

HISTORY OF WAHBAH AL-ZUHAYLI THOUGHT

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Abstract

This research aims to examine the history of Wahbah al-Zuhayli's thought as one of the great contemporary scholars who contributed significantly to the development of modern Islamic law. The focus of the study is directed at the educational background, intellectual development, main works, and methodological character of his thinking in the field of fiqh, fiqh proposals, and moderation of Islamic law. This research uses a qualitative method with a type of library *research* and a historical-philosophical approach to trace the dynamics of al-Zuhayli's thought in the historical and social context of his time. Data were obtained from Wahbah al-Zuhayli's primary works as well as relevant secondary literature, then analyzed descriptively-analytically. The results of the study show that Wahbah al-Zuhayli's thought is rooted in the classical fiqh tradition but is developed contextually through the approach of moderation (*wasathiyah*), *maqasid al-shariah*, and comparative fiqh. This approach makes him able to bridge the gap between the *nash shar'i* and modern social reality without being trapped in sectarian fanaticism or legal liberalism. The findings of this study confirm that Wahbah al-Zuhayli's contribution is not only important in the academic realm, but also has major implications for strengthening religious moderation, the development of contemporary fiqh, and the application of Islamic law that is adaptive and oriented to the benefit of the *ummah*, including in the context of Islam in Indonesia.

Keywords: Wahbah al-Zuhayli; History of Thought; Contemporary Fiqh; Islamic moderation; *Maqasid al-Syariah*

I. Introduction

After going through a phase of decline for approximately 550 years, Islam has finally experienced a resurgence. The 19th and 20th centuries were periods in Islamic history that have witnessed the emergence of various currents of Islamic thought which in turn played a role in the rise of Islam. One of the movements in the rise of Islam was in the intellectual field spearheaded by prominent Muslim figures. Names such as Jamal al-Din al-Afghani (1839-1897 AD) and Muhammad Abduh (1849-1905 AD) have been instrumental in resurrecting Muslims from their backwardness due to their long sleep.¹

The modernization of the Islamic world carried out by Muslim thinkers has high enthusiasm in re-establishing the revival of Islam to master technology and science, on the other hand carrying out a purification movement or purifying

¹ Syafiq A. Mughni, "Posisi Hassan dalam Reform Islam di Indonesia," *Qurthuba* 1, No. 1 (2017), 6-7.

Islamic teachings which is the main point of the movement. The reform movement intensified by Muslim thinkers spread throughout the Islamic world. Therefore, many Muslim countries were affected by the reform movement, resulting in the emergence of a new order in the Islamic world, both in the fields of science, politics, education and the rise against Western imperialism.²

This reform movement also affects the development of jurisprudence and Islamic law. As with the condition of Islam in the period of decline, the development of fiqh at that time also experienced the same thing. The Muslims at that time had turned their ability to study difficult books and severed their connection with the books left behind by the previous scholars. Ijtihad activities at this time were only limited to efforts to develop, detail and discourse the book of fiqh from previous imam mujtahid, and no new thoughts or opinions emerged. Not only that, the fiqh books produced in this period also only continue and continue the thoughts of the previous mujtahid imams without any purpose to review and review them critically. Therefore, Amir Syarifuddin stated that the development of fiqh in this period can be said to have lost its actuality.³

The political factors that befell the Muslims in this period of decline also gave the Europeans an advantage in dividing and blaming the weakness and inability of the Muslims to respond to the demands of the times. Ironically, reality proves that the lessons of fiqh have deteriorated and are lagging behind, resulting in a generation of Muslims who are educated from Western thought patterns and feel uncomfortable living in an Islamic country. As a result, Islamic jurisprudence lessons began to be replaced by lessons in applicable Western law (or it can be called positive law).⁴

II. Research Methods

This research is a qualitative research with a type of literature research or *library research*, because the object of research focuses on the thoughts of a figure, namely Wahbah al Zuhayli, which is contained in scientific works and written literature.⁵ The approach used in this study is a *historical philosophical approach*, which aims to trace the background, development, and character of Wahbah al Zuhayli's thought in the context of the history of contemporary Islamic thought.⁶ This approach allows al Zuhayli's thought to be understood not

² Samsul Munir Amin, *Sejarah Peradaban Islam* (Jakarta: Amzah, 2016), 359-360

³ Amir Syarifuddin, *Ushul Fiqh*, Jilid 1 (Jakarta: Kencana, 2011), 37.

⁴ Manna' Khalil Al-Qaththan, *Tarikh Tasyri': Sejarah Legislasi Hukum*, terj. Habibussalam (Jakarta: Ummul Qura, 2017), 593-594.

⁵ Harahap, Asrim Muda. "Studi etika terhadap al-Qur'an menurut pembacaan Wahbah az-Zuhaily dalam Tafsir Al-Munir." PhD diss., UIN Syekh Ali Hasan Ahmad Addary Padangsidimpuan, 2024.

