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The Inferiority Complex of the Muslim Ummah: A Critique of the Islamization of Knowledge in the Era of Globalization

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Abstract

Objective: The dominance of Western civilization in various aspects of life, including politics, economics, and science, has created conditions in which Muslims experience an inferiority complex in the face of modern science. To overcome this, Muslim intellectuals initiated the concept of the Islamization of science as an effort to build a scientific system based on Islamic values. However, this idea has been criticized by several Muslim thinkers who consider that the Islamization of science approach tends to be ideological rather than methodological, and has the potential to create a dichotomy between Islam and global science. **Theoretical Framework:** The theoretical framework used in this study combines social psychology theories about inferiority complexes and Islamic educational theories that emphasize the importance of building knowledge through Islamic teachings without losing relevance in the global world. **Literature Review:** The literature reviewed in this study includes various works that discuss the Islamization of knowledge, critiques of the dominance of Western culture, and issues related to globalization and its impact on Muslim identity. **Methods:** This study uses a qualitative approach with a discourse analysis method to critically examine the various perspectives that have developed regarding the Islamization of science. The data sources used come from literature studies, including the works of Muslim thinkers such as Syed Naquib al-Attas and Ismail Raji' al-Faruqi, as well as criticism from academics who highlight the limitations of this approach. **Results:** The results of the study show that although the Islamization of science attempts to restore the intellectual superiority of Muslims, this approach faces serious challenges, such as the lack of a transparent methodology, limited implementation in higher education, and the possibility of academic isolation from the global scientific community. **Implications:** Therefore, this study offers an alternative, more integrative approach, namely the reconstruction of the Islamic scientific paradigm that not only maintains Islamic values but can contribute to universal scientific discourse without getting caught up in the Islam vs West dichotomy. **Novelty:** This study presents a novel critique of the Islamization of knowledge by addressing the inferiority complex among Muslims in the face of Western scientific dominance. Unlike prior ideological approaches, it proposes a methodological reconstruction of the Islamic scientific paradigm that integrates Islamic values with global discourse, avoiding the Islam-versus-West dichotomy.

Keywords: inferiority complex, islamization of science, globalization, western, domination.

INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, world civilization has experienced rapid development, especially in the fields of science and technology. This progress is dominated by Western countries which are the centres of innovation, research, and scientific development [1][2]. This reality creates a significant gap between the Islamic world and the West, especially in terms of epistemology and scientific contribution. Former Iranian President Hashemi Rafsanjani firmly stated that the West's contribution to modern science and technology reached 97%, while the Islamic world only contributed 1%, with the remaining 2% coming from outside [3][4]. This statement reflects the increasingly deep-rooted backwardness of the Islamic world in various sectors of life, including politics, economics, diplomacy, and science.

Along with globalization and modernization, Western civilization has become the main reference in various aspects of life. The concept of democracy in politics, capitalism in economics, and global institutions such as the United Nations (UN), the World Bank, and the World Trade Organization (WTO) have become instruments of Western domination over the world. In fact, in the realm of culture and aesthetics, the beauty standards carried by events such as Miss Universe have become global benchmarks followed by many countries, including the Islamic world [5] [6]. This phenomenon indicates the strong penetration of the West in defining global standards, including in science.

Western hegemony in the field of science has given rise to the phenomenon of intellectual inferiority among Muslims [7][8]. From the colonial era to modernity, many Muslim communities have experienced an "inferiority complex" when dealing with Western civilization. This is due to the dominance of Western epistemology which systematically constructs scientific paradigms that are considered superior and more objective than the Islamic intellectual tradition. As a result, many Muslim academics tend to adopt Western scientific methods and approaches without considering the integration of Islamic values, thus causing the marginalization of scientific concepts originating from the Islamic tradition itself.

In response to this situation, Muslim thinkers such as Syed Naquib al-Attas and Ismail Raji' al-Faruqi initiated the concept of Islamization of science. Islamization of science aims to reconstruct Muslim intellectual consciousness by returning Islamic values to the epistemological framework of science. Al-Attas emphasized the importance of purifying science from elements that contradict Islamic teachings [9]. Al-Faruqi proposed the integration of modern sciences with Islamic values so that Muslims could develop science without losing their Islamic identity [10]. Thus, the Islamization of science is not merely a rejection of Western science, but rather an effort to develop a more holistic scientific paradigm that is by the Islamic worldview.

The study of the Islamization of science has become an important debate among Muslim scholars as an effort to reconstruct the scientific paradigm that is in line with Islamic values. Syed Naquib al-Attas highlighted that Western epistemology is built on the foundation of doubt, which makes reason the only tool to achieve truth. According to him, this approach is contrary to the concept of Islamic science which believes that revelation is the source of absolute truth, in addition to reason and experience as complementary instruments in gaining knowledge. Therefore, al-Attas emphasized the need to decontaminate science from elements that are contrary to Islamic teachings so that the knowledge produced can lead to a correct understanding of the reality and nature of life [9][11][12].

Meanwhile, Ismail Raji' al-Faruqi proposed the concept of Islamization of knowledge as a method to integrate modern science with Islamic values. He argued that the dominance of Western epistemology had led to a dichotomy between religious and general knowledge among Muslims, which ultimately weakened the role of Muslims in the development of science [13][14]. Al-Faruqi proposed that modern sciences should not be rejected outright, but rather reconstructed by aligning them with Islamic values. The Islamization of science in al-Faruqi's view involves the reinterpretation and reorientation of scientific disciplines to maintain academic objectivity but not lose the roots of Islamic spirituality [10].

