Islamic Law and Sharia Economic (IPACILSE), 1(1).

Scharbrodt, O. (2022). Muhammad Abduh: Modern Islam and the culture of ambiguity. Bloomsbury Publishing.

Sedgwick, M. (2013). Makers of the Muslim world: Muhammad Abduh. Oneworld.

Shodaqoh, U. (2023, June 15). Sambutan [Conference welcome remarks]. Halaqah Fikih Peradaban, Pesantren Roudlotut Thullab, Magelang. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JcfkVIvJhng&t=6485s

Staquf, Y. C. (2022, November 16). Seminar pendahuluan [Conference presentation]. Halaqah Fikih Peradaban, Pesantren Al-Anwar 3.

Sugiyono. (2014). Metode penelitian kuantitatif, kualitatif dan R&D. Alfabeta.

Syauqi, M. L. (2020). Kontekstualisasi penafsiran ayat-ayat teror dalam Al-Qur'an. Maghza: Jurnal Ilmu al-Qur'an dan Tafsir, 5(1).

Taufik, M. (2019). Kontekstualisasi teologi modern: Kritik Hassan Hanafi terhadap teologi tradisional. Refleksi: Jurnal Filsafat dan Pemikiran Islam, 19(2).