⁶ Masduqi, Irwan. "Kritik Syaikh Wahbah Az-zuhaili dan Syaikh Ahmad At-tayyib Terhadap Sistem Khilafah." PhD diss., Universitas Islam Indonesia, 2024.

only as a textual construction, but also as an intellectual response to the social, legal, and economic dynamics of his time.⁷

The source of research data consists of primary sources and secondary sources. Primary sources include the main works of Wahbah al Zuhayli, such as *al Fiqh al Islami wa Adillatuhu*, *Usul al Fiqh al Islami*, and *al Wajiz fi Usul al Fiqh*.⁸ The secondary sources include books, scientific journal articles, and the results of previous research that are relevant to the discussion of Wahbah al Zuhayli's thought, *fiqh* proposals, *contemporary ijtihad*, and *maqasid al sharia*. The use of both types of data sources is intended to obtain a comprehensive picture and strengthen the validity of the analysis.⁹

Data collection is carried out through documentation study techniques by searching, reading, and critically reviewing literature related to the research focus.¹⁰ The data that has been collected is then analyzed using analytical descriptive analysis techniques, namely by systematically describing the thoughts of Wahbah al Zuhayli and analyzing them based on the theoretical framework of *fiqh and maqasid al sharia*.¹¹ This analysis process is directed to reveal the *ijtihad method*, thought patterns, and contributions of Wahbah al Zuhayli in the history of contemporary Islamic thought, especially in the field of jurisprudence and *muamalat*. To maintain the validity of the data, this study applies *triangulation of sources* by comparing the thoughts of Wahbah al Zuhayli in various works with the views of other academics, so that the results of the research have validity and can be accounted for scientifically.¹²

III. Results and discussion

Wahbah Al-Zuhayli's Educational Background

To make it easier to understand the course of a person's life, a historian usually maps it in several periods. Periodization is the grouping of a historical event into chapters or periods. The periodization in the course of Wahbah al-Zuhayli's education can be mapped into two periods. *First*, the period in Damascus (1932-1952 AD) as the early period of Wahbah al-Zuhayli's life starting from childhood to his education in Damascus. *Second*, the period in Egypt (1953-

⁷ Abd Muhaimin, Indal Abror. "The Transmission of Fundamentalist Ideology in the Method of Legal Ijtihad: A Study of Ahmad Hassan's Interpretation of the Qur'an in the Book *al-Furqan* Transmisi Ideologi Fundamentalis Dalam Metode Ijtihad Hukum: Telaah Penafsiran al-Qur'an A. Hassan Dalam Kitab *al-Furqan*."

⁸ Abdul, Malik. "Studi Analisis Pendapat Wahbah Az-Zuhaili Tentang Zakat Hasil Investasi Properti Dalam Kitab *Al-Fiqhul Islami Wa Adillatuhu*." PhD diss., Universitas Wahid Hasyim, 2018.

⁹ Saputra, Rinaldi. "Studi Komparatif Pendapat Wahbah Az-Zuhaili dan Nasr Hamid Abu Zayd tentang Keadilan pada Pembagian Warisan Antara Laki-laki dan Perempuan." PhD diss., UIN KH Abdurrahman Wahid Pekalongan, 2025.

¹⁰ Efendi, E. C., Hadi, W., & Reveny, S. (2025). The Glory Of Science In Classical Islamic Civilization: The Abbasid Dynasty As A Center For Innovation. *Injosedu: International Journal of Social and Education*, 2(4), 1099-1116.

¹¹ Achjar, Komang Ayu Henny, Muhamad Rusliyadi, A. Zaenurrosyid, Nini Apriani Rumata, Iin Nirwana, and Ayuliamita Abadi. *Metode penelitian kualitatif: Panduan praktis untuk analisis data kualitatif dan studi kasus*. PT. Sonpedia Publishing Indonesia, 2023.

¹² Juliansyahzen, M. Iqbal. "Metode Ijtihad M. Quraish Shihab Dan Kontribusinya Dalam Pengembangan Hukum Keluarga Di Indonesia." (2014).