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In practice, the idea of Islamization of science demands fundamental changes in the education and research system in the Islamic world. The implementation of this concept can be done through a curriculum that integrates modern science with an Islamic perspective, the development of research methodologies based on Islamic values, and the establishment of educational institutions oriented to the Islamic scientific paradigm. Thus, the Islamization of science is not only an academic effort but also a long-term strategy for building a superior and independent Islamic civilization in the fields of science and technology.

Some thinkers and researchers also criticized the idea of Islamization of science because science is universal and does not need to be separated based on religion or a particular ideology. Fazlur Rahman, in his various writings, considers that the separation between Islamic science and Western science is unproductive because science is based on empirical and rational experience that can be used by all humans without needing to be boxed into religious categories [15]. In line with that, Hoodbhoy in his book Islam and Science: Religious Orthodoxy and the Battle for Rationality criticizes the Islamization of science as an effort that can hinder the development of science in the Muslim world, because according to him, science must remain objective and open to all perspectives without having to be adjusted to the teachings of a particular religion [16].

The debate between supporters and opponents of the Islamization of science shows the challenges in developing a scientific paradigm that is in line with Islamic values without ignoring universally applicable scientific methodology. The research conducted by Osman Bakar tries to bridge this difference by offering an integrative approach, where the Islamization of science does not mean rejecting modern science, but rather restructuring the epistemology of science to reflect the unity between revelation and reason [17][18]. Thus, the development of science in the Islamic world can remain progressive without having to lose its intellectual identity based on Islamic values.

However, the idea of the Islamization of science is not free from criticism. Some Muslim thinkers question the effectiveness and relevance of this concept in the context of contemporary science. For example, some academics argue that efforts to Islamize science can create an unproductive dichotomy between secular science and Islamic science. They argue that science is universal and does not need to be Islamized because the substance of science itself is neutral. Other critics state that efforts to Islamize science are often more normative without a clear methodology in its application. In addition, previous research also shows that in practice, the Islamization of science still faces major challenges in implementation. Many higher education institutions in Muslim countries do not yet have a curriculum that is truly based on the Islamization of science and still adopt the Western education system as the main model.

This study offers novelty in the analysis of the Islamization of science by reviewing the criticisms that have developed from methodological, epistemological, and applied perspectives. Unlike previous studies that tend to only discuss the urgency and objectives of the Islamization of science, this study focuses on a critical evaluation of the implementation of the Islamization of science in the academic context and education policy. With this debate, it is important to critically examine the Islamization of science, both in terms of concept, objectives, and implementation. This study is not only relevant in the academic context but also in the formulation of higher education policies in Muslim countries that seek to develop an Islamic-based education system.

This study will systematically discuss the criticisms raised against the Islamization of science, by reviewing various academic perspectives that have developed in this discourse. The main objective of this study is to explore the extent to which the Islamization of science can be a solution to the dominance of Western epistemology, as well as to identify the challenges and consequences of implementing this idea in the context of education and the development of science in the Islamic world.

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LITERATURE REVIEW

Inferiority Complex in the Context of the Muslim Community

The inferiority complex within the Muslim community is a psychosocial phenomenon that has developed as a result of a long historical experience, particularly since colonialism and the dominance of Western civilization in various aspects of life. According to Al-Attas, colonialism not only impacted political and economic aspects but also disrupted the intellectual and spiritual structure of Muslims [9]. This sense of inferiority was further reinforced by the lag in mastering modern scientific knowledge and the inability of most Muslim-majority countries to catch up with technological advancements. Consequently, many Muslim scholars face a dilemma between preserving Islamic values and adopting a secular-based scientific paradigm. In this context, the inferiority complex is not only an individual issue but also affects educational institutions, state policies, and the collective intellectual orientation of the Muslim community [19].

Islamization of Knowledge: Concept and Controversy

As a response to the epistemological challenges faced by Muslims, the concept of Islamization of knowledge emerged as an intellectual movement aimed at integrating revelation and reason within scientific disciplines. Ismail Raji al-Faruqi defined the Islamization of knowledge as an effort to restore the dominance of Islamic values in the realm of science by aligning modern scientific methodologies with Islamic principles [10]. Meanwhile, Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas emphasized the importance of constructing knowledge with *adab* a knowledge framework that is not solely based on empiricism and rationalism but also acknowledges the role of revelation in shaping truth. However, this idea of Islamization of knowledge has received criticism from various circles, both within and outside the Muslim community [13][14]. Ziauddin Sardar regarded the Islamization of knowledge as a defensive response that is more focused on seeking legitimacy rather than generating real innovation in scientific thought. Additionally, this approach is often considered to lack a solid methodology, making it difficult to implement within the global academic landscape.

Globalization and the Challenges Facing the Muslim Community

In the era of globalization, the challenges faced by Muslims in the realm of scientific knowledge have become increasingly complex. Globalization has facilitated the rapid flow of information and established scientific standards that are heavily influenced by Western paradigms [20]. This situation has led many Muslims to experience pressure to adapt to global standards without losing their Islamic identity. Some scholars view globalization as an opportunity to expand knowledge and build broader academic networks, while others see it as a threat to the authenticity of Islamic values. The disparity in the mastery of scientific knowledge and technology has further exacerbated this condition, pushing Muslims to the periphery of global intellectual discourse. Several studies indicate that the primary challenge in confronting globalization is not merely about acquiring technological advancements but also about how Muslims can develop a more competitive and globally recognized paradigm of knowledge [21].

