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Humanist Fiqh Developed by KH. Ahmad Rifa'i Arief Banten, Indonesia

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Abstract: This study aimed to examine the patterns and models of humanist fiqh developed by KH. Ahmad Rifa'i Arief through the popular boarding school in Banten, Indonesia, using a qualitative method. Data was obtained through observation, documentation, and comprehensive interviews, which were then analyzed using a descriptive approach. The results showed that KH. Ahmad Rifa'i Arief employed a philosophical approach in constructing the humanist fiqh, implemented across various Islamic Boarding Schools, including La Tansa. Furthermore, this approach emphasized the initial inward transformation (*qalbi*) as a means of self-introduction, subsequently imparting knowledge (*qauli*) and teaching, as well as culminating in tangible actions (*fi'li*) that benefit individuals regardless of their gender or social status.

Keywords: Fiqh; Humanist; KH. Ahmad Rifa'i Arief; Islamic Boarding School; La Tansa

Introduction

Fiqh, as a framework for spiritual practice, is greatly influenced by the individual who possesses the knowledge, shaping their ideology. Terry Eagleton argued that ideology is constructed through rationalization, universalization, and naturalization (Eagleton, 1991). Furthermore, the ideological structure indirectly influences the ideas and actions of a *Kyai* (KH.) as a religious figure while interacting with the community, both inside and outside the Islamic Boarding School, as a form of social relations to exert influence.

However, not all religious leaders embody the spirit of humanizing humans through humanist fiqh. For instance, there is a prominent religious leader in Banten often referred to as a *Kyai Entrepreneur* (Rosyad, 2014), who is considered as a modern figure within the Islamic Boarding School context in Banten (Munasaroh & Bastaman, 2019a). Despite the leader's thoughts, actions, and deeds reflecting a humanist inclination, the study does not specifically address the aspect of humanist fiqh. The leader was named KH. Ahmad Rifa'i Arief, through the existence of the La Tansa Islamic Boarding School in Cipanas, Lebak Regency, Banten Province.

From a social perspective, the education system at La Tansa shows a fervent commitment to cultivating exceptional Human Resources (HR) who possess a deep understanding of their faith while embracing the realities of the world. These individuals recognize the existence of the Creator without disregarding the importance of the created beings. Moreover, they foster a sense of mutual respect and refrain from belittling fellow human beings and the surrounding community. The guiding principle stems from the teachings of the La Tansa Islamic Boarding School, where the Divine Word of Allah SWT, as conveyed in the Qur'an, serves as a source of inspiration for developing exemplary human resources in the present life and in the hereafter (QS. 28: 77).

Even though social change is always dialectical, the impact of Islamic Boarding School knowledge does not fade in the hearts of the students and alumni. The benefits of the teachers' knowledge and blessings have become a positive spirit that directs them to be more productive, innovative, and responsible humanists. This is based on the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad SAW, which obliges every

individual to always be useful to themselves and others (Al-Qadha'i, 1985, p. 223). The Prophet has indicated that the people most loved by Allah SWT are always beneficial to others (Al-Thabrani, 1983, p. 86). According to Abdullah Saeed (2005, p. 2), the significance of this passage lies in its assertion that the need for change does not undermine the importance of human values. Different factors that drive change, including globalization, scientific advancements, technological progress, community migration, and others, contribute to increased awareness and comprehension of the significance of upholding and preserving human dignity.

Due to the primacy placed on human welfare, KH. Ahmad Rifa'i Arief developed the humanist fiqh model, integrated into the structure of Islamic Boarding schools like La Tansa. Consequently, this study explores the concept of humanist fiqh as formulated by KH. Ahmad Rifa'i Arief. Within this perspective, the approach entails the examination of fiqh as a religious text that prioritizes moral principles over mere legal formalities. The gap is that humanist fiqh is synonymous with Western studies and tends to be considered close to liberalism. KH. Ahmad Rifa'i Arief explained that humanist fiqh is not Westernized but tends to communicate effectively with the culture and Islam in Indonesia. Therefore, this study examines the importance of humanist fiqh studies in the development of a tolerant and moderate Muslim society as well as respect for humanity.

