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EPISTEMOLOGICAL CONFLICT OVER MINING CONCESSIONS GRANTED BY THE GOVERNMENT TO THE NU MASS ORGANIZATION: ANALYSIS OF HASAN HANAFI'S THOUGHTS ON AT-TURĀS WA AT-TAJDĪD

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Abstract

A study of mining concession conflicts involving Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) is important to examine the epistemological dynamics between structural policies, religious values, and public interest. This study aims to analyze the epistemological conflicts resulting from the policies of the Executive Board of Nahdlatul Ulama (PBNU) in accepting mining concessions and to review the benefits for the community and internal NU. The focus of the study includes NU's internal conflict response and the epistemological basis of the policy through Hasan Hanafi's *at-turās wa at-tajdīd* framework. The method used is qualitative with a literature study and epistemological-philosophical analysis approach. The results of the study show that the mining concession policy has created an epistemological gap within NU and tends to reduce theological-ethical values to economic pragmatism. This condition confirms the tension between NU as a moral force and an economic-structural actor, and shows the weak integration between Islamic scientific tradition, renewal, and policy praxis.

Keywords: *At-turās wa at-tajdīd*, Epistemological Conflict, Mining Concession, Nahdlatul Ulama

Abstrak

Kajian mengenai konflik konsesi tambang yang melibatkan Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) penting untuk menelaah dinamika epistemologis antara kebijakan struktural, nilai keagamaan, dan kemaslahatan publik. Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis konflik epistemologis akibat kebijakan Pengurus Besar Nahdlatul Ulama (PBNU) dalam menerima konsesi tambang serta meninjau manfaatnya bagi warga dan internal NU. Fokus kajian meliputi respons konflik internal NU dan basis epistemologis kebijakan melalui kerangka *al-Turāth wa al-Tajdīd* Hasan Hanafi. Metode yang digunakan adalah kualitatif dengan pendekatan studi pustaka dan analisis epistemologis-filosofis. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kebijakan konsesi tambang melahirkan kesenjangan epistemologis dalam tubuh NU dan cenderung mereduksi nilai teologis-etis ke dalam pragmatisme ekonomi. Kondisi ini menegaskan ketegangan antara NU sebagai moral force dan aktor ekonomi-struktural, serta menunjukkan lemahnya integrasi antara tradisi keilmuan Islam, pembaruan, dan praksis kebijakan.

Kata kunci: *At-turās wa at-tajdīd*, Konflik Epistemologis, Konsesi Tambang, Nahdlatul Ulama

Introduction

The issue of mining concessions granted by the government to community organizations, particularly Nahdlatul Ulama, has become a serious concern and sparked widespread debate in the public sphere and within the organization. The warning issued by Prof. KH. Sa'id Aqil Siraj, former Chairman of PBNU for the 2014-2021 period, that these mining concessions should be returned to the government highlights the fundamental problems with this policy, particularly in relation to the potential harm and controversy it causes.¹ The PBNU's policy of accepting mining concessions is not only understood as an economic-strategic move, but also raises conflicts of values, authority, and legitimacy among NU members. This situation shows that the issue of mining concessions is not merely a technical matter of natural resource management, but rather a complex problem that touches on theological, ethical, and epistemological dimensions within a large religious organization such as Nahdlatul Ulama.²

Studies on mining concessions in the context of Nahdlatul Ulama can be categorized into several main trends. First, studies that frame mining concessions as a matter of public policy and political economy, emphasizing legal-formal aspects, natural resource governance, and the relationship between the state and religious community organizations. Second, research that reviews internal NU controversies resulting from the acceptance of mining concessions, particularly in relation to organizational dynamics, differences in elite attitudes, and the response of NU members to PBNU policies. Third, there are normative-religious studies that highlight this issue from the perspective of Islamic ethics and public interest, but these are generally still partial and have not been compiled within a systematic epistemological framework.³ Despite these trends, there has not been much research specifically examining mining concession conflicts within NU as an epistemological problem, particularly through the lens of Hasan Hanafi's concept of *at-turās wa at-tajdīd*. Therefore, there is still room for further critical analysis of the relationship between tradition, renewal, and economic pragmatism.

This study aims to enrich the study of mining concession conflicts within Nahdlatul Ulama. This study examines it from the perspective of Hasan Hanafi's thinking, particularly through the framework of *at-turās wa at-tajdīd*. The main focus of this study is to examine the extent to which

¹Suwinto, "KH Said Aqil Siroj Usul PBNU Kembalikan Konsesi Tambang kepada Pemerintah," Sabtu, Desember 2025, <https://islam.nu.or.id/nasional/kh-said-aqil-siroj-usul-pbnu-kembalikan-konsesi-tambang-kepada-pemerintah-vo5mw>.

²Muhammad Iqbal et al., "Meninjau Peran Ormas Keagamaan Dalam Sektor Pertambangan Pasca PP 25/2024," *Wathan: Jurnal Ilmu Sosial Dan Humaniora* 2, no. 2 (June 2, 2025): 248–59, doi:10.71153/wathan.v2i2.261.

³Tammam Sholahudin and Muh. Nur Rochim Maksum, "Analisis Dampak Sosial Dan Ekonomi Dari Pemberian Konsesi Tambang Kepada Organisasi Masyarakat Nahdlatul Ulama," *Arus Jurnal Sosial Dan Humaniora* 4, no. 2 (August 19, 2024): 672–82, doi:10.57250/ajsh.v4i2.516.

