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Research Article

## **Nurcholish Madjid: *Islam as Rahmatal Lil Alamin* and Civilization Building Based on His Work *Islam, Doktrin and Peradaban***

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**Abstract:** *This article is the result of a study of the work *Islamic Doctrine and Civilization*, by Nurcholish Madjid. This work, which is a collection of papers from the Paramadina Religious Studies Club (KKA), presents a critical analysis of Islamic faith and civilization. In this work, Madjid focuses on the importance of understanding Islamic doctrine and how this doctrine influences the development of Islamic civilization. Madjid also discussed pluralism and openness in Islam, as well as how essential Islamic values can be applied in everyday life. This work is considered the basis for the struggle to develop a modern and relevant Islamic civilization in the Indonesian context.*

**Keywords:** *Islam, Doctrine, Civilization.*

**Abstrak:** Tulisan ini merupakan hasil telaah atas buku *Islam Doktrin dan Peradaban*, karya Nurcholish Madjid. Buku yang merupakan kumpulan makalah Klub Kajian Agama (KKA) Paramadina ini menyajikan analisis kritis terhadap keimanan dan peradaban Islam. Dalam karya ini, Madjid memfokuskan pada pentingnya memahami doktrin Islam dan bagaimana doktrin tersebut mempengaruhi perkembangan peradaban Islam. Madjid juga membahas tentang pluralisme dan keterbukaan dalam Islam, serta bagaimana nilai-nilai esensial Islam dapat diterapkan dalam kehidupan sehari-hari. Penulis berasumsi bahwa buku ini sebagai landasan pembangunan peradaban Islam modern yang relevan dalam konteks peradaban di Indonesia, sehingga menjadi

bagian penting dalam memahami corak peradaban Indonesia modern yang memiliki dimensi nilai-nilai universal (*rahmatan lil 'alamin*).

**Kata Kunci:** Islam, Doktrin, Peradaban, modern.

## Intoduction

“Islam is increasingly expected to appear with productive and constructive cultural offers, and to be able to declare itself as a bearer of goodness for all, without communal exclusivism. Muslims must authentically develop an understanding of the plurality of society (social pluralism). In tandem with this is the ability to develop attitudes of mutual respect among fellow members of society, by respecting what is considered important in each person and group. Universal values are always at the core of religious teachings that bring all humanity together. These universal values must be linked to the real conditions of time and space in order to have effective power in society as the basis of social ethics.”<sup>1</sup>

Nurcholish Madjid's “Islam, Doctrine and Civilization” is a very significant work in understanding and developing Islamic thought in the context of modern civilization. In this work, Nurcholish Madjid asks some very relevant and challenging questions, such as how Islam can be integrated with the values of civilization, and how Islam can adapt to the changes that occur in modern society. In this work, Nurcholish Madjid also discusses the importance of understanding Islamic doctrine in the context of civilization. He emphasizes that Islamic doctrine is not only abstract theories, but must also be applied in daily life. Thus, Nurcholish Madjid hopes to help people understand Islam as a civilization-oriented religion and not just a ritual-oriented religion.<sup>2</sup>

In this work, Nurcholish Madjid uses a very systematic and logical approach. He understands that Islam is not only a doctrine, but must also be integrated with other civilizational values. Thus, Nurcholish Madjid hopes to help people understand Islam as a civilization-oriented religion and not just a ritual-oriented religion. Overall, the work “Islam Doctrine and Civilization” by Nurcholish Madjid is a very significant work in understanding and developing Islamic thought in the context of modern civilization, including Indonesian modern civilization. This work offers some very relevant contributions in understanding Islam as a civilization-oriented religion and not just as a ritual-oriented religion.

Islam as *Rahmatan lil 'Alamin* is a concept that refers to Islam as a source of mercy and goodness for the entire universe, not only for Muslims but also for all living beings. This concept has a deep relevance to civilization building, as it underlines the role of Islam in creating a harmonious, inclusive and just environment. Nurcholish Madjid in his work “Islam, Doctrine and Civilization” emphasizes that the principle of *Rahmatan lil 'Alamin* must be the basis for the development of a humanist and progressive civilization. Islam *Rahmatan lil 'Alamin* is not an Islam that always spreads viruses of hatred, magnifies khilafiyah issues,

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<sup>1</sup> Part of the synopsis of Nurcholish Madjid, *Islam Doktrin dan Peradaban*, IV. (Jakarta: Paramadina, 1999). in [https://perpustakaan.kemendagri.go.id/opac/index.php?p=show\\_detail&id=3254](https://perpustakaan.kemendagri.go.id/opac/index.php?p=show_detail&id=3254) accessed on May 12, 2024.