Literature Review

As a science of human actions based on Shariah narratives (Harisudin, 2021), fiqh is often used to punish people with a different understanding. Even though Allah SWT presents the law to provide benefits and covers evil for humans (*jalb al-mashalih wa dar'u al-mafasid*), it is considered rigid and inhumane (Al-Salmi, 2003, p. 11). The command to be humane is presented from Allah's noble attitude in calling His servants with good calls, even to those rejecting Islamic preaching. This honorable disposition has likewise been exemplified by the Prophet, Muhammad, in whose essence a profound lesson is ingrained, emphasizing that the mercy of Allah surpasses His wrath. As frequently documented in the Sirah Books, the Prophet Muhammad SAW refrained from invoking evil upon the people of Thaif, even after enduring injuries from being stoned, and instead responded with a benevolent smile towards those who habitually spat at him. The Prophet compassionately provided nourishment to blind individuals, irrespective of their religious affiliation, despite enduring daily mistreatment from both non-Muslims and Muslims until his passing.

11 Some Sharia texts explain the humanist attitude of the Prophet Muhammad SAW, such as the word of Allah SWT, which affirms the sending of the Prophet to the face of the earth only to bring mercy to the universe (QS 21:107). There is a history that the existence of the on earth as a messenger of Allah is to perfect good morals for humans (Al-Syaibani, 1998, p. 381). According to a hadith, it is mentioned that every prophet possesses a comprehensive supplication utilized at any time and in any place. However, the Messenger of Allah selected to preserve this prayer and intended to solely employ it as a means of salvation for his followers on the Day of Judgment (Al-Bukhari, 1987).

In initiating a humanist society, the Prophet built a civilized society (having civilization) and transformed Yathrib City into Medina. As a result, this city has a pluralistic, multicultural, multi-ethnic, and multi-religious society, without conflict between the natives (*ansar*) and migrants (*muhajirin*). Instead, they live in harmony and glorify each other in the name of humanity taught by the Prophet Muhammad SAW and stated in the First article of the Medina Charter "*annahum ummatun wahidatun min duni an-naas*" (Al-Hindi, 1407, p. 59).

The Prophet Muhammad SAW and companions, through this large social capital, has expanded their humanitarian and religious network to all corners of the world with the following basic strategies such as (1) building a mosque as a center for vertical and horizontal communication, then synergies are created between them (Yatim, 1993, p. 26), (2) unites the native population with the immigrants since the conflict of interest occurs due to the gap between the two social groups (Syalabi, 2003, p. 103); (3) builds

harmony between religious communities to maintain peace (Ilahi & Hefni, 2007, p. 59), and (4) laying the legal, political, economic and social foundations of Islam (Lewis, 2010, p. 84).

For example, in the context of punishment, the Prophet Muhammad SAW implemented the nature of God that is Most Compassionate and Merciful, where mercy is more significant than wrath. Therefore, when *fath al-Makkah* (freedom of Mecca) was conducted, some people were very fierce in the fight against Islam, even when there was propaganda to kill Muhammad. Based on the Sharia, Abdullah bin Sa'ad, Habbar bin al-Aswad, Hindun bin 'Utbah, Wahsyi bin Harb, Ikrimah bin Abu Jahal, and Ka'ab bin Zuhair were to be sentenced to death (QS. 5: 33). They were all forgiven and released from the punishment after apologizing to the Prophet (M. Quraish Shihab, 2011, pp. 925-930).

Another illustration of the social context is the absence of gender differentiation between men and women, with both being accorded equal rights in public domains, encompassing education and employment. This principle is rooted in the divine decree of Allah SWT (QS. 49: 13), emphasizing that humans are created with diverse physical forms not to discriminate against one another, as the ultimate measure of honor and dignity lies in one's sincerity in reverence towards Allah. However, this concept has indirectly permeated the policies promulgated by UNESCO through the inclusion of terms such as "rights" and "freedoms" (Doni, 2019, p. 119; UNESCO, 2001, p. 17). The notion of humanist fiqh, currently being introduced into schools under the banner of "religious moderation", has an indirect influence on the educational landscape in the West. Some institutions adopted the concept as a fundamental component of their standard curriculum. This development has contributed to shaping the educational sphere by incorporating humanistic principles and values into the teaching and learning process (Monaziroh & Choirudin, 2021, p. 141).