PBNU's policy in accepting mining concessions can represent the principles of public interest and theological values that form the ideological basis of NU. This study also seeks to reveal the accompanying epistemological issues. Thus, this study attempts to demonstrate the relevance and strength of Hasan Hanafi's thinking in analyzing the relationship between religious tradition, organizational policy, and the pragmatic demands of modernity. Based on the above explanation, this study is formulated into several main questions. First, what is the epistemological basis of PBNU's policy in accepting mining concessions. Second, to what extent is this policy in line with the concept of *at-turās wa at-tajdīd*. Third, what are the epistemological and moral implications of this mining concession policy on the public interest and the internal affairs of the Nahdlatul Ulama organization.

These findings show that the analysis of mining concession conflicts within NU is not only administrative and economic in nature. PBNU's policy of accepting mining concessions contains fundamental problems. Within the framework of Hasan Hanafi's left-Islamic thinking through the concept of *at-turās wa at-tajdīd*, this policy reflects the tension between NU's theological-normative values and the demands of modernity that focus on economic interests. This tension creates an epistemological gap. Turath values, which should form the ethical and ideological basis of policy, are reduced by instrumental rationality. As a result, the relationship between religious authority, organizational policy, and public interest becomes inconsistent. Policy praxis precedes normative reflection. From the perspective of al-Turath wa al-Tajdid, this condition indicates a failure of the dialectical process between tradition and renewal. Therefore, an epistemological reconstruction is needed so that the management of mining concessions is in line with NU's theological, moral, and social vision. This is also important to remain relevant to current challenges without being trapped in economic pragmatism alone.

The PBNU's policy on accepting mining concessions is a complex issue. This issue not only involves administrative and economic aspects but also raises questions of understanding. This has an impact on the integrity of the organization's theological and moral values. The findings of the study show that this policy tends to be inconsistent with Hasan Hanafi's *at-turās wa at-tajdīd* framework. This policy prioritizes economic pragmatism and neglects the dimensions of public interest and moral responsibility. However, the conflict over mining concessions cannot be understood in a simplistic manner. It is related to the internal dynamics of the organization, power relations, and the surrounding socio-political context. Therefore, an analysis of the understanding of the mining concession policy needs to be viewed as a critical endeavor. This effort aims to reconstruct governance to be more in line with theological values, scientific traditions, and public

welfare orientation. In this way, Nahdlatul Ulama's role as a religious organization committed to social ethics and justice can be strengthened to this day.

Method

This study uses a qualitative approach with a library research method. The data obtained are the results of searches and critical analysis of primary and secondary sources in the form of books, scientific journal articles, policy documents, and official writings and opinions relevant to the issue of Nahdlatul Ulama mining concessions. The analysis was conducted using an epistemological-philosophical approach, specifically utilizing Hasan Hanafi's *at-turās wa at-tajdīd* framework, which examines the knowledge base, policy legitimacy patterns, and epistemological conflict dynamics that arise within NU. Data analysis techniques were carried out descriptively, analytically, and interpretively with the aim of revealing the relationship between structural policies, religious values, and public welfare orientation in the context of NU's role as a moral and economic actor.

Result and Discussion

1. A Brief History of the Nahdlatul Ulama Community Organization

NU was founded on January 31, 1926, in Surabaya by KH Hasyim Asy'ari together with a number of Islamic boarding school scholars, including KH Wahab Chasbullah, KH Bisri Syansuri, and KH Ridwan Abdullah. The establishment of NU was a response to the socio-religious situation of Indonesian Muslims at that time, who were under colonial pressure and facing the tide of modernization and a movement to purify Islam, which led to the rejection of local religious traditions.⁴ NU is not merely a religious organization, but also one of the most important nationalist forces in the struggle for Indonesian independence.⁵ NU accelerated the movement of Muslims to rebel against the Dutch colonizers and supported Indonesian independence by all means. One of the important results of all Islamic rebellions was that the valuable Jihad Resolution fatwa, which was the result of KH Hasyim Asy'ari's struggle, proved that the struggle against the destruction of the homeland and expelling the colonizers was a religious obligation for Muslims.

Epistemologically, NU is deeply rooted in the pesantren tradition. This organization adheres to the Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah doctrine, with its main reference being the Shafi'i school of fiqh, while also recognizing the classical scholarly authority contained in the turats books. Its founder, KH Hasyim Asy'ari, as the first Rais Akbar, laid down a very distinctive theological and

⁴ Amellia Chintya Devitasari, "Jejak Sejarah Tradisi Intelektual Nahdlatul Ulama Pada Masa Awal Pendirian (1920-An)" 05, no. 02 (2025): 822, doi:<https://doi.org/10.30998/je.v5i2.3038>.