<sup>2</sup> Janah, Nasitotul, “Nurcholish Madjid dan Pemikirannya (Diantara Kontribusi dan Kontroversi),” *Cakrawala: Jurnal Studi Islam* 12, No. 1 (2017).

demonizes the ideology of Pancasila, however, Islam *Rahmatan lil 'alamin* is an Islam that is beautiful, peaceful, polite, and full of love and compassion.<sup>3</sup> Islam as mercy means that its teachings encourage mankind to achieve moral and material progress in a balanced manner, so as to create a solid and sustainable civilization.<sup>4</sup>

The concept of Islam as *Rahmatan lil 'Alamin* is here to provide solutions to the various global challenges facing humanity today. By understanding and implementing this concept, Muslims can contribute significantly to confronting issues such as social injustice, interfaith conflict and environmental degradation. It is important to point out that Islam when properly understood is a religion that supports progress and prosperity for all. Islam has the potential to shape a just and prosperous society through the universal values it teaches. However, there are narrow and exclusive interpretations of Islamic teachings that can also hinder the widespread application of this concept. Hence, there is a need to promote an inclusive and progressive understanding of Islam.<sup>5</sup>

Literature research on Islam as a Religion of *Rahmatan Lil Alamin* in building Civilization from the perspective of Nurcholish Madjid is very important because Madjid's thought offers a deep and comprehensive approach to this concept. This research will not only explore Madjid's views in more detail, but will also make a significant academic contribution in enriching the literature on the role of Islam in civilization building. Previous research has extensively discussed the concept of Islam as *Rahmatan lil 'Alamin*, but has often lacked in-depth exploration of the direct relationship between this concept and civilization-building.

Previous studies on the concept of Islam *Rahmatan lil 'Alamin* were conducted by Arif in 2021, which concluded that Islam *Rahmatan lil 'Alamin* is the main goal of Islamic teachings in the social and cultural life of modern humans.<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, a literature study conducted by Rosidi on the implementation of Islam *Rahmatan lil 'Alamin* based on the perspective of one of the national figures, KH. Hasyim Muzadi.<sup>7</sup> The difference in this research is its focus on analyzing Nurcholish Madjid's thoughts that offer a unique and comprehensive perspective on how Islam can play a role in building an inclusive and dynamic civilization.

This research hopes to deepen the understanding of the concept of Islam as *Rahmatan lil 'Alamin* in the context of modern civilization building from the perspective of Nurcholish Madjid. This research is expected to provide new insights into how Islamic teachings can be applied effectively to build a just, prosperous, and sustainable society. In addition, this

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<sup>3</sup> Arsam Arsam, "Manajemen Dakwah Takmir Masjid Kampus Darunnajah IAIN Purwokerto dalam Membentuk Karakteristik Islam Rahmatan Lil'alamin," *Jurnal Dakwah Tabligh* 21, no. 2 (2020).

<sup>4</sup> Sayekti, Retno, "Applying the concept of rahmatan lil alamin in publication: a transdisciplinary perspective on scientific publication literacy and practices in Indonesian universities," *College & Research Libraries News* 82, No. 11 (2021).

<sup>5</sup> Mariya, Ais, Dhiya Ul Hikmah, Diva Istivarini, and Hasmy Nasanjy El M, "Pelaksanaan Konsep Islam Rahmatan Lil 'Alamin", *al-Afkar, Journal for Islamic Studies* 4, no. 2 (2022); Ardelia April Soneli, Nadiratul Salsabila, Tiara Amarsa, Olivia Dea Angraini, Wismanto Wismanto, and Fitria Mayasari, "Islam Sebagai Rahmatan Lil Alamin", *Journal of Student Research* 3, no. 5 (2025).

<sup>6</sup> Muhammad Khairan Arif, "Islam Rahmatan lil 'Alamin From Social and Cultural Perspective," *Al-Risalah* 12, no. 2 (2021).

<sup>7</sup> Rosidi Rosidi, "Implementasi Rahmatan lil 'Alamin Perspektif KH. Hasyim Muzadi di Madrasah," *journal TA'LIMUNA* 9, no. 2 (2020).

research also aims to enrich academic literature and become a reference for future studies on the role of Islam in civilization-building.

## Method

This research uses the library research method.<sup>8</sup> This literature review is a study of works, articles, and references related to the study of Islam as a religion of *Rahmatan lil 'Alamin* and can be used as a reference when conducting similar research to draw valid and accurate conclusions. The literature review method includes reading, storing, managing research, and collecting data from the library. According to Sugiyono, the literature study method is a series that discuss managing research papers, reading and recording research papers, and collecting data from the library.<sup>9</sup>

In collecting data, the author uses documentation techniques by studying and reviewing information from data sources, both primary and secondary data sources that have been collected, and then understanding them as a whole in order to answer the problems of this research. The author uses Nur Kholis Madjid's work entitled *Islam Doctrine and Religion* as the primary source and research works on Islam *Rahmatan lil 'Alamin* as secondary sources.

In this method, the author first records all findings related to the concept of Islam as *Rahmatan lil 'Alamin* and Nur Kholis Madjid's thoughts. Second, integrates all findings; third, analyzes all findings from various readings and sources; fourth, provides ideas from any discourse related to Nur Kholis Madjid's thoughts on the concept of Islam as *Rahmatan lil 'Alamin* in the context of civilization building.