It should be emphasized that the study of fiqh humanism is still new in Indonesia. Several studies examining issues related to fiqh humanism include *The Fiqh Paradigm for the Pancasila State: Abdurrahman Wahid's Thoughts on Islam and the Republic of Indonesia* (Rochmat, 2014, p. 326). According to the Wahid perspective, Islam, viewed through the fiqh paradigm, acknowledges the society, including the political system, as distinct entities that should mutually establish legitimacy. Therefore, the fiqh paradigm recognizes two separate dimensions of knowledge, namely the material (commonly referred to as secular sciences) and the spiritual sciences.

Fiqh humanism also discusses the Manifestation of Sharia Regional Regulations in Managing Social Morality (Sabir & Nazaruddin, 2021). The findings indicate that the establishment of regulated Sharia areas is rooted in the Qur'an and hadith. The development of such areas has been closely linked to the establishment of national laws in history. It is important to consider the three distinct periods of its construction, particularly concerning regional autonomy. Moreover, it is crucial to recognize that when examining local regulations, particularly those related to Sharia, within the legal framework of Indonesia, Islamic Sharia holds a significant position in shaping the social and legal context of the country.

Current issues related to the application of humanism fiqh can be observed in Covid-19 cases. Sholeh, A et al (2021) on the topic of *The Awareness of Islamic Law as a Spiritual Factor in Family Resilience and Parenting Quality During the Covid-19 Era*. This study attempts to examine the family's resilience as a minor social system and assess the impacts of Islamic law awareness as well as other factors in family resilience and parenting quality. Furthermore, family resilience is influenced by parenting quality, understanding of Islamic law, and personal financial management. Raising awareness of Islamic law among young people and families may strengthen resilience during the pandemic.

The study of humanism fiqh also develops on human rights aspects, such as Mukharrom and Abadi (2023) on *Harmonizing Islam and Human Rights Through the Reconstruction of Classical Islamic Tradition*. The analysis argues that philosophical harmonization between Islam and human rights can be conducted by reconstructing classical Islamic traditions. Therefore, a dialectic occurs that builds and complements one another in the future.

The previous study on KH. Ahmad Rifai Arief in Banten was presented by Munasaroh (2019b). *Da'wah Activities of KH. Ahmad Rifa'i Arief through La Tansa Lebak Gedong Banten Islamic boarding*

school (Biographical Study of KH. A. Rifa'i Arief in Banjar Irrigation village, Lebak Gedong, Banten District). This study is only limited to explaining the history of KH. Ahmad Rifa'i's da'wah and the perspective of humanist fiqh. The difference is related to the development of a philosophical understanding of fiqh humanism, interpreted in the form of studies as a religious text that prioritizes aspects of values and morals rather than formal legal aspects.

The recent study by Solihin (2022) focuses on the pattern of *Kyai* parenting at La Tansa Mashiro Lebak Banten, an Islamic Boarding School. This approach aims to nurture individuals who possess intellectual capabilities while also having a humanist Islamic perspective and demeanor. Additionally, the success of La Tansa Islamic Boarding School, situated in Parakansantri, Lebakgedong, Lebak-Banten, can be attributed to the leadership and management of KH. Ahmad Rifaer Daaef, particularly in terms of character development among the students. The educational pattern of the school refers to the parenting and teaching path. Education and nurturing can bring humanism awareness through the parenting pattern of students respecting each other, bring togetherness between students, introduce knowledge and humanitarian attitudes without distinguishing humans, and prioritize respect for human rights.