⁵ Amin Farih, "NAHDLATUL ULAMA (NU) DAN KONTRIBUSINYA DALAM MEMPERJUANGKAN KEMERDEKAAN DAN MEMPERTAHANKAN NEGARA KESATUAN REPUBLIK INDONESIA (NKRI)," *Walisongo: Jurnal Penelitian Sosial Keagamaan* 24, no. 2 (December 15, 2016): 251, doi:10.21580/ws.24.2.969.

methodological foundation. He formulated the principle of *al-muḥāfaẓah 'ala al-qadīm al-ṣāliḥ wa al-akhdzu bi al-jadīd al-aṣlah*. In essence, this principle is about preserving old traditions that are still good, while being open to new things that are more beneficial. This principle then became an important foundation for how NU responds to various social changes.⁶ Since its inception, NU has not only focused on religious rituals. They have been involved in various social and economic issues, even national affairs. Interestingly, their involvement in the struggle for independence was quite significant, for example through the 1945 Jihad Resolution proposed by KH Hasyim Asy'ari. This seems to show that NU has a role as a moral and socio-political actor, all for the welfare of the people and the nation. For NU, religion and national life cannot be separated. They are intertwined in the effort to achieve social justice. But sometimes I feel that this part is rather complicated to explain fully, because NU itself sees it as a whole. Their involvement in the struggle for independence also strengthened their position, although some may see it differently.⁷

Throughout its history, NU has demonstrated its moderate religious nature, adapting to the context of the times and remaining flexible. It has done so without losing sight of its traditional roots in knowledge. This orientation is clear in NU's acceptance of Pancasila as the basis of its organization. They are also involved in strengthening civil society through Islamic boarding school education, preaching, and economic empowerment of the people. This may be the most prominent aspect, but it is sometimes difficult to explain in detail.⁸ Therefore, NU views public policy, including strategic economic policy, as a space for social *ijtihad* that must be directed towards the principle of *maṣlahah 'āmmah*. Part of this public interest includes policies in the establishment of laws within Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) that are always based on agreements that have been formulated as specific guidelines and used as a foundation for every step taken by the organization. One of the main guidelines is the NU Charter, which serves as a foundation for thinking, behaving, and acting for all NU members. The principles of the NU Charter must be reflected in the behavior of individuals and organizations and serve as a reference in every decision-making process.⁹

Given this historical and epistemological background, NU's involvement in contemporary economic discourse and practices, such as natural resource management, cannot be understood as a

⁶ Moh. Asif Fuadi, "TRADISI PEMIKIRAN MODERASI BERAGAMA NAHDLATUL ULAMA (NU)" 21, no. 01 (2022): 16, doi:10.24014/af.v21i1.17220.

⁷ Heryanto, "Resolusi Jihad NU 1945 : Peran Ulama Dan Santri Dalam Mempertahankan Kemerdekaan NKRI" 05, no. 02 (2017): 758.

⁸ Muhammad Adnan, Satria Aji Imawan, and Hendra Try Ardianto, "Pancasila Sebagai Piagam Madinah Indonesia: Peran Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) Dalam Menjaga Kebinekaan Bangsa," *Pancasila: Jurnal Keindonesiaan* 4, no. 1 (April 30, 2024): 76–90, doi:10.52738/pjk.v4i1.223.

⁹ Yusuf, "Maslahah Al-Mursalah Dalam Kehidupan Berbangsa Dan Bernegara: Perspektif NU Dan Ulama Mazdhab Al- Arba'ah" 16, no. 01 (2020): 157.

deviation from its identity.¹⁰ On the contrary, it is a continuation of NU's long tradition as a socio-religious organization that combines scientific authority, social responsibility, and national commitment. However, there is something that has caused NU to turn away from its initial commitment to accept mining concessions from the government. This is not in line with its initial commitment that from its inception, between 1926 and 1936, Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) was present as a socio-religious organization (*Jam'iyah Diniyah Mahdhab*) which for the first time asserted itself as not being involved in practical political activities in carrying out its activities.¹¹ However, the fact is that NU is now indirectly involved in government projects.

2. The Epistemological Basis of PBNU Policy in Accepting Mining Concessions

The government's policy of granting mining concessions to religious organizations has been deemed detrimental to the life of the state. The granting of these mining concessions has also made religious organizations less critical of state policies, resulting in various conflicts, particularly within the NU organization. Ultimately, the state's efforts to grant mining concessions to religious organizations were realized through Government Regulation No. 25 of 2024 concerning the Implementation of Mineral and Coal Mining Business Activities (Minerba), which was issued in May 2024. Article 83A of the regulation states that religious organizations can manage mining operations.¹²

The acceptance of mining concessions by the Executive Board of Nahdlatul Ulama (PBNU) cannot be understood solely as a pragmatic economic decision, but rather as a product of NU's religious epistemology. NU's epistemology is based on three main pillars, namely *nash* (religious texts), *qawā'id fihiyyah* (Islamic legal principles), and *al-wāqi'* (social reality) as the actual context in which laws and policies are implemented.¹³ These three pillars work dialectically in the NU scholarly tradition, so that organizational decisions are always made through contextual readings of texts and oriented towards the common good. Within this framework, natural resources are understood as *amānah ilāhiyyah*, which are principally public in nature and must be managed for the common good. This view stems from the fiqh doctrine of collective ownership (*al-*

¹⁰ Vidairotul Hamdiah and Muhammad Arif, "Pemikiran Ekonomi Islam Pada Era Kontemporer Muhammad Abdul Manan" 05, no. 03 (2023): 80, <https://jurnalintelektiva.com/index.php/jurnal/article/view/1008>.