The Impact of Inferiority Complex on the Islamization of Knowledge

The inferiority complex experienced by the Muslim community directly influences how they develop scientific knowledge, particularly within the Islamization of knowledge movement. This sense of inferiority often leads Muslims to fall into two extremes: either entirely rejecting Western epistemology or adopting it uncritically [22]. In many cases, the effort to Islamize knowledge is more reactive than progressive, resulting in a lack of significant innovation in the academic world. Criticism of the Islamization of knowledge highlights that this approach often fails to provide concrete solutions to the intellectual challenges faced by Muslims, especially in the fields of science and technology. Consequently, rather than empowering the Muslim intellectual tradition, the Islamization of the knowledge movement risks reinforcing the inferiority complex by failing to gain recognition within the global academic community [23].

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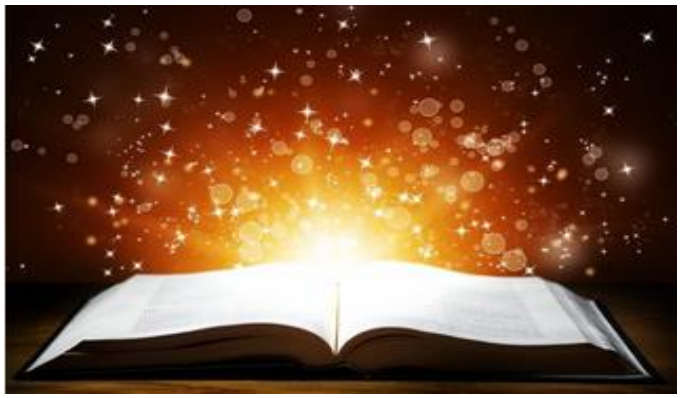

Figure 1. Enlightenment from the Islamization of Knowledge

METHODOLOGY

This study uses a qualitative approach with a discourse analysis method to critically examine the phenomenon of the inferiority complex of Muslims in science and criticism of the concept of the Islamization of science. The qualitative approach was chosen because this study focuses on the exploration of concepts, thoughts, and discourse constructions that develop in academic discourse [24][25]. According to Creswell, qualitative research aims to understand social and cultural phenomena in depth through the interpretation of data obtained from various sources [26]. In this case, this research examines academic texts from Muslim thinkers such as Syed Naquib al-Attas and Ismail Raji' al-Faruqi, as well as criticisms put forward by other academics towards the Islamization of science.

The discourse analysis method is used to examine how the concept of Islamization of science is constructed and debated in scientific studies. Fairclough explains that discourse analysis allows researchers to understand how ideology and power play a role in the formation of a particular concept or discourse. Therefore, this study not only explores the arguments that support the Islamization of science but also explores criticisms that highlight the limitations of this approach, including the epistemological and methodological challenges faced. The main data sources come from literature studies that include books, scientific journals, and other academic documents relevant to this topic [27]. With this method, this study aims to offer a more comprehensive perspective on the relevance and challenges of the Islamization of science in the era of globalization.

Table 1. Research Method Used in This Study

Aspect	Description
Type of Research	Qualitative
Approach	Discourse Analysis
Research Objective	To critically examine the phenomenon of the inferiority complex among Muslims in science and the critiques of the concept of the Islamization of knowledge
Rationale for Approach	To explore concepts, thoughts, and discourse constructions that develop within academic discourse
Key Figures Analyzed	Syed Naquib al-Attas and Ismail Raji al-Faruqi
Main Data Sources	Literature study (books, scientific journals, academic documents)
Method of Analysis	Discourse analysis to understand how the concept of Islamization of science is constructed and debated in scientific studies
Theoretical Framework	Fairclough's discourse analysis theory (examining the role of ideology and power in shaping discourse)

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Focus of Analysis	Supporting arguments and criticisms of the Islamization of science, including epistemological and methodological challenges
Expected Outcome	To offer a comprehensive perspective on the relevance and challenges of the Islamization of science in the era of globalization

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Islam, Science, and Epistemological Invasion

The relationship between Islam and science has been a long discourse that reflects the intellectual dynamics of Muslims in responding to the development of modern science. Since the golden age of Islam, science has developed rapidly with the integration of revelation, reason, and empirical experience. However, along with colonialism and Western domination, there was a paradigm shift that resulted in the emergence of a Western epistemological invasion of the Islamic scientific system. This epistemological invasion refers to the process in which Western scientific concepts and methods began to dominate, replacing Islamic epistemology based on revelation. As a result, Muslims experienced an intellectual crisis characterized by dependence on the Western scientific paradigm and the occurrence of a dichotomy between religious science and general science.

One of the main impacts of the invasion of Western epistemology is the emergence of the secularization of science that separates the spiritual and rational aspects. In this context, science that developed in the Islamic world began to lose its transcendental orientation, because it tended to adopt the values of positivism and empiricism that underlie Western science. Muslim thinkers such as Syed Naquib al-Attas and Ismail Raji' al-Faruqi saw this phenomenon as a threat to the authority of Islamic epistemology. They argued that science that is separated from Islamic values will lose its meaning and true direction [13][14][10]. Therefore, the idea of Islamization of science was born as an effort to reconstruct the Islamic scientific system by reinserting elements of Islamic revelation and ethics into the scientific paradigm.