Method

The valid data was obtained through field study with a qualitative approach using the means of observation, interviews, and documentation (Yusuf et al., 2022). Generally, it aims to explore the current phenomenon through direct observation. The study location focused more on the La Tansa Islamic Boarding School, Banten, with the primary informants, such as KH. Adrian Mafatihullah Karim and KH. Enceh Sholeh, along with the other *asatidz*. Data processing started with editing, followed by classification, and data verification as a form of truth checking, before analysis and conclusion (Moleong, 2005, p. 6). This study used descriptive analysis by providing an overview of the data (Moleong, 2005) and then obtaining a complete explanation of the answers to the problems.

Results and Discussion

Short Profile of KH. Ahmad Rifa'i Arief Banten

KH. Ahmad Rifa'i Arief is the leader and pioneer of the modern Islamic boarding schools Daar el-Qolam, La Tansa, La Lahwa, the College of Economics, and the College of Islamic Religion (STIE/STAI) La Tansa Mashiro, located in Banten Province. The leader was born in Pasir Gintung Balaraja Tangerang on December 30, 1942 (Kariem, n.d., p. 21; Nafis, 2008, p. 12), and died in the same place on June 15, 1997, or 10 Shafar 1418 H at 54 years (Rosyad, 2014). Genealogically, KH. Ahmad Rifa'i Arief was born into a religious family. The father, KH. Qasad Mansyur, was a religious figure and teacher at Madrasah Ibtidaiyyah Masyariqul Anwar. To provide an excellent religious education for the son, Ahmad Rifa'i Arief was transferred from the *Volkschool* to Madrasah Ibtidaiyyah Masyariqul Anwar in Caringin, while at the same time learning al-Qur'an with the brother, KH. Syihabudin Makmun (Rosyad, 2014).

After graduating in 1958, KH. Ahmad Rifa'i Arief continued his religious studies at the Darussalam Gontor Modern Islamic Boarding School in Ponorogo, East Java, managed by KH. Imam Zarkasyi, up to seven years and graduated in 1965. Under the direction of Kyai Zarkasyi, Ahmad Rifa'i Arief remained in the boarding school to serve for two years (Nafis, 2008; Rosyad, 2014) and did not necessarily feel satisfied with the religious knowledge acquired, then searched for *salafiyah* Islamic Boarding Schools around Gontor (Dar El-Qolam, 2021).

With the knowledge acquired from the Islamic Boarding School, Ahmad Rifa'i Arief returned to his hometown and discussed with family and religious leaders in the environment the desire to establish a boarding school. Following the fruitful discussion, a positive response emerged. Consequently, an agreement was reached to designate the Islamic Boarding School in Gontor as an exemplary and model educational institution. In line with this decision, a new educational institution named Daar El-Qolam was established in 1968 (Kariem, n.d.).

The Islamic boarding school's journey encountered several obstacles and even received a negative stigma, labeled as "resembling an infidel" for speaking English in the Islamic boarding school (Kariem, n.d.). However, the strong determination and noble character displayed in front of the community resulted in success and progress. It expanded by opening several branches in Banten areas, such as the **La Tansa Islamic Boarding School** in Cipanas, **Lebak Banten**. Interestingly, Daar el-Qolam and La Tansa are categorized as part of the twelve best in Indonesia because of their increasing popularity (Melayu, 2016).

Ahmad Rafa'i Arief's passion for learning persisted even as the Islamic Boarding School progressed. He pursued further studies at the State Islamic Institute (IAIN) in Serang, Banten, which was affiliated with the Sharia Faculty of IAIN Yogyakarta. It has since been elevated to the status of a State Islamic University, where he obtained a Bachelor of Architecture (BA) degree in 1974. Meanwhile, in 1985, he completed his doctoral degree (Drs.) (Rosyad, 2014). For his dedication in Banten, one of the national newspapers, *Republica*, recorded Ahmad Rafa'i Arief as an Ulema that is polite in educating the community (Mujadid, 2021).