## Results and Discussion

### The Work and Author Identity

This work is entitled *Islam Doctrine and Civilization*, by Nurcholish Madjid, published by Paramadina, South Jakarta, September 1999 (Print IV). This work measures 14 x 21 cm, with a total of 647 pages, including non-fiction works equipped with indexes. The target audience of this work is the general public.<sup>10</sup>

The author of this work is Nurcholish Madjid, born in Jombang on March 17, 1939. He who is familiarly called Cak Nur was raised in an Islamic Boarding School environment by his father KH. Abdul Madjid and his mother Fathonah. He has three younger siblings. He completed his primary education at two boarding schools, Pesantren Darul Ulum Rejoso in Jombang and Pesantren Gontor in Ponorogo. He continued his higher education at IAIN Syarif Hidayatullah in 1961 to 1968 by majoring in Arabic Literature. After that, he continued his doctoral studies at the University of Chicago in the United States in 1978 to 1984, majoring

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<sup>8</sup> Wildemuth, Barbara M., ed, *Applications of social research methods to questions in information and library science* (USA: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2016).

<sup>9</sup> Sugiyono, *Metode penelitian dan pengembangan (research and development/R&D)* (Bandung: Alfabeta, 2019).

<sup>10</sup> Madjid, *Islam Doktrin dan Peradaban*.: 5.

in Islamic Studies, Specializing in Philosophy and Islamic Thought, Islamic Reform, Islamic Culture, Politics and Religion, Sociology of Religion, Politics of Developing Countries.<sup>11</sup>

Cak Nur was a researcher at the Economic and Social Research Institute (LEKNAS-LIPI) in Jakarta in 1978 to 1984. Then in the following years in 1984 to 2005 he became a Senior Researcher at the Indonesian Institute of Sciences (LIPI) Jakarta. In the midst of his activities as a researcher one year later he was also appointed Professor of the Postgraduate Faculty of IAIN Syarif Hidayatullah, Jakarta, from 1985-1990. His other careers include being Vice Chairman of the Advisory Board of the Indonesian Muslim Scholars Association (ICMI), Chairman of Yayasan Paramadina, Visiting Professor of McGill University, Montreal, Canada, and active in memberships such as Member of the MPR-RI from 1987-1997, Member of the National Press Council in 1990-1998, Member of the National Human Rights Commission 1993-2005, Member of the ICMI Advisory Board 1995.<sup>12</sup>

Cak Nur, who is often known as an Indonesian Islamic thinker, scholar, and culturalist, has a variety of achievements so including receiving the ICMi Cultural Award in 1995 and receiving the Bintang Mahaputra award in Jakarta in 1998. During his youth, he was also an activist and chairman of the Islamic Student Association (HMI) for two periods. This is because he formulated the basic values of struggle (NDP), which led to the creation of the ideological groundwork of HMI.<sup>13</sup>

Cak Nur is very active as a speaker at the USINDO (United States Indonesian Society) conference, March 1997, in Washington, DC, USA. Seminar speaker on "Islam and Civil Society" and on "Islam and Pluralism", November 1997 at Georgetown University, Washington, DC, USA. He is also an active presenter in international seminars and international conferences, such as the International Seminar on "World Religions and Pluralism", November 1992 in Bellagio, Italy, and the International Conference on "World Religions and Peace", April 1993 in Vienna, Austria. While as a participant, namely during the 7th session of the World Conference on Religion and Peace (WCRP), November 1999, Amman, Jordan.<sup>14</sup>

Besides actively teaching and attending seminars and conferences, Nurcholish Madjid is also active in writing, both articles in journals and published works. Most of his works published since his return from Chicago have focused on Islamic thought in the context of Islamic integration, Indonesianness and modernity. His works include:<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Munir, Muammar, "Nurcholish Madjid dan Harun Nasution serta Pengaruh Pemikiran Filsafatnya," *PETITA* 2 (2017); Amir, Ahmad Nabil, and Tasnim Abdul Rahman, "Cak Nur: Intelektual Cerdas Indonesia (Studi Biografi)," *At-Tafkir* 14, No. 1 (2021).

<sup>12</sup> Daryat, Masduki, *ISLAM MAJEMUK: Pengejawantahan Pendidikan, Interpretasi dan Model Islam Keindonesiaan* (Yogyakarta: K-Media, 2018): 168; Khaeroni, Cahaya, "NURCHOLISH MADJID (1939-2005) (Gagasan-Gagasan Pemikiran Islam Kontemporer di Indonesia)," *At-Tajdid* 4, No. 2 (2020).

<sup>13</sup> Abdussalam, Samsam, *Pemikiran Nurcholish Madjid tentang toleransi beragama (1984-2005)*, Thesis UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung (2021); Jabar, Muhammad, *Pandangan Politik Nurcholish Madjid Tentang Partai Politik Islam*, Skripsi Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta (2014).

<sup>14</sup> Sumantri, Rifki Ahda, "Pemikiran Dan Pembaharuan Islam Menurut Perspektif Nurcholish Madjid Di Indonesia," *An-Nidzam: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Dan Studi Islam* 6, No. 1 (2019); Syamsul Huda, Devy Habibi Muhammad, dan Ari Susandi, "Konsep Pendidikan Islam Multikultural Dalam Pandangan KH. Abdurrahman Wahid Dan Nurcholish Madjid," *Jurnal Pendidikan dan Konseling (JPDK)* 4, No. 2 (2022).