In academic studies, the concept of Islamization of science has received various responses. Some academics support this idea as a form of intellectual decolonization that aims to restore the independence of science in the Islamic world. However, some criticize that efforts to Islamize science risk creating limitations in the development of science, because they are considered to emphasize normative aspects rather than scientific approaches based on objectivity. Therefore, the challenge ahead for Muslims is how to rebuild a scientific tradition that not only maintains Islamic values but is also able to compete with global scientific developments.

Islam places great emphasis on knowledge, as emphasized in the Qur'an and the hadith of the Prophet. The Prophet Muhammad encouraged Muslims to master various skills, including horse riding, swimming, and archery, which show the importance of knowledge in practical aspects of life. In addition, many verses of the Qur'an emphasize the urgency of knowledge, such as in Surah Al-Mujadilah verse 11 which states that Allah will exalt the status of those who know. However, from an Islamic perspective, knowledge is not only instrumental but also has a theological dimension that connects it to faith or monotheism. Osman Bakar emphasized that all knowledge ultimately comes from God the All-Knowing so that knowledge cannot be separated from spiritual and moral aspects. This statement is relevant in the context of the debate about the Islamization of knowledge and the invasion of Western epistemology which tends to separate knowledge from divine values.

In the face of the dominance of Western epistemology, Muslim thinkers such as Syed Naquib al-Attas and Ismail Raji' al-Faruqi attempted to return science to its roots of monotheism, namely by making revelation the highest source of truth. They argued that science that is detached from Islamic values will lose its direction and tend to be materialistic and secular. Therefore, the idea of the Islamization of science emerged as a strategy to integrate revelation with modern scientific methods, so that science is not only oriented towards

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rationality and empiricism but also has ethical and spiritual dimensions. This perspective contradicts the views of scientists such as Pervez Hoodbhoy, who argues that science must remain neutral and free from religious influence. According to him, the Islamization of science can limit the development of science because it prioritizes normative aspects rather than scientific objectivity [28].

This debate shows that the invasion of Western epistemology has posed a challenge for the Islamic world in developing science that maintains its spiritual roots. Osman Bakar offers an integrative approach, where science does not have to be compartmentalized between Islam and the West, but can be restructured by considering the unity of revelation, reason, and empirical reality. Thus, efforts to Islamize science do not mean rejecting modern science, but reconstructing the scientific paradigm so that it remains relevant to Islamic values. This is in line with Islamic teachings which emphasize that science is part of faith, and the search for knowledge must always be directed towards getting closer to Allah and bringing benefits to human life [18].

The concept of monotheistic science places God as the main source of all knowledge and truth. In Islam, knowledge is not only instrumental or merely a tool to understand the world, but is also part of worship that connects humans with God. Muslim philosophers such as Al-Farabi, Ibn Sina, and Al-Ghazali emphasized that human reason, in seeking the truth, must always refer to revelation as the highest source of knowledge. This is in line with the concept of divine reason, where true knowledge is not only obtained through rationality and empiricism alone but also intuition and spiritual enlightenment [29]. With this paradigm, science is not just a means to understand physical reality but also has ethical and moral dimensions that shape humans into individuals with noble character and are responsible for their knowledge, both in this world and in the hereafter.

However, in the course of history, the concept of monotheistic science experienced major challenges due to encounters and intellectual dialogues with Greek, Islamic, and then modern Western civilizations. The science that developed in the Islamic world during the golden age maintained its monotheistic roots even though it was influenced by Greek philosophy. However, when Western epistemology began to dominate during the Enlightenment era, the scientific paradigm began to experience secularization that sidelined the spiritual dimension. The West developed an epistemology based on doubt as a method of seeking truth, as proposed by René Descartes in the principle of cogito ergo sum (I think, therefore I am)[30]. This principle marks a major shift in the way humans understand science, from an approach that relies on revelation and transcendental beliefs to an approach that relies solely on rationality and empiricism. As a result, science has become more reductionist, limited to material and mechanistic aspects, and detached from the spiritual values that were previously an integral part of Islamic science.

This change has major consequences for the Islamic world, where the paradigm of science that was previously holistic and monotheistic began to be fragmented due to the dominance of Western epistemology. Many modern Muslim scientists have adopted a more secular approach to research and education, so that science has become something value-free, without any attachment to moral and spiritual aspects. Ismail Raji' al-Faruqi and Syed Naquib al-Attas see this phenomenon as a form of epistemological invasion that has uprooted the meaning of science from its monotheistic roots. They argue that the Islamization of science must be carried out to return science to its true position, namely as a means to understand reality while still recognizing God as the source of all truth [13][14][10]. In other words, the effort to Islamize science is not to reject modern science, but to reconstruct epistemology that reflects the integration of revelation, reason, and empirical reality. This is a challenge for today's Muslim intellectuals in building a scientific tradition that is not only superior in terms of technology and science but also maintains a strong moral and spiritual awareness.

In the early history of Islamic civilization, science developed harmoniously without the need for any distinction between Islamic and non-Islamic science. Muslim scientists such as Al-

Kindi, Al-Farabi, Ibn Sina, and Ibn Rushd adopted and developed Greek philosophy and Persian and Indian science, but maintained the epistemological roots of Islam based on monotheism. At that time, science that developed in the Islamic world was considered a universal science, which was inseparable from spiritual and moral values. According to Osman Bakar, in the golden era of Islam, there was no need to Islamize science because there were no challenges from other civilizations that offered different epistemologies. The science that developed in the Islamic world inherently reflected Islamic values, because it came from a scientific tradition rooted in revelation and reason as the main instruments for seeking truth [17][18].