1963 AD) was the life of Wahbah al-Zuhayli when he began to study in Egypt until he obtained a doctoral degree.

1. Education in Damascus (1932-1952 AD)

Wahbah al-Zuhayli is a scholar of contemporary interpretation and jurisprudence who hails from Dir 'Athiyah, Damascus, Syria. Dir 'Athiyah is a small town in the al-Nabk region of Damascus located between the Qolamun mountains of Syria and the mountains of Lebanon. Dir 'Athiyah became the link between the capital Damascus and the city of Homs, Syria. Since childhood, Wahbah al-Zuhayli lived in Dir 'Athiyah and received his education under the direct guidance of his parents. As explained above, Wahbah's family came from farmers and traders. With such conditions, it actually makes Wahbah even more enthusiastic in pursuing the highest knowledge. The family environment that has high spiritual awareness led Wahbah to become an accomplished person and then to become a scholar whose work is often used as the main reference.¹³

Wahbah al-Zuhayli began his education by studying the Qur'an under his mother's guidance until he could memorize it in a short time. Wahbah al-Zuhayli mastered the way of reading the Qur'an well somewhere under the guidance of a pious woman and hafizah from the family of Qathmah in a short time. Afterwards, according to his father's orders, he continued primary school in the area where he lived.¹⁴

In Syria, the level of Islamic education in both public education institutions and Islamic education consists of 4 (four) stages. *First, al-Marhalah al-Ibtidaiyyah*, consists of 6 (six) grade levels taken within a period of 6 years. *Second, al-Marhalah al-I'dadiyyah*, consists of 3 (three) grade levels taken within a period of 3 years. *Third, al-Marhalah al-Tsanawiyyah*, consists of 3 (three) levels of classes taken within a period of 3 years. *Fourth, al-Marhalah al-Jam'iyah* is the highest level of education.¹⁵

After graduating from *al-Marhalah al-Ibtidaiyyah* or elementary school, Wahbah al-Zuhayli continued the *al-Marhalah al-I'dadiyyah* and *al-Marhalah al-Tsanawiyyah* primary schools in the city of Damascus in 1946. Since he was 14 years old, Wahbah had to separate from his family to pursue education at the secondary level of education.¹⁶

Madrasah institutions at the *Tsanawiyyah* level in Syria have several types, including *Madrasah Syar'iyah Ammah*, *Madrasah Syar'iyah Khashah*, *Madrasah Tsanawiyyah Ammah*, and *Madrasah Tsanawiyyah Mihaniyyah*.¹⁷

¹³ Wahbah al-Zuhayli, *al-Fiqh al-Islâmi wa Adillatuh*, Juz 1 (Damaskus: Dâr al-Fikr, 1985), h. 12.

¹⁴ Muhammad Zuhri, *Pemikiran Fikih Kontemporer Wahbah al-Zuhayli* (Jakarta: Kencana, 2010), h. 21.

¹⁵ Abdul Karim Syamsuddin, *Biografi Intelektual Ulama Kontemporer* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Ilmu, 2014), h. 44-45.

¹⁶ Ahmad Syamsul Arifin, *Sistem Pendidikan Timur Tengah* (Bandung: Pustaka Setia, 2009), h. 89.

¹⁷ Muhammad Zuhri, *Pemikiran Fikih Kontemporer Wahbah al-Zuhayli*, h. 23.

Wahbah al-Zuhayli entered *Madrasah Syar'iyah Ammah* where he studied various scientific disciplines, such as law, Arabic (nahwu, literature, balaghah, composition, and literary history), foreign languages, logic, philosophy, history and geography. Wahbah al-Zuhayli studied at the *Tsanawiyyah* level for 6 years and graduated in 1952 with the first rank in Damascus at that time.¹⁸

The teachers of Wahbah al-Zuhayli when he was still in Damascus include: Muhammad Hasyim al-Khatib al-Shafi'i (d. 1958 AD) taught Wahbah al-Zuhayli in the field of jurisprudence Imam Shafi'i and provided an understanding of true Islam, Abdul Razaq al-Hamasi (d. 1969 AD) taught fiqh, Mahmud Yassin (d. 1948 AD) taught linguistics, humanities and jurisprudence, Judat al-Mardini (d. 1957 AD) taught geography, Hassan al-Shatti (d. 1962 AD) taught faraid, family law and waqf law, Hassan Habanakah al-Syahir al-Midani (d. 1978 AD) taught Wahbah al-Zuhayli in the field of tafsir, Muhammad Shaleh Farfur (d. 1986 AD) taught Arabic which includes balaghah and literature, Muhammad Lutfi al-Fayumi (d. 1990 AD) taught *Ushul Fiqh*, *Musthalah Hadith* and Nahwu, Mahmud al-Rankusi (d. 1985 AD) taught the science of faith and kalam.¹⁹

The teachers of Wahbah al-Zuhayli in Damascus besides those mentioned include: Shaykh Ahmad al-Samaq (Tajweed science), Shaykh Musthafa Hamdi al-Jawijati (recitation), Shaykh Abu Hasan Ahmad al-Qashab (Nahwu and Shorof science), Hasan al-Khatib (Prophetic Hadith), Shadiq Hanbakah al-Maidani (Tafsir), Shaykh Ali Sa'du al-Din (Prophet's Hadith), Ustadz Hakamat al-Sathi (Physics), Ustadz Rasyid al-Sathi (Physics) and Shaykh Kamil al-Qashar (Prophet's Hadith).²⁰

2. Education in Egypt (1953-1963 AD)

The move of Wahbah al-Zuhayli from Damascus to Egypt was a new chapter in his life. After obtaining a *Tsanawiyyah* diploma, he decided to continue his higher education in the land of the scholars, namely Egypt. His decision to emigrate was not only driven by the desire to deepen religious knowledge, but also because Egypt at that time became the center of scientific civilization of the Islamic world with a gathering of great scholars and monumental scientific works. Wahbah al-Zuhayli was then enrolled at al-Azhar University, specifically at the Faculty of Sharia and Arabic. In addition,

¹⁸ Abdul Karim Syamsuddin, *Biografi Intelektual Ulama Kontemporer*, h. 47.