¹¹ Muhammad Hafion and A Yusrianto, *DINAMIKA SEJARAH NU DAN TANTANGANNYA KINI*, 01 ed. (Yogyakarta: Tangga Ilmu, 2021).

¹² P Pandu, "Pemberian Konsesi Tambang Untuk Ormas Keagamaan Merusak Kehidupan Bernegara.," *Berita, Kompas*, (Agustus 2024), <https://www.kompas.id/artikel/pemberian-konsesi-tambang-untuk-ormas-keagamaan-dinilai-merusak-kehidupan-bernegara>.

¹³ "Doktrin Kultural Politik NU," *Al-Tsaqafa : Jurnal Ilmiah Peradaban Islam* 18, no. 2 (2021): 181, doi:10.15575/al-tsaqafa.v18i2.%2015075.

milkiyyah al-‘āmmah) and the prohibition of exploitation that causes damage (*ifsād fī al-ard*).¹⁴ Therefore, PBNU's involvement in mine management is positioned as an effort to ensure that the utilization of natural resources is not entirely subject to market logic and capital interests, but rather within the framework of social ethics and moral responsibility.

Normatively, the principle of *taṣarruf al-imām ‘ala al-ra‘iyyah manūṭun bi al-maṣlahah* forms the basis for the legitimacy of this policy. In the context of religious community organizations, PBNU acts as the representative of the collective leadership of the people, which has the moral authority to make strategic policies as long as they are oriented towards the common good. This principle is reinforced by other fiqh rules such as *dar’u al-mafāsīd muqaddam ‘ala jalb al-maṣālih*, which requires that mining be carried out carefully in order to minimize social and ecological impacts.¹⁵ Furthermore, PBNU's mining concession policy also reflects the development of a social fiqh paradigm, which is an approach to Islamic law that does not stop at determining normative halal and haram, but moves towards a structural analysis of economic inequality and access to resources. From this perspective, mining is seen as a space for contesting social justice, so that NU's involvement is intended as an ethical intervention to expand the distribution of economic benefits to Islamic boarding schools, educational institutions, and marginalized community groups that have been marginalized.¹⁶

Thus, PBNU's decision to accept mining concessions is based on a religious epistemology that rejects the reduction of Islam to an instrument of capitalist legitimization. This policy is understood as a strategic instrument to strengthen NU's economic independence (*istiqlāl iqtishādī*), support the sustainability of da'wah and education, and expand NU's role in realizing social justice. However, this epistemological foundation also demands ethical consistency and accountability mechanisms so that this policy remains in line with the principle of *maṣlahah*, which is the main foundation of NU epistemology.¹⁷ Overall, NU's policy foundation uses considerations commonly used by scholars, namely those related to *maqashidu al-shari'ah*. This has been formulated by NU in the context of *maṣlahah al-mursalah*, including the following:

¹⁴ Sam’ani, “FIQIH SEBAGAI COUNTER DISCOURSE SOSIAL POLITIK Dinamika Fiqih Nahdlatul Ulama (NU)” 05, no. 01 (2028), <https://e-journal.uingusdur.ac.id/penelitian>.

¹⁵ Nadirsah Hawari Hawari, “Marketing Politik Partai Islam Progressif Dalam Perspektif Kaidah Dar’u al-Mafasid Muqaddamun ‘Ala Jalb al-Mashalih,” *Jurnal Ilmu Politik Dan Pemerintahan* 10, no. 1 (June 25, 2024): 74, doi:10.37058/jipp.v10i1.10448.

¹⁶ Anwar Habibi Siregar, “PENGELOLAAN BARANG TAMBANG DALAM HUKUM ISLAM DAN HUKUM POSITIF,” *Al-Mazaahib: Jurnal Perbandingan Hukum* 2, no. 2 (December 1, 2014): 391, doi:10.14421/al-mazaahib.v2i2.1375.

¹⁷ Muhammad Iqbal et al., “Meninjau Peran Ormas Keagamaan Dalam Sektor Pertambangan Pasca PP 25/2024,” *Wathan: Jurnal Ilmu Sosial Dan Humaniora* 2, no. 2 (June 2, 2025): 248–59, doi:10.71153/wathan.v2i2.261.

- a. *Maslahah al-'ammah* is something that has value and benefit in it, in the interests of humans, and does not contain any harm whatsoever, whether it involves *jalb al-masalihat* or *daf' al-mafasid*.
- b. *Maslahah al-'ammah* must be in line with the objectives of shari'ah, which are to preserve the five basic rights and guarantees for humans (*al-usul al-khamsah*).
- c. *Maslahah al-'ammah* must truly encompass the public interest, not special interests. Anything that brings benefits and eliminates harm, but only benefits or serves the interests of certain parties, is not included in *maslahah al-'ammah*.
- d. *Maslahah al-'ammah* must not create inequality in sacrificing something, including sacrificing the public interest, for the sake of personal interests.
- e. *Maslahah al-'ammah* must be haqiqi (real) and not wahmiyyah (speculative). Therefore, in determining *maslahah al-'ammah*, a careful and thorough study must be conducted, carried out with mutual agreement.
- f. *Maslahah al-'ammah* must not conflict with the Qur'an and Hadith, Ijma' and Qiyas. Therefore, any policy decided upon on the grounds of public interest but which conflicts with these foundations must be rejected.