However, with the weakening of Islamic civilization and the dominance of Western epistemology since the Enlightenment era, there was an awareness among Muslim intellectuals that science had undergone a fundamental change. Western civilization developed science with a different paradigm, namely by emphasizing rationality, empiricism, and the separation of science from religion. The concept of science in the Western tradition is based on scepticism and secularization, which places science as something that is value-free and not bound by certain moral or spiritual principles. Unlike the Islamic tradition which considers science as a means to know God and achieve moral perfection, Western epistemology emphasizes more on mastery of nature and material exploration. As a result, Muslims began to face major challenges in the world of science, where many modern Muslim thinkers tend to adopt the Western paradigm without considering the spiritual and ethical aspects that are the foundation of science in Islam.

It is in this context that the idea of the Islamization of knowledge began to receive serious attention from contemporary Muslim thinkers such as Syed Naquib al-Attas and Ismail Raji' al-Faruqi. They saw that science developed based on Western epistemology had lost its transcendental dimension and had become merely a tool for exploring the physical world. Therefore, they propose a scientific reconstruction based on Islamic values so that Muslims not only become consumers of modern science but are also able to develop science that remains based on the principle of monotheism [13][14][10]. Islamization of science does not mean rejecting modern science but aims to filter and integrate science to suit the Islamic worldview. With this approach, it is hoped that Muslims can rebuild a scientific tradition that is not only superior in terms of rationality and technology but also maintains the spiritual and moral roots that have been the hallmark of Islamic civilization since its inception.

Islamization as the Answer

The Islamization of science emerged as a response to the dominance of Western epistemology which was considered to reduce spiritual values in science. Muslim thinkers such as Syed Naquib al-Attas, Ismail Raji' al-Faruqi, Osman Bakar, and Sayyid Hossein Nasr saw that science developed with a Western foothold not only had an impact on the way humans think but also on the way they view reality as a whole. Syed Naquib al-Attas emphasized that science in the Western tradition was built on the legacy of Greek and Roman philosophy which based truth on speculation and skepticism (doubt). As a result, the science produced by Western civilization tends to be relative and continues to be revised by the development of the times [9][11]. In contrast to Islam which places revelation as the main source of truth, Western epistemology relies solely on rationality and empiricism, which in the long term causes the secularization of science and the separation between science and moral and spiritual values.

In al-Attas' view, the impact of Western epistemology is not only limited to the realm of science but has also influenced the way Muslims understand the world and themselves. Western civilization, with its secular and materialistic worldview concept, has created a paradigm of science that separates facts and values, between the material and spiritual worlds. As a result, many modern Muslim scientists have unknowingly adopted this paradigm without questioning its implications for Islamic values. The penetration of Western science has even penetrated various aspects of life, from natural science, and social science, to the way humans treat the environment and natural resources. Therefore, according to al-Attas, the Islamization of

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science is an effort to return science to its nature, namely as a means to know God and strengthen moral and ethical values in human life [9][11][12].

In this context, the Islamization of science is not intended as a rejection of modern science, but as a critical process to purify science from elements that are contrary to Islamic values. Ismail Raji' al-Faruqi emphasized that the Islamization of science must begin by deconstructing existing science, and then reconstructing it by incorporating Islamic values into it. This includes the integration of rational science and revelation so that the science produced is not only materially beneficial but also has a spiritual dimension that supports human welfare holistically [10][13][14].

The question is why do they ignore religion and What are the implications? The neglect of religion in the Western scientific tradition is a direct result of their historical experience with church authority in the Middle Ages. The Church, which at that time had absolute dominance over science, often suppressed ideas that were considered contrary to their religious doctrine. The imprisonment of Galileo Galilei and the resistance to Copernicus' heliocentric theory are clear examples of how science was hampered by religious authority. This traumatic experience created a perception among Western scientists that religion was an obstacle to progress, so they tried to create a science that was free from religious elements through the process of secularization. In this paradigm, science is no longer associated with moral and spiritual values but is only focused on empirical and rational aspects. The implication of this secularization is the birth of reductionist science, which only takes into account the physical and material aspects of reality, without considering the broader metaphysical aspects.

The impact of the secularization of science in the West also spread to the Islamic world, where some Muslim scientists began to experience an inferiority complex in the face of Western progress. They saw that Western civilization was able to achieve rapid development in science and technology after leaving religion so a view emerged in certain circles that Muslims should also follow in the same footsteps. This thinking ultimately led to the marginalization of Islamic values in the academic and scientific world in the Muslim world. This phenomenon was criticized by Syed Naquib al-Attas, who described Muslims as wanderers who were initially sincere in seeking the water of knowledge but eventually added the salt of doubt to the water. As a result, although they continued to drink knowledge from the West, their intellectual thirst was never satisfied because the knowledge they absorbed had lost its spiritual dimension. Al-Attas emphasized that if Muslims want to progress, they must return to understanding science in a broader context, namely science that not only prioritizes empirical aspects but also makes revelation the main source of truth [9].

As a solution to this dilemma, al-Attas proposed the concept of Islamization of science which is carried out through two main processes. First, the isolation of science from Western characters, personalities, and cultures that are not by Islamic values. This means that science developed in the West must be critically examined to identify elements that are contrary to the Islamic worldview. Second, the filling of science with key Islamic concepts, such as monotheism, revelation, and Islamic ethical values [11][12]. With this process, science is no longer a value-free entity but is guided by Islamic principles that direct science towards a higher goal, namely the welfare of humanity and devotion to God.