¹⁹ Wahbah al-Zuhayli, *al-Fiqh al-Islami wa Adillatuh*, h. 13.

²⁰ Taufiq Ahmad al-Wasil, *al-'Ulama' al-Mu'ashirin wa Atsaruhum fi al-Fikr al-Islami* (Beirut: Dar al-Bayān, 1999), h. 118-

he also attended a number of additional lectures at 'Ain Shams University, Cairo, to broaden his academic horizons.²¹

At al-Azhar University, Wahbah pursued Sharia studies in depth and managed to earn a Lisans (equivalent to a bachelor's degree) from the Faculty of Sharia in 1956. His high enthusiasm for study made him not stop at that level. He continued his diploma program specializing in the field of Sharia Literature in 1957. Not only that, he also managed to obtain a Master's degree from the Faculty of Law of Cairo University in 1959, with a concentration in comparative law (*muqaranah al-qanun*). His focus on comparative legal studies demonstrates his open, analytical, and oriented academic character to an integrative understanding between Islamic law and contemporary positive law.²²

The culmination of his study journey was the achievement of a Doctorate in Islamic Law at al-Azhar University in 1963 with the predicate of Summa Laude. His doctoral dissertation was entitled *Atsar al-Harb fi al-Fiqh al-Islami* (The Influence of War in Islamic Law), a comparative study that cemented his reputation as a great scholar in the field of contemporary jurisprudence.²³ Through this long period of education, Wahbah al-Zuhayli emerged as a Muslim intellectual who had a solid scientific foundation and a highly structured research methodology, with a combination of traditional and modern approaches.²⁴

Career and Works of Wahbah Al-Zuhayli

Wahbah al Zuhayli's intellectual journey did not only stop at the academic world, but developed into a scholarly and scientific work that was very influential in the contemporary Islamic world. After completing his doctoral studies in Egypt in 1963, he returned to Damascus and devoted himself as a permanent lecturer at the Faculty of Sharia of Damascus University. At the university, he held various important academic positions as a professor in the field of fiqh and fiqh proposals. In addition to teaching, he also mentored graduate students who later became influential Islamic figures in many countries.²⁵

In addition to teaching, Wahbah al Zuhayli is actively a member of fatwa institutions and sharia advisors at various Islamic financial institutions in the Middle East such as Qatar, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, and Saudi Arabia. His scholarly capacity has made him often invited as a speaker at international conferences and academic forums on Islamic law and economics. His academic

²¹ Wahbah al-Zuhayli, *al-Fiqh al-Islami wa Adillatuhu*, Jilid 1 (Damaskus: Dār al-Fikr, 1985), 16.

²² Muhammad Kamal al-Hasyimi, *al-Imām Wahbah al-Zuhayli: Siratuhu wa Manhajuhu fi al-Fiqh* (Beirut: Dār al-Risālah al-'Alamiyyah, 2014), 42–43.

²³ Wahbah al-Zuhayli, *Atsar al-Harb fi al-Fiqh al-Islami* (Kairo: Dār al-Ma'ārif, 1964), vii–viii.

²⁴ Muhammad al-Syarqawi, *'Ulamā' al-Syām wa Idāhātuhum al-Fiqhiyyah* (Mesir: Dār al-Salām, 2009), 122.

²⁵ Wahbah al Zuhayli, *Al Fiqh al Islami wa Adillatuhu*, Jilid 1 (Damaskus: Dar al Fikr, 1985), 10.

reputation grew thanks to his moderate and solutive legal views on contemporary issues.²⁶

As a prolific scholar and academic, Wahbah al Zuhayli has produced dozens of scientific works that are widely used in the world of Islamic education. His book is the main reference in the study of contemporary fiqh because of his systematic, analytical, and integrative approach to writing between classical turats and modern needs. His contribution is very large in strengthening the development of sharia studies, especially in the field of comparative Islamic law and economics.²⁷