From the formulations, it can be concluded that the establishment of law in NU organizations does not derive law directly from its source, but rather is the result of the efforts of fiqh experts to elaborate on issues for which sources are sought.¹⁸

3. The Concept of *al-Turās wa al-Tajdīd* in the Thought of Hassan Hanafi

The concept of *at-turās wa at-tajdīd* is one of the central ideas in the thinking of Hassan Hanafi, a contemporary Egyptian philosopher and Islamic thinker. This idea arose from Hanafi's concern about the backwardness of the Islamic world, which he believed was caused by the way Muslims treated tradition historically and defensively. In Hanafi's framework, the main problem facing Muslims is not a lack of tradition, but rather an inability to actualize it in a critical and emancipatory manner. Hasan Hanafi is one of the Islamic thinkers who can focus attention on his ideas, namely reconstructing classical Islamic sciences such as *ushuluddin* and *fiqh* by adapting them to objective reality. For Hasan Hanafi, according to him, the revival of Islam is a revival of rationalism to revitalize the wealth of previous Islamic heritage.¹⁹

¹⁸ Ibnu Elmi A.S Pelu, "EPISTEMOLOGI PENEMUAN HUKUM NAHDLATUL 'ULAMA (NU)," *JURNAL AL-QARDH* 3, no. 1 (July 5, 2016): 45, doi:10.23971/jaq.v1i1.626.

¹⁹ Muhammad Yuslih Yuslih and Aiyuhan Nurul Ain, "AL-TURĀS WA AL-TAJDĪD: UPAYA PEMBAHARUAN HASSAN HANAFI DAN RELEVANSINYA DALAM KONTEKS KE INDONESIAAN," *Mazalat: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam* 5, no. 2 (June 20, 2024): 1–13, doi:10.64367/m-jpi.v5i2.14.

For Hanafi, *al-turats* is not merely a legacy of religious texts from the past, but rather a historical product of human consciousness formed within a specific social, political, and economic context. Tradition must be understood as the result of a dialectic between revelation and historical reality. Therefore, *al-turās* is not absolutely sacred, except at the level of revelation, but is open to reinterpretation, criticism, and transformation in accordance with the needs of the times.²⁰ This approach places tradition as a source of inspiration, not as a final authority that stifles intellectual creativity. Meanwhile, *at-tajdīd* in Hassan Hanafi's thinking is interpreted as the reconstruction of public consciousness through a reinterpretation of tradition from the perspective of contemporary reality. Renewal is not merely an adjustment of law to the modern context, but an epistemological project that aims to shift the orientation of Islamic scholarship from abstract theocentrism to practical anthropocentrism.²¹ Within this framework, people with experiences of oppression, inequality, and backwardness become the starting point for understanding and implementing Islamic teachings.

Hanafi proposed a revolutionary hermeneutic approach that emphasized reading tradition from “below,” that is, from the perspective of oppressed communities and concrete social realities. *At-tajdīd* demanded that the treasury of Islamic jurisprudence, theology, and philosophy be directed toward liberating humanity, realizing social justice, and building the independence of the ummah.²² Thus, renewal does not stop at the conceptual level, but must lead to structural transformation in the social, political, and economic spheres. Methodologically, Hanafi's concept of *at-turās wa at-tajdīd* rejects two extremes at once: fundamentalism that freezes tradition and Western modernism that is detached from the roots of Islamic culture. Hanafi offers a middle way in the form of internal criticism of tradition, namely dismantling the epistemological structure of the classical heritage to discover its hidden progressive potential. Tradition is treated as a field of intellectual struggle, not as a dogma that must be accepted without reservation.²³

In a broader context, Hassan Hanafi's *at-turās wa at-tajdīd* project aims to establish Islam as an ideology of liberation. Tradition is only valuable insofar as it is able to address the problems of poverty, injustice, and the structural dependence of Muslims on global powers. Thus, Hanafi's thinking is critical, transformative, and in the public interest, while also serving as an important

²⁰ Listiyono Santoso and dkk, *Epistemologi Kiri*, Edisi Revisi (Yogyakarta: Ar-Ruzz Media, 2015), 81.