<sup>15</sup> Budy Munawar Rachman, *Karya Lengkap Nurcholish Madjid* (Jakarta: Nurcholish Madjid Society (NCMS), 2019): 31-32

1. Islam, Doctrine and Civilization, the work under review now.
2. Islam, Modernity and Indonesianness;
3. The Doors to God;
4. Islam, the Religion of Humanity: Building a New Tradition and Vision of Indonesian Islam;
5. Islam as a Civilization: Building the Meaning and Relevance of Islamic Doctrine in History;
6. Islamic Tradition: Its Role and Function in Development in Indonesia;
7. The Skyline of Islamic Civilization;
8. Religious Society;
9. Ibrahim, the Father of the Prophets and the Model of the Teachings of Godliness
10. Bilik-bilik Pesantren: A Portrait of a Journey;
11. 30 Sajian Ruhani: Meditations in the Month of Ramadhan;
12. Dialogue of Openness: Articulation of Islamic Values in Contemporary Socio-Political Discourse;
13. Scholars and the Religiousness of Society;
14. For Islam - For Indonesia: An Interview with Nurcholish Madjid;
15. Messages of Piety: A Collection of Friday Sermons at Paramadina;
16. The Religious Journey of 'Umrah and Hajj;
17. Nurcholish Madjid's Fatsoen;
18. In the Name of Experience: Religion and Nationhood in Transition, A Collection of Friday Dialogues at Paramadina;
19. The True Face of Islam: Essays on Islam and Modernity in Indonesia;
20. Indonesia Kita;
21. "The Foundation of Faith for Fiqh Interfaith" in Sirry, Mun'im A., *Interfaith Theology: Responses of Progressive Indonesian Muslims*.

### **Brief Description of Work Contents**

This work begins with opening remarks and a preface that explain the origin of this work from a collection of papers of the Religious Studies Club (KKA), organized by the Para Madina Waqf Foundation. In addition, the author also expresses his gratitude and thanks especially to Br. Utomo Dananjaya, who was the first originator of the KKA idea, as well as all parties involved in the production of this work.<sup>16</sup>

Furthermore, this work has four sections, including: The first part is Tawhid and Emancipation of Human Rights (1-185), the second part is Traditional Islamic Disciplines (213-283), the third part is Building an Ethical Society (303-429), and the fourth part is Islamic Universalism and Modernity (449-607). The work also includes an index to make it easier for readers to find important terms in the work (647).

In the first part of Tawhid and the Emancipation of Human Rights, Cak Nur has a concept that is written that "As a human being, believing in God Almighty is the right thing". "Believing in the true God, Allah SWT". "With the right faith, we can form a value system

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<sup>16</sup> Madjid, *Islam Doktrin dan Peradaban*.: i-k

based on Godhead, convinced that our life as humans is solely for God. Cak Nur termed *taqwa*, *tawakkal*, and *ikhlas* are religious knots that need to be the foundation of faith towards truth. Based on faith and the correct religious knot, the value or degree of all human endeavors will truly be beneficial not only in the world but until the hereafter or what is called provision for life.

In the second part, Traditional Islamic Disciplines, Cak Nur explains and exemplifies the application of Islam in civilization which comes from the Foundations of Kalam, Fiqh, Sufism and Philosophy. The point in this second part is that Cak Nur defines kalam science as the science of divinity and its variations (the science of theology, but not the same as theology referred to by Christianity or other religions. The concept of divinity is evidence of His existence, namely the universe and its contents, the concept of worship or human obligations as a form of His creation which is an elaboration of the concept of human relation and God (*Habluminallah*) in this section. Not only that, the environment, culture, and life of Indonesian society, which is the implementation and effect of the concept of kalam science disciplines, such as for example, activities in madrasah and pesantren education, which are actually a reflection of the concept of theology with traditional or *salaf* packaging.

Cak Nur also reminds us in this second part to remember that the foundation of our country in the first principle of Pancasila, is a form of implementation of the concept of God Almighty, which is often understood dogmatically and mentioned quite widely. In this second part, there is also an interesting understanding of the application of the discipline of kalam, which is exemplified in the history of the development of Islam during the Prophet Muhammad in the era of Uthman bin Affan, the following excerpt:

“The sad event in Islamic history that is often called al-Finat al Kubra (the Great Fitnah), as has been widely discussed, is the basis for the growth of Islamic society and religion in various fields, especially the political, social and religious fields. Therefore, the Science of Kalam as a form of expression and reasoning of religious understanding also almost directly grows with the starting point of the great fitnah.”<sup>17</sup>

He gave an example of a real big fitnah incident that occurred so that it concluded the concept of imbalance between the relation of God (*hablum minallah*) and the relation of human being (*hablum minannas*) in that era. The history is raised by the author so that humans do not forget their position as God's creation and their position as His fellow creations. This section also emphasizes the concept of Rahmatan lil 'Alamin. The concept of *Rahmatan lil 'Alamin* at least needs to be strengthened with a reference to understanding that Allah is *rahman* and *rahim*, because Allah's mercy covers everything. This aims to further strengthen the meaning of the sending of the Prophet Muhammad as a mercy for the universe.