The special notes from the life of KH. Ahmad Rafa'i Arief is reluctant to popularize his name in the community, then requests to deliver lectures outside Islamic Boarding Schools, even from famous television stations, was not accepted. Furthermore, the popular advice given was that *"Even though Rifa'i dies, this Islamic boarding school cannot die, it should continue to live with the system, not with the Kyai"* (Dar El-Qolam, 2021). Ahmad Rafa'i Arief was described by the Prophet Muhammad SAW as a nomad or a traveling foreigner, which holds the principle of using the time to realize some positive value from dawn to dusk. In contrast, Ahmad Rafa'i Arief always makes optimal use of healthy times and life opportunities for himself and many people (Al-Taimiyyi, 1993, p. 471).

The Struggle Faced by KH. Ahmad Rifa'i Arief Banten to Develop Humanist Fiqh

The fundamental principle of humanist fiqh is the manifestation of divine messages in the human dimension. First, Allah created humans to know and worship Him (Al-Damsyiqi, 1999, p. 425). Subsequently, a Prophet and Messenger were sent from among humans (QS. 3: 164) to show the right path to the Creator. Various actions and reactions of humans were born to realize the benefit for themselves and their communities, but still in the process of humanizing humans, including the form of the Islamic Boarding School in La Tansa, built by KH. Ahmad Rifa'i Arief. Academically, La Tansa is unique, combining general knowledge with religion in its educational regulations. The formal education applied to the **Ministry of Education and Culture** is headed in the form of Junior, and Senior High Schools (SMP) and SMA, respectively. The **Islamic boarding school** is under the supervision of the **Ministry of Religion** making the Darussalam Gontor Islamic Boarding School a reference for its management with the Trimurti model.

Through this unique education pattern, Ahmad Rifa'i Arief, with wisdom, built the mentality to realize human values in their life. The foundation of the thought and action is stated in QS.28:77 with a concentration *"And be good to others as Allah has been good to you."* During the occurrence of the monetary crisis in 1997, KH. Ahmad Rifa'i Arief promptly promoted the students and guardians not to succumb to fear, emphasizing the unwavering connection with Allah SWT. Furthermore, their pursuit of knowledge, motivated by benevolence, was deemed a commendable form of jihad in the eyes of Allah SWT. This notion is exemplified through the practice of consuming "jacketed fish" (a term for mackerel wrapped in flour) (Uddin, 2021).

"Jacketed fish" symbolizes submission to Allah SWT, such as a Muslim wearing ihram clothes while performing Umrah or Hajj to the *Baitullah al-Haram*. This is a fundamental lesson before an individual can humanize humans, where at the zero point (submission), there is no place to return except to Allah SWT, with a view of mercy (love and compassion), not *la'nah* (hatred and curse). KH. Ahmad Rifa'i Arief decided to make La Tansa an educational center capable of turning its students into wise and humble Muslims (Azhari, 2012, p. 42) and humanist cadres.

Imam Al-Shafi'i provided a good description of the attitude of mercy with the verse stating that when there is reproach and insult, the best attitude is not to respond (Fahmi & Nuruddin, 2014, p. 190).

This is because silence is essentially golden, and overreacting only results in negative consequences. Furthermore, this was clarified by Muhammad Amin with a Shafi'i school: *"Love, my child, all living beings... Look upon them with gentleness and love. Honor the elders and love the young... And invite everyone to fulfill the rights of Allah SWT."* (Al-Syafi'i, 2001, p. 163)

According to Saeful Bahri (2000) in the obituary, as well as Azhari, KH. Ahmad Rifa'i Arief's observations regarding the crisis circle struck a deep chord with every student. Different issues, including the crisis of identity, social orientation, and courage, which resonated strongly with the hearts of the audience were discussed. A particular discourse that left a lasting impact was the philosophy of the jacketed fish, symbolizing the condition of Muslims in the 20th century. It shed light on how the ummah appeared to be fixated solely on personal religious obligations such as prayer, hajj, and fasting while neglecting the broader social benefits. This limited interpretation of religion resulted in its diminished role, despite Islam's comprehensive guidance encompassing all aspects of life.