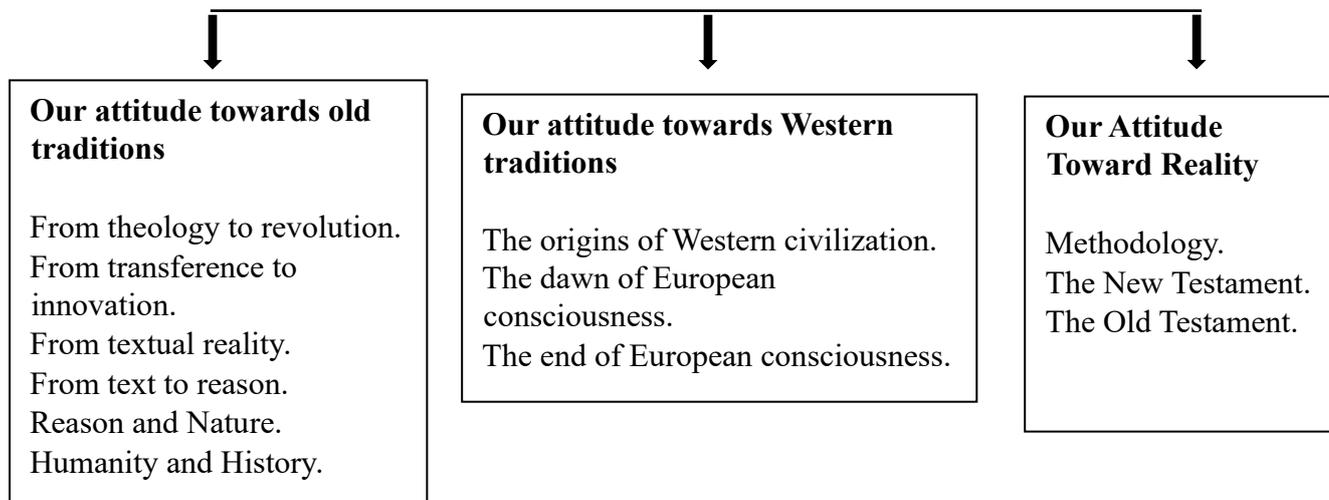
²¹ M. Gufron, “Transformasi Paradigma Teologi Teosentris Menuju Antroposentris: Telaah Atas Pemikiran Hasan Hanafi,” *Millati: Journal of Islamic Studies and Humanities* 3, no. 1 (June 15, 2018): 141, doi:10.18326/mlt.v3i1.141-171.

²² Moh Khoirul Fatih, “Metodologi Hermeneutika Hassan Hanafi,” *Al Furqan: Jurnal Ilmu Al Quran Dan Tafsir* 6, no. 2 (December 20, 2023): 264–79, doi:10.58518/alfurqon.v6i2.1850.

²³ Muh. Syamsuddin, “Orientalisme, Oksidentalisme Dan Filsafat Islam Modern Dan Kontemporer (Suatu Agenda Masalah),” *Refleksi Jurnal Filsafat Dan Pemikiran Islam* 18, no. 1 (January 30, 2018): 47–60, doi:10.14421/ref.v18i1.1856.

theoretical framework for reinterpreting the relationship between religion, power, and economics. The al-Turath wa al-Tajdid project can be seen in the following diagram created by Hanafi:

Scheme of The Concept of at-Turās wa at-Tajdīd



Based on this table, Hasan Hanafi's ideas can be understood as a methodology that follows the steps in a gradual systematization. Through this systematization, Hanafi positions himself to read the Western world critically. However, he still does not “let go” of the reality and origins of the classical traditions that the East itself possesses. This is because, in political explanations, epistemology is an issue for both sides. In Eastern tradition, various epistemological issues themselves are “misinterpreted” and “rationalized.” The East is trapped in the Western understanding of superiority because the East itself has assigned itself an inferior position. The West, which is in the middle, dominates the East as ‘I’ while the other is “he.”²⁴

4. The Compatibility of Mining Concession Policies with the Concept of al-Turats wa al-Tajdid

The PBNU's policy in accepting mining concessions can be interpreted as a practical manifestation of the concept of al-turats wa al-tajdid in the dialectical sense between tradition and renewal. From the perspective of al-turats, NU does not detach itself from the normative framework of classical fiqh, particularly the concept of public ownership (*al-milkiyyah al-'ammah*), the principle of public interest (*maṣlahah 'ammah*), and the prohibition of ecological destruction (*ifrad fī al-ard*).²⁵ This framework serves as an ethical boundary that guides policy so that it does not become trapped in the exploitation of natural resources that harms society and the environment. From the perspective of al-tajdid, this policy demonstrates NU's courage in entering the realm of

²⁴ Santoso and dkk, *Epistemologi Kiri*, 93.

²⁵ Muhammad Hasan Mun'im et al., “TINJAUAN KONSEPTUAL KEPEMILIKAN DALAM EKONOMI ISLAM,” *AMAL: Jurnal Ekonomi Syariah* 6, no. 1 (June 30, 2024): 69–78, doi:10.33477/eksy.v6i1.7135.

economic and political praxis, which has been monopolized by the state and large corporations. In the perspective of al-tajdid as formulated by Hassan Hanafi, renewal is not merely symbolic adaptation, but a transformation of the social role of religious institutions so that they are able to be present in the structures of power and the economy.²⁶ Thus, NU's involvement in mining concessions can be understood as an effort to reconstruct the role of religion from merely a moral controller to a transformative actor that seeks to intervene in the distribution of resources in a more equitable manner.

The compatibility of this policy with the *at-turās wa at-tajdīd* paradigm lies in its ethical orientation and social objectives. Mining concessions are not positioned as the ultimate goal, but rather as a strategic instrument to achieve economic independence (*istiqlal iqtishadi*), strengthen educational institutions and Islamic boarding schools, and support the social work of NU.²⁷ Within the Hanafi framework, this kind of practical orientation is in line with the idea of Islam as an ideology of liberation, in which tradition is only valuable insofar as it is able to address the problems of inequality and structural dependence among the people. However, this harmony is conditional and requires consistency in practice. Within the framework of *at-turās wa at-tajdīd*, renewal that is not controlled by traditional ethics has the potential to become a new form of legitimization for exploitation.²⁸ Therefore, NU's concession policy must continue to be tested through accountability mechanisms, NU member participation, and socio-ecological impact assessments. The tensions that have arisen in the public sphere do not merely indicate a deviation from tradition but rather reflect the dynamics of interpretation regarding the boundaries between emancipatory and pragmatic reforms.