Ismail Raji al-Faruqi highlighted that the secularization of science in the Islamic world was not only caused by the dominant influence of the West but also by the internal weaknesses of Muslims themselves. Western domination did not only occur in political and economic aspects, but also penetrated the culture and thinking of Muslims, which ultimately triggered the process of secularization, westernization, and de-Islamization in various parts of the Islamic world. In this condition, Islamic teachings were constantly attacked and questioned, the authority of the Qur'an was doubted, the apostleship of the Prophet Muhammad was questioned, and sharia law was considered irrelevant to the development of the times [13][14]. The great achievements in the history of Islamic civilization seem to be ignored as if the Islamic world has no significant contribution to the development of global science. As a result, Muslims began to lose

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confidence in their intellectual heritage, which led to intellectual inferiority in the face of Western epistemology.

However, even though the West has made rapid progress in science and technology, al-Faruqi believes that Western scientific methodology has fundamental weaknesses that cannot be ignored. First, Western methodology fails to explain the moral and spiritual aspects of human life because its scientific paradigm only focuses on the physical and material aspects. Science developed in the Western tradition tends to be reductionist, ignoring the metaphysical dimensions that are an integral part of human existence. Second, the results of research developed with Western methodology are only relevant in the context of Western society itself, so they are not always suitable for application in the context of Islamic society which has a different outlook on life. Third, Western methodology violates a fundamental principle in Islam, namely that in Islam there are no divine values or commands that are personal or individualistic. Every value and science must be linked to social life so that science cannot be separated from moral and social responsibility [31].

As a solution to this problem, al-Faruqi proposed the Islamization of science as a method to reconstruct a more integrative Islamic epistemology. The Islamization of science does not mean rejecting all the results of Western science, but rather conducting a critical selection of the developing sciences, removing elements that contradict Islamic values, and incorporating Islamic values into the framework of science [13][14]. Thus, the Islamization of science serves as an intellectual filtering mechanism that allows Muslims to benefit from modern science without having to sacrifice the principles of Islamic teachings. In this perspective, science is not a neutral entity but must be developed within the corridor of Islamic values that integrate revelation, reason, and empirical experience harmoniously.

According to al-Faruqi, the root of the main problem that caused the decline of Muslims was the problem of epistemology. He considered that other aspects such as politics, economics, and society were only consequences of more fundamental epistemological problems. One of the causal factors was the methodological weakness in Islamic science which made the institution of ijtihad not function optimally. Ijtihad is the main pillar in the intellectual dynamics of Islam that allows the people to continue to develop through the challenges of the times. When ijtihad is no longer the centre of decision-making and innovation of thought, Muslims experience stagnation in various aspects of life. This causes an inability to respond to changes in the times adaptively so they are left behind in global competition. In addition, al-Faruqi highlighted the conflict between reason and revelation as a problem that does not need to occur. In the history of Islamic intellectualism, the debate between rationalism and traditionalism is often considered an unbridgeable dichotomy. In fact, in the holistic view of Islam, reason and revelation are not two opposing entities, but rather complement each other. Reason is used to understand revelation, while revelation guides reason so as not to get lost in baseless speculation [31]. However, when Muslims failed to harmonize the two, two extreme tendencies were born: one party that relied too much on rationality to the point of ignoring revelation, and the other party that rejected rationality on the grounds of maintaining the purity of Islamic teachings. As a result, intellectual discourse in Islam became divided and lost its relevance in building an advanced and competitive civilization.

Al-Faruqi criticized the cultural and religious dualism in the lives of Muslims. He saw that since the era of Islamic decline, two opposing paths of thought had emerged: first, a spiritual life that was empty and isolated from social reality, where religion was practised ritualistically without concern for the welfare of the people; second, worldly tendencies that developed independently of Islamic morality, resulting in a system that was immoral and far from Islamic values. These two tendencies created a disconnection between knowledge and practice, thought and action, and theory and reality [13][14]. In this context, the Islamization of science becomes an important solution to reunite the intellectual and spiritual dimensions in the lives of Muslims. Islamization not only aims to rebuild a strong Islamic epistemology, but also to ensure that the science developed can provide real benefits to the people, both in moral and material aspects [10].

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In response to the challenges of epistemology and the dominance of Western thought, Ismail Razi Al-Faruqi designed a series of action programs in the context of the Islamization of science. The main goal is to rebuild Islamic science based on monotheism and contribute to humanity. The steps offered by Al-Faruqi include mastery of modern scientific disciplines, understanding the treasures of Western science, and determining the relevance of Islam for each field of modern science. In addition, he emphasized the importance of creative synthesis between the treasures of Islam and modern science to create science based on Islamic values [10][32]. Thus, the Islamization of science does not only function as a reaction to Western domination but also as an effort to build an authentic and applicable Islamic scientific paradigm for the people.

However, the idea of Islamization of science is not universally accepted among Muslim intellectuals. Some groups reject the idea of Islamization because science is neutral and has no affiliation with any particular religion or group. They argue that science develops based on empirical and rational methods, so it does not need to be adjusted to the teachings of a particular religion. In addition, they are also concerned that efforts to Islamize science could limit the development of science and hinder innovation. For this group, what is more important is ensuring that science is used for purposes that benefit humanity, without the need to be labeled with a particular religious identity. This debate reflects the differences in views within the Islamic world regarding the relationship between science and religion, and how Muslims should respond to the development of science in the modern world.