In the third section, Building an Ethical Society, Can Nur describes more about the reflection of the universe that is real for humanity and has a direct or indirect effect on humans. this has become a natural law that has become an automatic rule that has been arranged by the Almighty. Cak Nur also explained that humans who truly understand the

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<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.* Part of the synopsis of Nurcholish Madjid's work *Islam Doctrine and Civilization*, (Jakarta: Paramadina, 1999) in [https://perpustakaan.kemendagri.go.id/opac/index.php?p=show\\_detail&id=3254](https://perpustakaan.kemendagri.go.id/opac/index.php?p=show_detail&id=3254) accessed on May 13, 2024.

reality of nature will take action according to God's law, not only that, humans will also be able to build a good and right human order according to the law of nature (*Sunatullah*).

The third section also explains the concept of the principles of *sunatullah* that do not conflict with the future of mankind, namely, his civilization until God wills the Day of Judgment. At the end of this section, Cak Nur assesses the problem of work ethic in Indonesia, where this problem is feared to make Indonesia fall further behind other nations in the Southeast Asian region. Many people work only following fate without considering the effects on various aspects and contrary to *Sunatullah*.

Cak Nur also wrote that our nation already has a strong theological basis and a national history that has never been far from the framework of God Almighty but is often ignored. The solution that Cak Nur also offers in this section is that we must be able to capture the divine message in the form of creation in the form of this universe and make it material for contemplation to be applied in everyday life.

In the fourth section, *Islamic Universality and Modernity*, explains that understanding Universal Islam is the same as understanding the Earth is Round. The meaning of Islam is perfect from all sides, but the perfection of Islam cannot be captured if it is not shown by its adherents in everyday life. In addition, Cak Nur also invites Muslims to implement the concept of relation of God (*Hablum Minallah*) and relation of human being (*Hablum Minannas*) in every life problem and still ensure the direction of the goal to Allah.

## Reviews

Nurcholish Madjid's "Islam, Doctrine and Civilization", published in 1995, offers an in-depth and critical analysis of several issues related to faith, humanity, and modernity in Islam. In this work, Nurcholish Madjid, an Indonesian progressive Muslim intellectual, develops his ideas on pluralism and openness in Islam, and criticizes some aspects that are considered as obstacles to the progress of Islam in Indonesia.

The work consists of papers presented at Paramadina's Religious Studies Club (KKA) in the 1990s. In these papers, Nurcholish Madjid attempts to explain a more open and inclusive Islam and to instill the essential values of Islam in everyday life. He also rejected exclusive symbolism that could separate Islam from human civilization, thus allowing dialogue and synergy between Islam and other cultures. Nurcholis Madjid states that the view of inclusiveness is needed today, inclusiveness as a religious understanding that studies and understands other understandings, teachings, beliefs or religions, so that there is no monopoly on heaven or hell. Islam for him is very flexible, and can be redefined. Islam for him means surrender to God, and this is the basis of religion. Because there is no true religion except surrender to God. So this becomes the meeting point of all religious groups. Thus, each religious group is able to create an open civilization (inclusive) and tolerance, by living their own religion without attacking other religious groups.<sup>18</sup>

As the foundation of Nurcholish Madjid's inclusive thinking, it departs from the phenomenon in Indonesia which consists of a plural society. Often the assumption of

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<sup>18</sup> Dede Ari Sopandi dan Mohamad Taofan, "Konsep Teologi Inklusif Nurcholish Madjid," *Jaqfi: Jurnal Aqidah dan Filsafat Islam* 4, no. 2 (2019).



plurality becomes a uniqueness among other societies, and this uniqueness requires unique treatment with the notion of pluralism. For Nurcholish Madjid, pluralism is not unique to a society or a nation. Because the Holy Work has explained that pluralism is a certainty from Allah SWT. Every society must accept what it is by fostering an attitude of togetherness as an attitude of accepting the plurality. Literally in the Qur'an, an attitude that optimizes all the advantages of each to realize and encourage every good (*fastabiqul khairat*) in society. If there is a difference, it is returned to God alone.<sup>19</sup>

According to Nurcholish Madjid, pluralism in Indonesia is a very important phenomenon that must be considered. We must be realistic so that it becomes a necessity, namely socio-cultural conditions in the pattern of pluralism that will always require a common ground for the values of all existing groups. In Islam, seeking and finding common ground is a very important teaching. In the Holy Work, Allah commands the Prophet SAW, to teach the *ahl al-kitab* to unite in a common view (*kalimah sawa'*). By understanding the One True God, such as the content of QS. Ali Imran verse 64. According to Nurcholish Madjid, the Holy Work (al-Qur'an) has explained that pluralism is the destiny of Allah SWT. So every society needs to have a sense of acceptance of the plurality as it is, which further fosters a healthy sense of togetherness to accept the plurality itself. Literally in the Qur'an, a healthy attitude optimizes all the advantages of each individual to encourage and realize the goodness (*fastabiqul khairat*) in society. Meanwhile, the difference is left to God alone.<sup>20</sup>