Through the principle of *at-turās wa at-tajdīd*, mining concession policies can be interpreted as a dialectic space between local heritage values and the demands of modern development. Within this framework, mining concessions should not be understood solely as economic instruments based on global capitalist logic, but must be mediated by critical awareness of the social, ecological, and cultural realities of local communities.²⁹ The concept of *at-Turāth* requires that policies be rooted in traditional wisdom, social justice values, and ethical stewardship of nature that have long existed in society, while *at-Tajdīd* directs policy reform to be responsive to contemporary challenges such as energy needs, technology, and national welfare.

²⁶ Choirul Huda, "EKONOMI ISLAM DAN KAPITALISME (Merunut Benih Kapitalisme Dalam Ekonomi Islam)," *Economica: Jurnal Ekonomi Islam* 7, no. 1 (May 31, 2016): 27–49, doi:10.21580/economica.2016.7.1.1031.

²⁷ Yuslih and Ain, "AL-TURĀS WA AL-TAJDĪD.," 10.

²⁸ Elok Rufaiqoh et al., "Hassan Hanafi's Reformation in The Islamic World," *JURNAL ISLAM NUSANTARA* 7, no. 2 (December 30, 2023): 158, doi:10.33852/jurnalnu.v7i2.448.

²⁹ Geby Bernike, Devi Ervina Nusyamsiah, and Shannia Angelia Rahardjo, "Tinjauan Yuridis Pemberian Izin Kepada Ormas Keagamaan Dalam Usaha Pertambangan Mineral Dan Batubara Berdasarkan Peraturan Pemerintah Nomor 25 Tahun 2024," *Padjadjaran Law Review* 12, no. 2 (December 7, 2024): 157–70, doi:10.56895/plr.v12i2.1813.

When mining concession policies merely replicate Western development models without critical analysis, they have the potential to reproduce structural dependency and reinforce exploitative logic that disregards local identity and sovereignty. When mining concession policies merely replicate Western development models without critical analysis, they have the potential to reproduce structural dependency and reinforce exploitative logic that disregards local identity and sovereignty.³⁰ Therefore, aligning mining concession policies with the concept of *at-turās wa al-tajdīd* is a strategic effort to rehabilitate the development perspective in the Eastern world especially in the context of Islam. So that modernization no longer marginalizes its own values but rather becomes a means of renewal that is fair, sustainable, and rooted in local civilizational traditions. Thus, PBNU's policy in accepting mining concessions can be interpreted as an epistemological and practical experiment in operationalizing *al-turās wa al-tajdīd*. Its success is not only measured by economic achievements, but also by the extent to which the policy can maintain a social justice orientation, preserve the moral integrity of the organization, and strengthen the position of religion as a transformative force in the contemporary economic-political structure.³¹

5. Epistemological and Moral Implications for Public Welfare and Internal Welfare of NU

Epistemologically, PBNU's policy in accepting mining concessions marks a significant expansion of NU's social fiqh working space from the realm of normative discourse to the realm of structural policy and strategic resource management. NU no longer positions itself solely as a moral force that provides legitimacy or criticism from the outside, but also as an economic actor directly involved in the mechanisms of economic production and distribution.³² This change in position requires strengthening the epistemic framework so that economic decisions remain rooted in the principles of *maqāṣid al-syarī'ah*, particularly the protection of life, property, the environment, and human dignity. These epistemological implications also have methodological consequences, namely increased demands for scientific and policy accountability. Mining management cannot be legitimized by normative arguments alone, but must be accompanied by multidisciplinary studies covering ecological, social, and economic aspects as part of religious responsibility.³³ In this context, failure to read the structural impact of mining activities has the potential to reduce social

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³¹ A Ardiansyah, "Pembaharuan Islam Perspektif Hassan Hanafi Dan Nurcholish Madjid" (Disertasi, UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, 2022).

³² Sholahudin and Maksum, "Analisis Dampak Sosial Dan Ekonomi Dari Pemberian Konsesi Tambang Kepada Organisasi Masyarakat Nahdlatul Ulama," hal.676-678.

³³ Muhammad Rizky Hk, "Dari Teologi Ke Ekologi: Kontroversi Konsesi Tambang Nahdlatul Ulama Dari Kacamata Teologi Lingkungan Sayyed Hossein Nasr," *Sophist : Jurnal Sosial Politik Kajian Islam Dan Tafsir*, August 23, 2024, <https://sophist.or.id/index.php/js/article/view/116>.

fiqh to a pragmatic justification, rather than an instrument of liberation as idealized in the *at-turās wa at-tajdīd* paradigm.