In this aspect, the role of the Islamic students as the pioneers of humanity should be realized by being forged in advance in the boarding school. Therefore, KH. Ahmad Rifa'i Arief formulated the five souls of the La Tansa Islamic Boarding School (Kariem, n.d.) namely:

1. Sincerity: According to Ahmad Rifa'i Arief, the word sincere means *"sepi ing pamrih"* (Rosyad, 2014), namely not expecting personal gain from work and activities, by strengthening these good intentions on the *lillahi ta'ala* standard.
2. Simplicity: The term does not mean economically poor. However, in the spirit of simplicity, there is strength in the form of ability, fortitude, and self-control in dealing with life, to organize a more dynamic and challenging life in the face of trials.
3. Self-reliance: An independent soul is not only part of the life of Islamic students but should be able to hack into a wider order, after being in the midst of society.
4. *Ukhuwah Islamiyah*: This serves to strengthen the brotherhood between the students by not presenting the differences as barriers and motors of division, but need to be elaborated into a blessing from Allah SWT.
5. Freedom: Every Islamic student has the freedom to think, act and determine the future, and is free to select a way of life and even be free from various negative influences from outside the community.

The five souls of this Islamic Boarding School have become a solid foundation in the upbringing and education of the students. Therefore, humanist values are embedded in their personality and mindset after graduation. The implications of the struggle through Islamic Boarding Schools have received a positive response from various people, such as the presence of envoys from Al-Azhar University in Cairo, Egypt, and the Malaysian Minister of Islamic Religion in 1995. Several ministers in the era of President Soehartower are also present, including Minister of Religion Tarmizi Taher, State for Youth and Sports Hayono Isman, and Information Harmoko (Nafis, 2008).

Apart from national and foreign figures, the local community also benefited from Islamic boarding schools in the year 1966. For example, the local term *"barudak"* refers to the children and Bedouin people collecting the leftover food waste from the students for their animal feeds and selling homemade products such as food and agricultural products. Furthermore, to appreciate the existence of the surrounding community, Ahmad Rifa'i Arief preferred to employ women around the school as washers for the students' clothes rather than using a washing machine. Therefore, this boarding school also benefits the surrounding community besides students (Uddin, 2021).

Another humanist behavior Ahmad Rifa'i Arief exhibited was when he invited one of the sons to visit the community in the rice fields and provide minimal assistance, and this was accomplished regularly in life. Upon returning, Ahmad Rifa'i Arief stated that *"We should not discriminate between people to stay in touch, they are people in need, and their prayers are accepted by Allah"* (Azhari, 2012).

The social meeting was used as momentum by KH. Ahmad Rifa'i Arief in the form of devotion to glorify others. This is in line with the teaching of the Prophet Muhammad SAW always to love living

creatures on the earth, specifically humans. Therefore, the creation in the sky will always love him, and Allah's grace will descend on them (Al-Tirmidzi, n.d., p. 323). With this humanist attitude, the Islamic boarding schools La Tansa, since the 1997s, have become educational references for children from Java, Sumatra, Sulawesi, Kalimantan, and others.

Another interesting message and an illustration of Ahmad Rifa'i Arief's humanist fiqh was recorded in a graduation speech for students at the La Tansa Islamic Boarding School in 1997, stating that "*A human's life was destructed due to his inability to recognize himself, small admits to greatness, great but does not know his greatness, finally falls into the abyss of humiliation. Therefore, when you are small, admit your smallness, you need to ask yourself often, anywhere, and anytime, who am I? Is the answer provided by Allah SWT? fasyhad bi anna muslimun (witness that I am a Muslim)*" (Rosyad, 2014). This reflection is in line with the commandment to direct the identity of every individual towards becoming true Muslims, namely those who do not hurt each other with their words or actions, even though this command is a special chapter in the Book of Sahih Al-Bukhari (Al-Bukhari, 1987, p. 12).

The significant keywords were consistently pondered upon internally, particularly before taking action, regarding one's identity. Consequently, when wealth and power are within reach, sentiments of love and respect emerge within the economically disadvantaged, neighbors, and the broader community. This serves as a confirmation of the humanist message elucidated by KH. Ahmad Rifa'i Arief, which has been integrated into the fabric of his existence.