According to Nurcholish Madjid, pluralism should be a rule from God (*sunnatullah*) that is impossible to change and cannot be resisted or denied. In line with Islamic teachings, the Qur'an explicitly recognizes the rights of other religions, except paganism or shirk, to live and practice their respective teachings with full sincerity. Recognizing the rights of other religions leads to an understanding of socio-cultural and religious pluralism, as an unchangeable decree from God (Surah 5:44-50). It is then continued in the Holy Work, with the command to Muslims to hold on to the teachings of continuity by continuing to believe in God's messengers (prophets and apostles) regardless of whether they are written in the Holy Work or not (Qur'an 2:135; QS. 4:163-165; QS. 45:16-18).<sup>21</sup>

Inclusivism can be understood as a theology of peace or religious harmony, from one particular religion or between other religions. Inclusivism is an attitude of positive openness to respect every difference. Religion should not be a barrier in interacting with fellow human beings, to create unity of action and deeds. Nurcholish Madjid has argued that faith will foster awareness to carry out God's mandate, as fellow human beings to appreciate and respect each other in the form of social relations. Reminding each other of the truth without imposing personal will.<sup>22</sup>

In this work, Nurcholish Madjid also displays the characteristics of his writing style, which is long and detailed, and uses subordinate sentences to explain his ideas. This makes this work a very useful reference for those who want to understand more moderate and inclusive Islamic thought. Islam is a view of life that illuminates the way of life of its

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<sup>19</sup> Madjid, *Islam Doktrin dan Peradaban*.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

adherents who regulate all matters of human life, ranging from matters of worship, rituals to worldly matters. Islam teaches its followers to be qualified, superior and able to contribute positively to human survival in the world. To translate Islam into the environment of social life, a straight and deep view is needed. In this case, Nurcholish Madjid offers the idea of the importance of *al-hanaifiyat al-samhah*. This is a view that is no longer contacted in the form of communalism or forms that tend to confine themselves to certain structures. This kind of understanding encourages a person to be called to participate in activities that benefit all. Islam contains universal activities and ideals in the form of realizing salvation, justice, peace, which are based on the values of tawhid and human nature. The point is the emergence of a moderate and inclusive attitude in fighting for universal agendas for the advancement of human civilization.<sup>23</sup>

The work "Islam, Doctrine and Civilization" by Nurcholish Madjid is an important example of efforts to modernize Islam and integrate Islamic values with human civilization. With deep and critical analysis, the work offers a broader and more inclusive view of Islam and its role in modern society. This work is a monumental work that discusses the relationship between Islamic teachings as doctrine and the practice of daily life in the context of human civilization. In this work, Nurcholish Madjid emphasizes the importance of understanding Islam as a teaching that accommodates changing times and civilizations, and encourages Muslims to contribute positively to the development of civilization.

Regarding his idea of Islam and ideology, Nurcholish Madjid comments that there is a separation between Islam and ideology that is limited by time and space. Although ideology involves broad and complex aspects, it has a positive meaning towards Islam, where Islam as an ideology must be characterized as a religion that has similarities with other ideologies. In this statement, Nurcholish Madjid asked Indonesian Muslims to review the process of Islamic political ideology from the beginning of Indonesian independence until the New Order period. He argued that a critical study of religious sources is necessary, not just respecting but also criticizing the origins of culture since the early generations and understanding each period of development. Nurcholish Madjid argues that the Islamic ideology of the past is very strong and needs to be adjusted to the conditions of Indonesian Islamic society universally. Therefore, when Nurcholish Madjid discusses Islam and the New Order, he emphasizes that socio-political development cannot be implemented in absolute terms, but must be demonstrated in relative terms.<sup>24</sup>

The work is divided into several chapters that discuss various aspects of Islam, doctrine, and civilization. Nurcholish Madjid outlines the basic concept of Islam as a religion of *Rahmatan lil-'Alamin* (mercy for all nature), as well as the role of Muslims in building a quality civilization. The basic concept of Islam as a religion of rahmatan lil-alamin (mercy for all nature), according to Nurcholish Madjid is the universalism of Islam. In this context, Islamic universalism includes the concept of rahmatan lil 'alamin, which means Islam as a

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<sup>23</sup> Made Saihu, "Pedidikan Moderasi Beragama: Kajian Islam Wasathiyah Menurut Nurcholish Madjid," *Andragogi: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam dan Manajemen Pendidikan Islam* 3, no. 1 (2021).

<sup>24</sup> Muhammad Saleh Tajuddin, "Filsafat Politik Nurcholish Madjid," *JURNAL POLITIK PROFETIK* 9, no. 2 (2021).

religion that is a mercy for all nature.<sup>25</sup> Nurcholish Madjid understands Islam as a religion that is oriented towards the salvation and welfare of mankind, and seeks to achieve universal awareness and self-awareness as part of the whole universe. According to Nurcholish Madjid, the role of Muslims in the development of a quality civilization is to be khalifah on earth and to be the best people before Allah SWT. In his view, Muslims should be able to realize themselves as caliphs through the great teachings of Islam, as well as being an example for other people in achieving universal awareness and self-awareness as part of the whole universe.<sup>26</sup>

In this work, Madjid also emphasizes the importance of understanding Islam as a teaching that accommodates changes in times and civilizations, and encourages Muslims to contribute positively to the development of civilization. According to Nurcholish Madjid, understanding Islam as a teaching that accommodates the changing times and civilizations is very important. In his view, Islam must be lived as a universal religion and oriented towards the salvation and welfare of mankind. Islam must be able to adapt to changing times and civilizations, and encourage Muslims to contribute positively to the development of civilization. Nurcholish Madjid emphasizes that Islam must be lived actively and dynamically, and not just as a static tradition or ritual. Thus, Muslims can be an example for other communities in achieving universal awareness and self-awareness as part of the whole universe.<sup>27</sup>