Daftar Karya Karya Utama Wahbah al Zuhayli

1. *Al Fiqh al Islami wa Adillatuhu* (Encyclopedia of Fiqh of the Eight Schools, the largest work in contemporary fiqh).
2. *Tafsir al Munir* (Contemporary Tafsir of the Qur'an as many as seventeen volumes).
3. *Atsar al Harb fi al Fiqh al Islami* (His dissertation on the influence of war in Islamic law).
4. *Usul al Fiqh al Islami* (The basic book of usul fiqh which is an important reference in sharia studies).
5. *al Alaqat al Duwaliyyah fi al Islam* (A book on international relations from an Islamic perspective).
6. *al Fiqh al Islami wa Madzhabuhu al Iqtisadi* (The Relationship between Fiqh and the Islamic Economic System).
7. *Nazariyyat al Darurah al Syaraiyyah* (Discussing the principle of emergency as a flexibility of Islamic law).
8. *al Maslahah fi al Tasyri al Islami* (The concept of maslahat in the formation of law).
9. *Mausuat al Fiqh al Islami wal Qadhaya al Muasirah* (Encyclopedia of contemporary fiqh on modern problems).
10. *Buhuth wa Dirasat fi al Fiqh al Islami* (A collection of fiqh research on various themes).
11. *al Jihad fi al Islam* (Argumentative and comprehensive discussion of the concept of jihad).
12. *al Dirasat al Islamiyyah wal Muqaranah* (Comparative study between Islamic law and positive law).
13. *Fiqh al Siyasah* (Politics and state governance in an Islamic perspective).
14. *al Fatawa al Muasirah* (A contemporary fatwa on various modern issues).
15. *Muamalah al Maliyyah al Muasirah* (Modern Islamic financial instruments and

²⁶ Muhammad Kamal al Hasyimi, *Al Imam Wahbah al Zuhayli Siratuhu wa Manhajuhu fi al Fiqh* (Beirut: Dar al Risalah al Alamiyyah, 2014), 51.

²⁷ Muhammad al Syarqawi, *Ulama al Syam wa Idahatuhum al Fiqhiyyah* (Mesir: Dar al Salam, 2009), 128.

transactions).²⁸

Through his extensive works, Wahbah al Zuhayli played a major role in formulating modern jurisprudence that could answer the problems of Muslims in contemporary times. He is also active as a member and advisor to international fatwa institutions, including the Jeddah Fiqh Academy Council and Majma al Fiqh al Islami Rabitah Alam Islami.²⁹ His prominent position in international institutions strengthened the influence of his thought in the formulation of global Islamic law. With his scientific integrity and breadth of work, Wahbah al Zuhayli is known as the great scholar of the modern century who made a significant contribution to the development of Islamic law in the world.

Background of Al-Zuhayli's Thought

Wahbah al-Zuhayli's thought was shaped through a long scholarly journey rooted in the strong tradition of Islam in Syria. He was born into a religious family that upheld the tradition of religious education and fiqh. His father was known as a pious merchant and strongly encouraged his children to master sharia knowledge. The social environment of Damascus at that time became the center of interaction between various schools of fiqh, especially the Shafii, Hanafi, and Maliki schools. Dynamic intellectual association fosters comparative insight and an open attitude in understanding the different views of Islamic law.³⁰ This condition forms the intellectual character of Wahbah al-Zuhayli who is not fanatical of one sect, but prioritizes arguments of postulates and rationality of sharia.

His formal education became the most important pillar in the formation of his construction of thought. After completing his basic education in Syria, he continued his studies at al-Azhar University, Cairo, in the field of Sharia and Law. The Egyptian academic environment greatly influenced his thinking because at that time there was a discourse on Islamic law reform pioneered by figures such as Muhammad Abduh, Rashid Ridha, and Mahmud Syaltut.³¹ Through this scientific tradition, Wahbah al-Zuhayli combines a normative approach and a contextual approach and opens up space for the use of contemporary ijtihad methods based on sharia maqasid. His ability to understand classical fiqh and modern social reality made him a scholarly figure who was able to dialogue with the times.

²⁸ Wahbah al Zuhayli, *Al Fiqh al Islami wa Adillatuhu*, Jilid 1 (Damaskus: Dar al Fikr, 1985), 4 5.

²⁹ Majma al Fiqh al Islami, *Qararat wa Taushihat* (Jeddah: Rabitah Alam Islami, 2005), 91.

³⁰ Wahbah al-Zuhayli, *Al-Fiqh al-Islami wa Adillatuh*, jilid 1, (Damaskus: Dar al-Fikr, 1985), hal 21.

³¹ Wahbah al-Zuhayli, *Ushul al-Fiqh al-Islami*, (Damaskus: Dar al-Fikr, 1986), hal 17.