Based on these statements, the notion of humanist fiqh appears to have limited popularity, giving the impression of a liberal approach influenced by Western ideals. However, it is in alignment with the religious teachings conveyed by the Prophet Muhammad SAW. This resonance extends throughout various aspects of humanity. For instance, women were confined to roles associated with household chores and domestic responsibilities. In this context, they were afforded equal status and rights to men beyond the boundaries of their homes. This practice aligns with the divine guidance provided by Allah SWT in QS.16:97, which emphasizes the significance of domestic spaces for women.

This idea was implemented in the La Tansa Islamic Boarding School by combining male and female students in one class during formal studies and not separating them from each other. The separation was conducted only at the seating position into two or three parts. In situations where female students held a majority, male students were positioned in the middle. However, when male students were in the majority, female students were distributed either evenly in the middle or divided into two equal groups.

Despite equal rights for all, the inherent nature of gender, represented by the Arabic pronoun "*dhamir*", remains unchanged when knowledge, wealth, and power are acquired. As gender is a divine gift from Allah that cannot be altered, the pursuit to reinterpret religious understanding in the name of humanity faces limitations. For example, the concept of women serving as prayer leaders with congregations consisting of both men and women simultaneously contradicts the principles of humanist fiqh.

The spirit of humanity is placed on the social or profane dimension, namely in the context of the relationship between humans. It does not enter the realm of religion that cannot be interpreted. This is because it is *qath'i* (ie, arguments with historical origins, meaning, or the argumentative power of the meaning itself is certain and convincing) (Al-Syathibi, 2003, p. 14). The discussion of monotheism needs to avoid disputes, hence, the spirit to humanize humans is realized because the elements of the debate were transferred to the more productive spirit and work movement. According to the advice of Sayyid Abdullah bin Alwi Al-Haddad (1337, p. 30), it is advisable to refrain from engaging in arguments with others. This is because arguments have the potential to ignite emotions, foster arrogance within one's heart, and even lead to enmity and hatred among individuals.

The humanist concept is also obligated to break the joints of primary human needs, namely clothing, food, and housing. Furthermore, KH. Ahmad Rifa'i Arief accommodated the surrounding community to take advantage of the existence of La Tansa Islamic Boarding School. Every distribution of zakat assets in the month of Ramadan and slaughtering of sacrificial animals on *Eid al-Adha* did not ignore and leave the

surrounding needy community. This aligns with the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad SAW, who emphasized the importance of empathy and compassion towards others. According to these teachings, it is not appropriate for individuals to experience happiness and pleasure while their neighbors suffer from distress and hunger (Al-Baihaqi, 1994, p. 3).

The humanist fiqh should be built based on knowledge, where the students are required to communicate in a foreign language, recite the Yellow Book, and teach the concept to others. Savran (Billahi & Iskandar, 2017) observed that during the establishment of the first boarding school, Daar el-Qolam Gintung Balaraja, a practice was implemented where students were permitted to recite the Yellow Book to the local Kyai every afternoon. This practice served as a demonstration of KH. Ahmad Rifa'i Arief's inclination towards fostering a cooperative relationship with the surrounding community regarding Islamic practices in his boarding school, while still upholding the tradition of reciting the Yellow Book. The skepticism encountered during that era can be attributed to the perceived "breakthrough" in societal norms, transitioning from traditionalist to modern thinking. Despite introducing modern concepts, the traditional values ingrained in society were not disregarded or abandoned. This pattern is in line with Hasan Hanafi (n.d., p. 107) making past thoughts as *al-turats* (cultural heritage) and has an orientation on three things, namely something inherited (*al-manqul ilaina*), understandable (*al-mafhum lana*), and directs behavior (*al-muwajjib li sulukina*). The thought is more adaptive to the environment and responsive to the cultural structures in the community²

Another movement occurred at the La Tansa Islamic Boarding School in 1996, where local Kyai was invited several times to convey religious messages to the students. However, a Kyai could not speak Indonesian and only speak Sundanese. The implication was that they provided positive values to the surrounding community and to realize the sustainability of the Islamic boarding school within the traditional society.