Criticism of the Islamization of Science

These views on the Islamization of science, especially those offered by al-Faruqi, have received harsh criticism from Sardar. According to Sardar, he considers that the Islamization of Science approach uses reverse logic. According to him, it is not Islam that must be made relevant to modern science, but rather modern science that must be adjusted to Islamic values. This is different from Al-Faruqi's approach which is more oriented towards the reconstruction of the epistemology of science to be in harmony with Islam [16]. Indonesian Muslim scholar, Kuntowijoyo chose an opinion that was almost in line with Sardar. For Kunto, the intellectual movement of Islam in facing modern science must be directed at academic efforts that move from text to context. Islamic texts are faced with everyday reality and scientific reality. What happened according to Kuntowijoyo was the Islamization of Science, not the Islamization of Science[33]. For him, what needs to be done is not just attaching Islamic identity to science, but returning science to its fundamental principle, namely monotheism. With this concept, Kuntowijoyo offers three main principles in the development of science, namely the unity of science which affirms that truth is one, the unity of life which eliminates the dichotomy between value-free science and value-laden science, and the unity of history which directs science to serve the people and humanity in general [33][34].

On the other hand, Usep Fathuddin rejects the idea of the Islamization of Science more firmly. According to him, the effort to Islamize Science is not only unnecessary but also not a creative step. He argues that what Muslims need is not to "Islamize" science but to master science itself as was done by classical Islamic civilization. History proves that the glory of Islam in the past was not built on efforts to Islamize but on the in-depth mastery of science by Muslim scholars. Thus, for Usep, the Islamization of Science is a concept that contradicts the essence of the development of science itself (contradictio in terminis). This view emphasizes that what is more important for Muslims is to improve the quality of education and research, not simply to Islamize concepts that have developed in modern science. These criticisms indicate a fundamental difference in the way Muslim intellectuals view how Islam should interact with modern science [35].

For Usep, the Islamization of knowledge is like the work of a roadside handyman. When a scientist succeeds in creating or developing knowledge, then some Muslims will try to capture and Islamize it [35]. As a critique of the agenda of Islamization of science, Usep does not seem to present a history of science that presents dynamics and continuous change. According to

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Usep, the Islamization of Science is merely a passive reaction to the development of science produced by Western scientists, where some Muslims only try to capture and Islamize existing science without creating something new. However, this critique ignores the broader historical aspect, where the epistemological clash between Islamic and Western science has been going on for a long time. After the Islamic world experienced a political decline, Islamic scientific centres lost their influence and Western science became dominant, influencing almost all aspects of life, including science, politics, and economics in the Muslim world.

The neglect of the epistemological differences between Western and Islamic science in Usep's critique shows the incompleteness of his analysis. If it only emphasizes mastery of science without considering the Islamic perspective on science itself, then Muslims will continue to follow the Western scientific paradigm without being able to develop an approach that is by Islamic values. In addition, the claim that Western science has brought progress also needs to be criticized more deeply, because, on the other hand, modern science has also caused various problems such as human alienation, moral crisis, and excessive exploitation of natural resources. Therefore, the Islamization of Science offered by Al-Faruqi and other Muslim thinkers is not merely a reaction to Western domination, but a systematic effort to build a more holistic scientific framework based on Islamic values. Although this idea is not free from criticism, simplifying it as an effort to “Islamize” existing science without innovations also does not reflect the reality of science that is developing dynamically.

For Fazlurahman, the most important thing in responding to the scientific reality that exists in the West vis a vis Islamic science is not to create Islamic knowledge, but to create great thinkers who think positively and constructively [15][36]. Rahman argues that the main problem with science in the West lies not in the substance of its science, but in the way it is used, which often forgets the ethical and moral dimensions. Fazlur Rahman's approach highlights the importance of building a strong intellectual tradition among Muslims so that they can utilize modern science for the common good, not just Islamizing existing science. His criticism of the Islamization of Science also emphasizes that science does not need to be categorized based on religion, but rather needs to be directed to be by noble moral principles. In this context, Rahman emphasizes the importance of reforming thought and education that can produce competitive Muslim scholars who have a transformative vision for Islamic civilization. Therefore, the challenge for Muslims is not just to debate the legitimacy of the Islamization of Science, but rather to build intellectual capacity that can utilize and develop science ethically and responsibly.

From the author's perspective, Fazlur Rahman's criticism of the Islamization of Science does have relevance, especially in terms of the importance of the presence of great thinkers who can provide legitimacy and influence global scientific discourse. Science is not just a matter of the substance of science itself but is also related to the authority and credibility of the individuals who carry it [36]. With the presence of influential figures, scientific ideas will be more easily accepted and developed in a wider academic realm. However, on the other hand, Fazlur Rahman seems to ignore that science is never truly neutral or universal. Every science is born from a certain social, cultural, and historical context that influences the perspective and methodology used in building that knowledge. In this context, Western science cannot be claimed as something objective and universal because it develops within a unique epistemological and cultural framework. Moreover, the methodology of Western science which is based on rationalism and empiricism is different from the methodology of Islamic science that recognizes the dimension of revelation as a source of knowledge. Therefore, Fazlur Rahman's criticism of the Islamization of Science becomes less relevant if it does not consider this fundamental difference.