Table 1. The Development of Wahbah al-Zuhayli's Thought Based on the Time Period

Time Period	Activities and Historical Context	Focus of Scientific Thought and Study	Relevant Works
1932–1952 (Early Formation Period in Syria)	Basic education in Damascus, living in the scientific tradition of the Sham Islamic boarding school, interaction with local scholars and the study of the Shafii, Hanafi, and Maliki schools.	Strengthening the foundations of classical fiqh, mastery of the turats, recognition of differences of opinion between sects and intellectual tolerance.	-
1953–1963 (Studies in Egypt)	Studies at al-Azhar University, Cairo University, and Ain Shams University; in contact with the thought of modern reformists such as Muhammad Abduh, Muhammad Rashid Ridha, and Mahmud Syaltut.	The development of modern fiqh methodology, the integration of Islamic law and positive law, the application of <i>maqasid al-shari'ah</i> in contemporary ijtiḥad.	<i>Athar al-Harb fi al-Fiqh al-Islami</i> (Tesis Doktoral, 1963)
1964–1980 (Strengthening of Academic Career and Major Scientific Works)	Teaches at the University of Damascus and various universities in the Middle East, is active in international seminars.	Formulation of comparative fiqh (<i>fiqh muqaran</i>), formulation of <i>ijtiḥad jama'i methodology</i> , strengthening of moderation and rationality of sharia.	<i>Ushul al-Fiqh al-Islami</i> , <i>Al-Fiqh al-Islami wa Adillatuh</i> (volumes 1–8)
1981–2000 (Establishment of Thought and International Influence)	Recognized as a scientific reference in the Islamic world, becoming an advisor to sharia law in various international fiqh institutions and organizations.	Development of contemporary fiqh, Islamic international law, economic and banking law syariah global, humanitarian relations and peace.	<i>Al-Fiqh al-Islami wa Adillatuh</i> , <i>Al-Wasatiyyah fi al-Islam</i> , <i>Nazhariyyat al-Dharurah al-Syar'iyyah</i>
2001–2015 (Period of Refinement and the Idea of Global Moderation)	He actively wrote until the end of his life, focusing on issues of extremism, unity of the people, and international peace.	Religious moderation (<i>wasatiyyah</i>), rejection of radicalism and extreme liberalism, alignment of traditional fiqh with global reality.	<i>Al-Wasatiyyah fi al-Islam wa Tadbiqatuha</i> , <i>Ma'alim al-Hidayah al-Nabawiyyah</i> , various international fatwas

This table illustrates the stages of the evolution of Wahbah al-Zuhayli's thought from the initial formation period, the academic development phase, to the peak of intellectual contribution as an international fiqh reference. The

period showed a consistent orientation of thought, which was to combine the classical fiqh tradition with modern needs through a moderation, rationality, comparative, and benefit approach of the ummah.

In addition, Wahbah al-Zuhayli's thought gained additional strength from his proficiency in the science of *Ushul Fiqh*. He not only mastered the basic theory of ushul fiqh but also developed a new methodological approach that was more flexible and respected the empirical reality of society. In his great work *Ushul al-Fiqh al-Islami*, he emphasized that Islamic law must be built on the basis of strong evidence, consideration of benefits, and the principle of justice, not just following the opinions of previous scholars without methodological criticism.³² Therefore, he views sectarian fanaticism as an obstacle to the progress of Islamic legal thought. He emphasized the importance of tolerance and openness to differences of opinion as long as it is still based on sharia postulates.

Wahbah al-Zuhayli's thought was also shaped by the socio-political conditions of the Islamic world in the 20th century which were filled with waves of colonialism, ideological conflicts, and the challenges of globalization. This situation encourages scholars to rebuild an understanding of Islamic law that is applicable and able to answer the problems of the ummah. Wahbah al-Zuhayli positioned himself as a bridge between traditionalism and modernism, rejecting extremist attitudes that were both too textual and too liberal. On various occasions, he emphasized that Islamic law reform is only possible through scientific methodology based on sharia postulates and maqasid and paying attention to the reality of human life.³³

Furthermore, Wahbah al-Zuhayli's great attention to humanitarian issues, inter-religious relations, and peace ethics also enriched his thinking. He wrote extensively on the law of war and international peace, as well as the role of Islam in realizing global brotherhood. In his work *Athar al-Harb fi al-Fiqh al-Islami*, he emphasized that the main purpose of the sharia is to maintain life, peace, and the welfare of humans. This shows that his thinking not only focuses on the fiqh of worship and muamalah, but also on the universal dimension of Islamic sharia as a religion of mercy for all nature.

Wahbah al-Zuhayli's contribution to modern fiqh thought is also very visible in the idea of religious moderation. He rejected violence and extremism and called for a balanced understanding of Islam based on the principles of tawazun, i'tidal, and tasamuh. He emphasized that Islam is a just, humane religion, and always takes sides with the values of welfare and social peace. The principle of moderation is one of the aspects of thinking that is widely adopted by Islamic

³² Wahbah al-Zuhayli, *Ushul al-Fiqh al-Islami*, (Damaskus: Dar al-Fikr, 1986), hal 38

³³ Wahbah al-Zuhayli, *Al-Wasatiyyah fi al-Islam wa Tadbiqatuha*, (Beirut: Dar al-Risalah, 2002), hal 14.

scholars and educational institutions in various countries including Indonesia.³⁴ Through these ideas, Wahbah al-Zuhayli occupies an important position in the development of contemporary Islamic law.