Morally speaking, this policy has a dual dialectical potential. On the one hand, NU's involvement in mining concessions opens up opportunities for the realization of public welfare through the redistribution of resources, the strengthening of the pesantren economy, and the sustainability of education and social service programs. This policy can serve as a corrective to the dominance of large corporations that have monopolized the management of natural resources without adequate social sensitivity. However, on the other hand, this policy also carries significant moral risks. Direct involvement in the extractive sector opens up opportunities for economic co-optation, internal conflicts of interest, and a weakening of NU's criticality towards exploitative practices.³⁴ If not managed transparently, participatively, and accountably, this policy has the potential to erode NU's moral authority as the guardian of public ethics and defender of marginalized groups. For NU internally, the mining concession policy is a concrete test of the consistency of the *at-turās wa at-tajdīd* paradigm. NU's economic reforms must remain within the corridor of traditional ethics and social justice, not merely an adaptation to market logic. This requires internal control mechanisms, including the involvement of NU members, scholars, and *bahtsul masā'il* institutions in monitoring the direction and impact of these policies.³⁵

Thus, the success or failure of NU's mining concession policy cannot be measured solely by the organization's profits or financial independence. The main measure lies in the extent to which the policy is able to maintain epistemological integrity, uphold moral authority, and realize the welfare of the people and social justice in a sustainable manner. Within this framework, the mining concession policy becomes an important arena for NU to prove that the Islamic scholarly tradition remains relevant and transformative in facing contemporary economic and political challenges.

In addition to internal implications, NU's mining concession policy also affects public epistemology, namely how the public understands the position of religion in the realm of state policy. NU's direct involvement in the mining sector has the potential to shift public perceptions of religious knowledge: from a source of normative criticism to part of the economic policy apparatus. This shift requires NU to construct an epistemic narrative that can transparently explain the scientific basis, ethics, and social objectives of the policy. Without adequate epistemological articulation, this policy risks causing a crisis of knowledge legitimacy, in which religious decisions are perceived as the result of political compromise rather than the fruit of responsible collective

³⁴ Burhanudin Al-Butary, Andri Soemitra, and Nawawi Zuhri, "PERAN EKONOMI ORMAS ISLAM DI INDONESIA, SEBUAH STUDI LITERATUR," *El-Amwal: Jurnal Ekonomi Dan Keuangan Syariah* 05, no. 01 (2022): 33–34.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 25.

ijtihad.³⁶ From the perspective of *at-turās wa at-tajdīd*, this problem of legitimacy arises when *tajdīd* is not accompanied by a reconstruction of the consciousness of the people. Hasan Hanafi emphasizes that renewal must move from the consciousness of the elite to a broader social consciousness.³⁷ Therefore, NU's involvement in mining concessions requires a continuous public education process, so that the people are not merely recipients of policy, but also critical subjects who understand the ethical rationality behind it.

From the perspective of public interest, mining concession policies require an understanding of public interest as a dynamic and contextual category, rather than a static and short-term one. The public interest is not only measured by direct economic benefits, but also by the long-term impact on environmental sustainability, social cohesion, and power relations between the center and the regions. If the public interest is reduced to increasing organizational revenue, then there is a narrowing of the meaning of *maqāshid al-syarī'ah* that contradicts the spirit of social justice.³⁸ Within this epistemological framework, NU is required to develop more comprehensive indicators of *maslahat*, including ethical and ecological measures. This effort is also a form of methodological *tajdīd*, in which social fiqh not only responds to reality, but also constructs new assessment instruments that are relevant to the complexity of modern society.

Conclusion

As discussed, the epistemological conflict that arose in the government's mining concession to NU reflects the fundamental tension between the pragmatic interests of the state and the ethical-religious horizon that lives in the scientific tradition of NU. In this context, Hasan Hanafi's framework of *at-turās wa at-tajdīd* offers an important contribution to critically and contextually analyzing this relationship. This approach emphasizes that tradition (*at-turās*) should not be positioned as a frozen legacy, but rather as a source of values that must be progressively reinterpreted in order to respond to contemporary social, economic, and ecological challenges.

Furthermore, this conflict does not only revolve around economic or legal-formal policy aspects, but also touches on the epistemology of religious knowledge, namely how scientific authority, Islamic social ethics, and state interests negotiate with each other in the public sphere. This is where *at-tajdīd* functions as a critical effort to transform religious traditions so that they

³⁶ Didi Suheri, "Politik Patronase Dalam Pemberian Izin Tambang Kepada Ormas Nahdlatul Ulama," *Arus Jurnal Sosial Dan Humaniora* 5, no. 2 (August 4, 2025): 1822–28, doi:10.57250/ajsh.v5i2.1393.

³⁷ Yuslih and Ain, "AL-TURĀS WA AL-TAJDĪD," 3-5.

³⁸ Ahmad Lutfi Rijalul Fikri, "Maqashid Sharia Study on Minerals and Coal Law in Indonesia," *Hayula: Indonesian Journal of Multidisciplinary Islamic Studies* 8, no. 1 (January 27, 2024): 43–56, doi:10.21009/hayula.008.01.03.

remain aligned with the interests of the people, social justice, and environmental sustainability, without being uprooted from their historical and theological roots.

However, this epistemological conflict cannot be understood in a simplistic or singular manner. It is formed through complex interactions between state power structures, the internal dynamics of NU mass organizations, the logic of extractive capitalism, and the contemporary Indonesian socio-political context. Therefore, Hasan Hanafi's thinking needs to be positioned as one of the important analytical tools, not the only one, in reading the relationship between Islam, the state, and the political economy of natural resources. Thus, this study emphasizes that the integration of religious tradition and critical renewal remains an urgent agenda in order to maintain Islam's commitment to the values of justice, humanity, and sustainability amid the ever-changing dynamics of public policy.

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