As an idea, the Islamization of Science does not always receive a positive response. The author himself is of the view that criticism of this project can be categorized into two groups. First, is the constructive group, which carries out criticism as part of an effort to perfect and expand the path for the Islamization of Science. Criticism from this group is very valuable because it helps this agenda find more effective and contextual implementation paths. Second,

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the group that is against it, namely those who reject the idea of the Islamization of Science and consider it an unnecessary or even futile effort. For the author, this second group can certainly be understood as part of the diversity of views in the intellectual world. However, rather than closing oneself off to differences, a dialogical approach is a better way to deal with these differences of view. Through open dialogue, the Islamization of Science can be better understood by those who still doubt its urgency, so that the debate that arises does not become merely a rejection, but instead opens up the possibility for enrichment of concepts and more mature implementation strategies.

In the debate on the Islamization of Science, it is clear that there are fundamental differences between those who support and those who reject this idea. Those who support the Islamization of Science view that science cannot be separated from the values and culture that give birth to her, so efforts are needed to align modern science with Islamic values. Meanwhile, those who reject it argue that science is neutral and universal, so there is no need for efforts to "Islamize" existing science. In this context, efforts to Islamize Science do not mean rejecting or denying modern science, but rather seeking a more harmonious synthesis between science and Islamic values. This idea is a response to the dominance of Western epistemology which is often secular and separates science from aspects of spirituality. With the Islamization of Science, it is hoped that there will be a process of integration between revelation and reason in building a more balanced civilization, not only materially advanced but also having a strong moral and ethical foundation.

The agenda of Islamization of Science is not only concerned with academic discourse but also has a broader impact in shaping the mindset of Muslims. By understanding that science cannot be separated from certain values and worldviews, Muslims are expected to be more critical in accepting and developing science. This is important to avoid simply becoming consumers of science produced by other civilizations without any effort to adapt it to Islamic values. However, the biggest challenge in implementing the Islamization of Science is how to make it a real and applicable movement. Because, without concrete steps in the world of education and research, the Islamization of Science will only stop as a discourse without any significant impact. Therefore, a systematic and structured strategy is needed to realize this agenda, starting from the education curriculum, and development of research methodology, to the dissemination of scientific works based on the Islamization of Science.

In the course of the history of Islamic thought, the idea of the Islamization of Knowledge has remained a debate that has never subsided. The criticisms levelled against it are part of a healthy intellectual dynamic and show that this discourse is still relevant to continue to be studied and developed. However, the main challenge faced is how this idea can be implemented concretely in the academic world so that it does not only become a discourse that fills the intellectual discussion space. The Islamization of Knowledge is not only an academic project but also a broader cultural agenda. In this context, synergy is needed between academics, educational institutions, and intellectual communities to create a more inclusive scientific ecosystem, which not only maintains Islamic values but is also able to contribute to the development of global science. Thus, academic work based on research, publications, and curriculum development oriented towards the Islamization of Knowledge must be the main priority in this effort.

The threat of secularization of science that is increasingly strengthening in various parts of the world demands that Muslims not be passive. Islam is not only a religion that regulates worship and morality but also has a system of epistemology, ontology, and axiology that can provide a unique worldview for science. Thus, the Islamization of Science is not just a choice, but a necessity for Muslims to remain relevant in the discourse of modern science while maintaining an authentic Islamic identity.

The success of the Islamization of Science certainly cannot be achieved in a short time. As has been done by great thinkers such as al-Faruqi, al-Attas, and Kuntowijoyo, this effort requires continuous hard work and strong collaboration in various lines, both on and off

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campus. The importance of building a broad scientific network, both at the national and international levels, is one strategy that can accelerate the process of the Islamization of Science. Ultimately, the challenges faced in the Islamization of Science do not only come from outside parties but also from within the Muslim community itself, who still have diverse views on this concept. Therefore, constructive dialogue and discussion must continue to be carried out so that the concept of the Islamization of Science is increasingly understood and accepted as part of the intellectual endeavour to build a more advanced and competitive Islamic civilization on the global stage. Hopefully, this effort can continue and provide great benefits for the development of Islamic science and humanity as a whole.

CONCLUSION

The concept of Islamization of Science often emerges as a response to the inferiority of Muslims in the field of modern science. To catch up with the West, some Muslim scholars have proposed the Islamization of Science as a solution to rebuild a more independent Islamic epistemology, such as Ismail Raji al-Faruqi's thoughts on the Islamization of Science emphasizing the importance of synthesis between Islamic treasures and modern science. However, this idea has also drawn quite sharp criticism from various groups, such as Ziauddin Sardar, Kuntowijoyo, and Fazlurrahman who have proposed a different approach to responding to the development of science. One of the main criticisms is that the Islamization of Science is considered a defensive reaction to the dominance of Western science, which can strengthen the inferiority of Muslims. Critics argue that science is neutral and does not need to be Islamized, but what is more important is the in-depth mastery of science and the development of constructive thinking within the framework of Islam. In addition, there is a view that emphasizes that the backwardness of Muslims is not caused by the secularization of science, but by the lack of innovation, research, and mastery of technology in the Islamic world. Thus, this study confirms that the inferiority of Muslims in the world of science is not only a matter of epistemology or methodology of science, but also related to aspects of the mentality, education, and strategic policies of Muslims themselves. Islamization of Science may be one approach, but without strengthening the culture of research, innovation, and a quality education system, these efforts will continue to face major challenges. Therefore, what is more important is to build the self-confidence of Muslims in the world of academics and science, and to ensure that the knowledge mastered can make a real contribution to human civilization.

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Author Contribution

All authors contribute equally to the publication of this paper, all authors read and agree to this paper, and all authors declare no conflict of interest.

Conflicts of Interest

All authors declare no conflict of interest.

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