In an effort to strengthen the universality of Islam, Nurcholish Madjid focuses on Islamic sciences such as Kalam, Fiqh, Sufism, and Islamic Philosophy. Kalam Science is one of the disciplines that grew and developed in the tradition of Islamic religious studies. Kalam science is also called the science of '*Aqaid* (the science of creed), which is the knot of belief, or the science of Tawhid (the Science of the Omnipotence of God). In Indonesia, the study of Kalam Science or called the science of Tawhid, is commonly taught in Islamic educational institutions and is impossible to abandon. Its importance is to teach Islamic principles in instilling correct religious understanding. So that people can understand and take inclusivism values as adherents of ahlussunnah wal jamaah. Unlike the Khawarij sect, which is known to be exclusivistic and extreme, although it can be said to have perished, its ideology still exists today.<sup>28</sup>

Islamic Philosophy, the science that few understand and at the same time the most controversial. Nurcholish emphasized that Islamic philosophy comes from Islamic sources, namely the Qur'an and Sunnah. In Indonesia itself it is translated into "philosophy" or there are those who name it "philosophy". While in Arabic expression it is called Ulum al-Hikmah or al-Hikmah for short (as an equivalent of the Greek word sophia) which means "wisdom". So the word philosophy becomes clear including Islamic disciplines, although based on Islamic teaching sources, but more derived from external elements, namely Hellenism or

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<sup>25</sup> Muhammad Nur Jamaluddin, "Wujud Islam Rahmatan Lil Âlamin dalam Kehidupan Berbangsa di Indonesia," *ADLIYA: Jurnal Hukum dan Kemanusiaan* 14, no. 2 (2021).

<sup>26</sup> H. Syamsuddin Abdullah, "Pemikiran Kalam Nurcholish Madjid dan Relevansinya dalam Pemikiran Modern di Indonesia," *At-Tadabbur : Jurnal Penelitian Sosial Keagamaan* 7, no. 2 (2018).

<sup>27</sup> Amalia Yunia Rahmawati, "Memahami Hakikat Islam dan Realitas Kaum Muslim: Upaya Membangun Masyarakat Madani," *Jurnal Edukasi* 4, no. 1 (2016).

<sup>28</sup> Madjid, *Islam Doktrin dan Peradaban*.

Greek thought. In the development of Islam, intellectual interaction between Muslims and the Hellenic world became the driving force for the progress of Islamic science, such as medicine and alchemy, metaphysics, astronomy, mathematics, including philosophy. Currently, the development that can be seen is the integration of religious and general sciences. This is one of Nurcholish Madjid's obsessions for modernization efforts on the platform of modernity rooted in Indonesianness with the foundation of faith. So it can be seen that Nurcholish is committed to modernizing Islamic education in Indonesia, built from Indonesian culture imbued with the spirit of faith.<sup>29</sup>

**Fiqh science.** Fiqh is a strong dominant Islamic science in Muslims' understanding of their religion, as it forms a large part of their way of thinking. Through this strong fiqh orientation, Islamic society has a very strong legal orientation. The study of rights and duties is the basis of traditional Islamic education, reflected in the certainty of law and order among Muslims. Some of the main ideals of Islam regarding society are more evident in the science of fiqh. There is a strong principle of human equality (egalitarianism) in fiqh. Affirmation of the equality of everyone before the law. According to Nurcholish Madjid, the Prophet SAW as a carrier of teachings aimed at reforming and improving social life. Characterized by the ability to capture, understand and practice the teachings of Islam, in fact that is where the improvement and improvement of one's human value lies.<sup>30</sup>

**Sufism.** In Islam, the science of Sufism cannot be separated, because it deals more with mystical matters which are the core of esoteric religion. In a heterogeneous society, in addition to the importance of legal certainty (Fiqh), rules and order in society. So religiosity or piety is manifested in obedience to legal provisions, piety is based on legal awareness that deals with human behavior.<sup>109</sup> For Nurcholish Madjid, taqwa and morals are a parallel relationship like faith and charity, and like the relationship between God and humans. From that, Sufism cannot be separated from a religion. Because as a discipline that deals with inner (core) problems, it becomes a core of religiosity. So the science of tasawwuf is a scientific explanation of what taqwa is. Then taqwa is also associated with ihsan as in the Hadith, "ihsan is if you worship God as if you see your God, and if you do not see Him then you must realize that He sees you".

Works that have similar studies with this work such as *Islam: A History of Thought and Civilization* by Fazlur Rahman is a very useful reference in understanding the doctrine and development of Islam.<sup>31</sup> This work discusses various aspects of Islam, including the figure of the Prophet Muhammad, the Qur'an, hadith/sunnah, law/sharia, theology/kalam, philosophy, and Sufism. Regarding civilization, Rahman reviews tarekat, philosophical movements, the development of madhabs, education, renewal movements, and modern developments. This work not only discusses the main doctrines of Islam and the development of Muslim civilization from the beginning of its birth to the present, but also proposes a clear perspective to read the problems of the times and the work agenda of Muslims in order to advance a civilized, ethical, and advanced society.