Moderation in Islamic Law According to Al-Zuhayli

The concept of moderation in Islamic law is one of the most important ideas in Wahbah al-Zuhayli's thought. The moderation in question is not just in the middle mathematically, but a balance of values between compliance with the shari'i and the ability to adapt to the demands of the times. According to Wahbah, moderation (*al-wasatiyyah*) is a fundamental feature of Islamic teachings as stated in Surah al-Baqarah verse 143:

وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ أُمَّةً وَسَطًا لِتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى النَّاسِ وَيَكُونَ الرَّسُولُ عَلَيْكُمْ شَهِيدًا وَمَا جَعَلْنَا الْقِبْلَةَ الَّتِي كُنْتَ عَلَيْهَا إِلَّا لِنَعْلَمَ مَنْ يَتَّبِعُ الرَّسُولَ مِمَّنْ يَنْقَلِبُ عَلَى عَقْبَيْهِ وَإِنْ كَانَتْ لَكَبِيرَةً إِلَّا عَلَى الَّذِينَ هَدَى اللَّهُ وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُضَيِّعَ إِيمَانَكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِالنَّاسِ لَرَءُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿١٤٣﴾

Meaning: "Likewise We have made you (Muslims) the middle people so that you may be witnesses of human beings and so that the Messenger (Muhammad) may be a witness of you. We have not established the Qibla (Jerusalem) to which you have been (formerly) Qibla except that We may know (in fact) who follows the Messenger and who turns back. Indeed, it is very heavy, except for those who have been instructed by Allah. Allah will not waste your faith. Indeed, Allah is Merciful and Merciful to mankind."

The above verse emphasizes that Muslims are a just and balanced ummah.³⁵ This perspective became the methodological basis for all the legal approaches he developed, so he rejected extremism in fatwa and liberalism that ignored the fiqh tradition.

Wahbah emphasized that moderation can only be achieved through a comprehensive ijtiḥad mechanism by considering maqasid al-sharia, social reality (*waqi'*), as well as the opinions of previous scholars.³⁶ He views that ijtiḥad is the main instrument to maintain the relevance of Islamic law throughout time without having to abandon agreed normative principles. For Wahbah, ijtiḥad should not be stuck in the repetition of rigid classical doctrines, but neither

³⁴ Wahbah al-Zuhayli, *Athar al-Harb fi al-Fiqh al-Islami*, (Damaskus: Dar al-Fikr, 1998), hal 55.

³⁵ Wahbah al-Zuhayli, *Al-Wasatiyyah fi al-Islam wa Tadbiquatuha* (Beirut: Dar al-Risalah, 2002), 7.

³⁶ Wahbah al-Zuhayli, *Ushul al-Fiqh al-Islami* (Damaskus: Dar al-Fikr, 1986), 104.

should it adopt unlimited social change. Moderation means combining the purity of sharia sources with an objective and rational understanding of reality.

One of Wahbah's greatest contributions to the issue of moderation was his rejection of violence and radical actions in the name of religion. In his view, jihad should be understood as an effort to maintain human dignity, not a means of imposing ideology on other parties. He strongly criticized groups that legalize bloodshed and anarchist acts under the pretext of religion. According to him, Islam prioritizes peace, justice, and the benefit of humanity. This thought is expressed unequivocally in his work *Al-Wasatiyyah fi al-Islam wa Tadbiquatuha*, which places Islam as a tolerant religion and respects diversity.³⁷

In the field of Islamic economics and banking, Wahbah's concept of moderation is also clearly seen through the acceptance of modern economic institutions as long as they do not contradict the basic principles of sharia. He emphasized that fiqh must be able to answer contemporary problems such as financial transactions, business contracts, and global market mechanisms, while still upholding justice and not harming any party. His proportionate attitude made his works the main reference of international fatwa institutions, including *Majma' al-Fiqh al-Islami*.³⁸

Thus, according to Wahbah, moderation is not just a slogan, but a methodological and epistemological principle that directs fiqh towards healthy, rational, humanistic, and contextual growth. Through the combination of nash, maqasid, and social reality, Wahbah succeeded in building an inclusive and adaptive paradigm of Islamic law. The concept of moderation that he initiated is not only relevant to academic discourse, but also an important foundation for the practice of Islamic law in various Muslim countries, including Indonesia.