The students need to complete *'amaliyah al-tadris* (teaching practice) in their final year as a condition for graduation and enhance teaching abilities. Therefore, they were beneficial to the community with their knowledge of humanist thoughts, deeds, and movements. It is implied that the basic standard of the *intisyar al-'ilm* (dissemination of knowledge) has been realized when a student passes exam.

The building of science-based humanist fiqh is the most effective and inexpensive way because having a mosque or surau (mosque in small size) is enough to spread knowledge even for small groups. However, Intisyar al-'ilm aims to develop and educate the community. Fake news (hoaxes) is currently spreading in the community through social and electronic media. Most of the community is taking knowledge only from their electronic devices, which leads to misunderstandings.

Unconsciously, it is common to blame other people in disagreement, easily giving negative stigma and labels on social media as sinful (*bid'ah*) and mild infidels. The younger generation also dominated suicide bombers in Indonesia with a lack of religious knowledge (Nurani & Nurdin, 2018). The growth and education of the people directly have a good impact on the realization of a humanist atmosphere amid society. They naturally feel that when someone else is hurt, it harms them, not only in this world but also in the hereafter (QS.3:30).

Humanist education as instilled by KH. Ahmad Rifa'i Arief is an alternative reference for the national education system, hence, it is instilled in students from an early age. This was performed by accommodating all parties and prioritizing the values of togetherness in plurality based on the principles of *tasamuh* (tolerance), *tawasuth* (moderate), *tawazun* (balanced), and *ta'adul* (justice) (Wahid, 2001). It opposes all forms of violence and arbitrariness. These traits should be mixed with respect, courtesy, honesty, being fair, and helping each other. Furthermore, it reflects the plural nature of the Indonesian nation as a form of character values that need to be revived to humanize others.

Any existing differences between individuals must be channeled towards positive endeavors, such as taking the opportunity to understand one another better. This approach fosters mutual appreciation and respect, allowing for harmonious coexistence. In this context, Islam uses the unity of humanity as the basis for *ummatur wahidah*, which in turn promotes solidarity between groups of humans (Ledang, 2016).

Furthermore, the universality of Islamic values emphasizes Islam as a tolerant religion of differences. Allah as God did not make the human community uniform but diversified it into (QS.16:93 and QS.10:99) various ethnic groups, religions, languages, cultures, social statuses, and others (QS. 49:13).

From the Arkoun approach, humanist fiqh was developed by KH. Ahmad Rifa'i Arief tends to be characterized by philosophy (Fatkhurrohman, 2015), which reconciles literary and religious humanism by presenting all possible responsibilities understood and reasoned autonomously by humans. Briefly, *fiqhiyyah*, KH. Ahmad Rifa'i Arief embodies the pillars of worship in the joints of his life, hence, humanist character and behavior are formed, namely a sincerity *qalbi* (heart) in living social life, *qauli* (words) that give peace to anyone, and *fi'li* (deeds) becomes a solution for the community. This is transferred into the soul, body, and mind of the students in the Islamic Boarding School.

Conclusion

It is concluded that in building humanist fiqh, KH. Ahmad Rifa'i Arief tends towards philosophical humanism by implementing the basic principles in the Islamic Boarding School in the form of the pillars of worship, namely *qalbi*, *qauli* and *fi'li*. Therefore, the polarization starts with self-introduction (*qalbi*) or knowing personal identity in a social context to realize self-benefit amid society (who am I or *man ana?*). This can accommodate and glorify all parties (*fi'li*) regardless of social status, and become a true Muslim that protects words and deeds, to grant equal rights regardless of gender. It can contribute to the best economic benefits for the surrounding community, and thereby developing and educating everyone by the mediation of knowledge (*qauli*) to avoid bad behavior resulting in heinous acts and murder based on religion.

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Conflict of Interest

This article has not a conflict of interest

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