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Fazlur Rahman, *Islam: Sejarah Pemikiran dan Peradaban* (Bandung: Mizan, 2017).

Furthermore, the work “Islam, Doctrine and Contemporary Issues” is authored by Prof. Dr. H. Faisal Ismail, MA. This work discusses various contemporary issues related to Islam, including diversity, religion, and issues that often arise in modern society.<sup>32</sup> The work also offers a deep and critical analysis of several issues related to faith, humanity and modernity in Islam. This paper certainly does not want to compare the above works with the work we are reviewing. At the very least, the works above show that the study of Islamic doctrine and civilization can help determine its various shortcomings and strengths.

Reviews of this work can be found on several internet sites such as the review by Ahmad Rajiv in <https://www.goodreads.com/review/show/2453342036> as an effort to understand the HMI's NDP so that he gets enlightenment about sustainable struggle in the life of the nation and diversity.<sup>33</sup> Review also by Faiz Al Zawahir in <https://id.scribd.com/document/393726388>.<sup>34</sup> Likewise, M Khusnul Khuluq in <https://kampusdesa.or.id/review-singkat-karya-lengkap-nurcholish-madjid/he> reviewed a work edited by his teacher, Dr. Budhy Munawwar Rachman.<sup>35</sup>

Various advantages or positive things in this work include presenting an in-depth and critical analysis of issues of faith, humanity, and Islamic modernity. The development of the idea of pluralism is also very relevant to the diversity of cultures and religions in Indonesia. In addition, this work has a broad, open, and inclusive view that allows dialogue between Islam and other cultures. The work also uses a footnote system as a reference. This helps the reader to access the sources used by the author. The work also includes an index list, which will certainly make it easier for readers to find things they want to know from this work. The index list is sorted by subject, person's name, place name, or events that are considered important and monumental. However, this work still contains shortcomings. Although this work is thick and quite appealing, it is mandatory reading for student activists, but this work is very difficult to find in bookstores, because it includes classic non-fiction works. The sentences in this work are also quite long, and are still added with sub-sentences, so that the explanation is very long.

## Conclusion

This study finds that Islam, Doctrine and Civilization represents Nurcholish Madjid's systematic effort to formulate Islam not merely as a normative religious system, but as a comprehensive civilizational paradigm that is universal, inclusive, and historically grounded. The central finding of this research shows that Madjid positions tawhid as the ethical foundation of civilization, transforming it from a purely theological concept into a source of moral consciousness that promotes human equality, social justice, and historical responsibility. In this framework, faith becomes the driving force for ethical engagement in public life rather than a private or ritualistic expression alone.

<sup>32</sup> Faisal Ismail, *Islam, doktrin, dan isu-isu kontemporer* (IRCiSoD, 1959).

<sup>33</sup> Ahmad Rajiv. Review Islam Doktrin dan Peradaban, Goodreads, 2018 in <https://www.goodreads.com/review/show/2453342036>

<sup>34</sup> Faiz Zawahir Mutaha, Nilai Perjuangan ndp Hmi Sebagai Nilai Dasar Peradaban in <https://id.scribd.com/document/393726388/Critical-Review-Islam-Doktrin-Peradaban-Caknur>

<sup>35</sup> M. Khusnul Khuluq, Review singkat Karya lengkap Nurcholish Madjid, Kampus Desa Indonesia, 2020 in <https://kampusdesa.or.id/review-singkat-karya-lengkap-nurcholish-madjid/>

Another significant finding of this study is that Islamic doctrine, in Madjid's thought, is inherently dynamic and dialogical. Doctrine is not treated as a rigid or closed system, but as a living source of values that continuously interacts with social, cultural, and intellectual realities. Madjid's recognition of reciprocal influences between Islam and external traditions—such as Hellenistic philosophy—demonstrates his rejection of exclusivist interpretations of Islam. Instead, he affirms that such interactions have historically contributed to the growth of Islamic sciences and the formation of a vibrant Islamic civilization, thereby affirming Islam's capacity to engage constructively with modernity.

Furthermore, this research finds that the concept of Islamic civilization in Madjid's work is fundamentally oriented toward the principle of *rahmatan lil 'alamin* as an ethical and practical framework. Civilization is not defined by political dominance or formal religious symbolism, but by the realization of universal Islamic values—justice, compassion, tolerance, and moral integrity—in social life. In the Indonesian context, this finding highlights Madjid's argument that Islam can coexist harmoniously with Pancasila and national pluralism without compromising its theological foundations.

Overall, this study concludes that Islam, Doctrine and Civilization articulates Nurcholish Madjid's intellectual project of redefining Islam as a religion of civilization rather than a rigid political ideology or a purely ritual tradition. Islam is presented as a transformative moral force capable of responding to historical change and contributing to the construction of a humane, inclusive, and sustainable civilization. Within this perspective, Islam as *rahmatan lil 'alamin* emerges not as a rhetorical ideal, but as a normative framework that demands concrete realization in the civilizational practice of Muslim societies.

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