The Views of Indonesian Muslim Figures on Al-Zuhayli

Wahbah al-Zuhayli's thought received wide attention in Indonesia because of his contribution in developing modern fiqh that was sourced from classical traditions but remained responsive to the contemporary social context. His works have become important references in various Islamic boarding schools, universities, and national fatwa institutions. Indonesian Muslim scholars, academics, and thinkers have great appreciation for the scientific figure of Wahbah al-Zuhayli, especially in the approach of religious moderation, comparative fiqh, and integrative Islamic legal methodology.

One of the Indonesian figures who often alluded to Wahbah al-Zuhayli's thoughts was M. Quraish Shihab. According to Quraish Shihab, Wahbah al-

³⁷ Wahbah al-Zuhayli, *Al-Fiqh al-Islami wa Adillatuh*, Jilid 8 (Damaskus: Dar al-Fikr, 1985), 523.

³⁸ Wahbah al-Zuhayli, *Al-Fiqh al-Islami wa Adillatuh*, Jilid 5 (Damaskus: Dar al-Fikr, 1985), 211.

Zuhayli is a contemporary great scholar figure who is able to unite the breadth of knowledge of religious texts and sensitivity to social reality. Quraish Shihab considers that Wahbah's moderate attitude in understanding the verses of the law shows a scientific character that is not extreme and illiberal. Therefore, his works are highly authoritative and are the main source of reference in the field of legal interpretation.³⁹

Meanwhile, according to Azyumardi Azra, Wahbah al-Zuhayli is a representation of modern scholars who have succeeded in building a bridge of thought between Middle Eastern traditionalism and the need for legal reform in the modern era. Azra considered that his thinking played an important role in strengthening the Islamic moderation movement in Indonesia initiated by large organizations such as Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah. The principle of wasathiyah developed by Wahbah is in line with the Islamic orientation of rahmatan lil alamin which is the basis for Islamization and religious dynamics in Indonesia.⁴⁰

The Chairman of the Central MUI, KH Ma'ruf Amin, also expressed a positive view of the role of Wahbah al-Zuhayli in the development of contemporary fiqh. According to him, Wahbah's contribution is very large, especially in modern muamalah fiqh and sharia economic law. Many Islamic finance fatwas in Indonesia refer to his fiqh arguments, especially in *Al-Fiqh al-Islami wa Adillatuh* which is considered the most complete fiqh encyclopedia in the modern era. Thus, Wahbah al-Zuhayli is not only influential in the academic world, but also in the development of national sharia economic regulations and practices.⁴¹

A similar view was also conveyed by Din Syamsuddin, a Muhammadiyah figure who called Wahbah an international scholar who had a strategic role in building civilizational dialogue and rejecting extremist movements. Wahbah is considered a figure who is able to present a peaceful, moderate, and humanist face of Islam. His thinking could be a solution to the tensions of religious identity and social conflicts that arise in the midst of modern society.⁴²

The appreciation of Indonesian Muslim figures shows that Wahbah al-Zuhayli has an important position as the main reference scholar in the field of contemporary Islamic law. Its influence is present not only through scientific works, but also through methodological roles in strengthening moderation and integration of knowledge in religious life. This makes Wahbah an important figure in the development of Islamic thought in Indonesia and his legacy is

³⁹ M. Quraish Shihab, *Membumikan Al-Quran* (Jakarta: Lentera Hati, 2013), hal77.

⁴⁰ Azyumardi Azra, *Islam Substantif* (Bandung: Mizan, 2015), hal 122.

⁴¹ Ma'ruf Amin, *Fatwa dalam Sistem Hukum Islam* (Jakarta: Elsas, 2017), hal 31.

⁴² Din Syamsuddin, *Islam Berkemajuan untuk Peradaban Dunia* (Jakarta: Suara Muhammadiyah, 2020), hal 54.

projected to continue to be a reference for religious research and policy in the future.

IV. Conclusion

From the previous discussion, it can be concluded that Wahbah al Zuhayli is one of the contemporary scholars who has made an important contribution to the development of modern Islamic law. His educational background in Damascus and Egypt shaped his intellectual character as a scientist who mastered the treasures of classical science while being able to respond to modern problems. This is reflected in his scholarly work in the fields of interpretation, fiqh proposals, comparative jurisprudence, and contemporary Islamic law, which shows the depth of thought and methodological consistency in the development of Islamic law.

Wahbah al Zuhayli's thinking is based on the principle of moderation or wasathiyah, which is the attitude of rejecting sectarian fanaticism and placing Islamic sharia as an instrument of benefit and justice. His adaptive approach but still adhering to nash and sharia rules makes his thinking relevant in answering the challenges of modern life, especially in the field of jurisprudence and sharia economics. In Indonesia, Wahbah al Zuhayli's thought received wide appreciation from scholars and intellectuals, thus influencing the strengthening of Islamic moderation and the development of jurisprudence that is applicable, inclusive, and oriented towards the benefit of the ummah.

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