

Islamization of Knowledge or Modern Myth ? Kantian Reflections on al-Faruqi's Vision

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Abstract: *The concept of Islamization of Knowledge according to Ismail Raji al-Faruqi using the perspective of Immanuel Kant's criticism. Contextually, al-Faruqi seeks to reform modern science by integrating the Islamic metaphysical principle of tawhid. The purpose is to examine the epistemological compatibility between this theological project and Kant's critique, which limits certain knowledge to empirical phenomena. This article is a library research with a qualitative approach, descriptive critical analysis related to al-Faruqi concept of the Islamization of Knowledge, analyzed through Immanuel Kant's critical approach, especially related to rationality, ethics, and intellectual freedom. The key finding reveals a fundamental tension: Kant's epistemology, which confines valid knowledge to the empirical realm, problematizes al-Faruqi's application of the non-empirical concept of tawhid to scientific disciplines. A crucial convergence is identified in their shared insistence that science must be guided by a moral framework to serve humanity's good. Based on this common ground, the research's contribution is proposing "Islamic Criticism" as a creative synthesis. This framework navigates the tension by offering a morally-grounded, Islamic epistemological model that addresses the persistent science-religion dichotomy, reconciling Kant's rational boundaries with al-Faruqi's theological vision for science.*

Keywords: *Islamization of Knowledge, Ismail Raji al-Faruqi, Immanuel Kant, criticism, tawhid, epistemology*

A. Introduction

Albert Einstein in one of his essays entitled "Religion and Science" published in the Symposium of Conference on Science, Philosophy and Religion in Their Relation to the Democratic Way of Life in New York in 1941, stated that "science without religion is lame, religion without science is blind." Through Einstein's expression, science and religion are understood as two different units,

but both have significant roles and influence each other in human life. There is great hope and potential for religion to build a universal ethical framework because every religion has humanitarian values, and religion is also responsible for these humanitarian values.¹ Religion makes humans have faith so that life is more focused, ethical, has high moral standards and is civilized, while science provides a wealth of knowledge for humans. With the development of science, it will advance the world with various brilliant discoveries and provide easy facilities that greatly support human survival. Science and religion are said to be different because they have different paradigms. Clearly classifying science and religion became a trend in Renaissance society.²

The dichotomous classification between science and religion that crystallized since the 15th century has created a foundation of polarization where these two domains run on their own paths and even contradict each other, thus triggering a "battle" of truth claims that continues to this day - science accuses religion of being outdated and illogical, while religion retaliates by declaring science as the enemy of God because it is considered inconsistent with the holy book. The autonomy of modern science that was formed in the 16th-17th centuries by rejecting the intervention of faith and building independent methods is indeed worthy of being seen as a natural development, although this desire for emancipation is often accompanied by an aggressive attitude towards theology, while the suspicion of religious communities towards science - which is often based on historical burdens - explains why rejection of scientific findings still often occurs by referring to past conditions.³ According to science, truth is empirical, logical, and verifiable an approach dominated by positivism that positions science as the primary arbiter of truth in various aspects of life, while religion encompasses transcendent truths that transcend the senses and are accepted through faith.⁴ This fundamental difference has given rise to the perennial tension between science and religion, particularly in the context of Western civilization, where science has developed into a secular, autonomous entity, freeing itself from the influence of religion despite facing strong criticism from religious circles a polarization that has actually reinforced the dichotomy between the two in the course of modern history.

In the Islamic world, science began to erode and be abandoned because many scholars and thinkers tended to lead Muslims to religious rituals and seemed to close the door to *ijtihad*, and rejected the influence of Greek philosophy because it did not originate from Muslims. The criticism was made by al-Ghazali (1058-1111 AD) in his book *Tahafutu 'l Falasifah*, who argued that there was an epistemological confusion expressed by philosophers, which ultimately forbade philosophy by their followers, even though the origin of science began with philosophical thought. The impact of the elimination of influences originating from outside Islamic civilization, especially philosophy and science, resulted in Muslims and Islamic civilization experiencing

¹Kung, Global Responsibility In Search of a New World Ethic, (Publishing Company, New York, USA 1991), 91.

² Reese, Dictionary of Philosophy and Religion: Eastern and Western Thought, (Sussex Press, New Jersey USA 1980), 489.

³ Louis Leahy, Aliran-aliran Besar Ateism, (Kanisius Publisher, Yogyakarta 1990), 116-117.

⁴ Robert Audi, The Cambridge Dictionari of Philosophy, second edition (Cambrige University Press, United Kingdom, 1999), 240

stagnation and even decline and backwardness in social life and understanding of science, so that Islamic civilization and Muslim-populated countries became targets and dominated by empires in all fields of western countries, especially in the current secular modern era.

Studies on epistemology in Islam are still very rarely conducted by Islamic thinkers, especially in the contemporary period. Studies on epistemology in reality have not reached an adequate level of study, even though epistemological studies are very important to study, as an alternative epistemological system other than Western epistemology, which dominates contemporary epistemological discourse.⁵ There have been several Muslim intellectuals who devoted their efforts to reform and explore epistemological issues within Islam. In the modern context, two distinct and often opposing epistemological paradigms have emerged: the anthropocentric school, represented by figures such as Muhammad Abduh and Sayyid Amir Ali, and the theocentric school, led by Seyyed Hossein Nasr.⁶

Ismail Raji al-Faruqi's thoughts came against the current of thought that was developing at that time by offering ideas that came from concerns about the state of Islamic civilization that was collapsing into the basis and driving force of Muslim intellectuals to campaign for the Islamization of science. According to al-Faruqi in Rosnani Hashim (2005), Islamization is an effort to define, reorganize data, think about arguments and rationalizations related to the data, assess, interpret, project goals and do all of that in such a way that these disciplines enrich Islamic insight and are beneficial for the cause (ideals).⁷

The Islamization of Knowledge in its development is present as a form of epistemological criticism of the modern scientific movement based on secularism that is being practiced and is a reference for the development of science today, as well as a forum for the struggle to harmonize the romance of religion and science. which became the identity of the golden era of the history of Islamic civilization. The concept of the Islamization of Knowledge has not gone unchallenged; it has faced criticism from both Muslim and Western scholars who argue that it contains conceptual and epistemological ambiguities. These debates have, in turn, evolved into a significant point of intellectual dialogue in contemporary thought.

Since its inception around 40 years ago, Ismail Faruqi's thoughts on the Islamization of Knowledge have given rise to various attitudes, both pro and con, that continue to emerge. One party enthusiastically and optimistically welcomes this momentum as the beginning of Islamic revivalism. Some critics, however, argue that the "Islamization" movement is just a momentary euphoria to cure "heartache" (inferiority complex), because they are very far behind western civilization, so that this movement is only a waste of time and energy and will weaken over time

⁵ Mulyadi Kertanegara, *Menyibak Tirai Kejahilan : Pengantar Epistemologi Islam* (Mizan, Bandung, 2003), xxxi.

⁶ Azumardi Azra, *Pendidikan Islam : Tradisi dan modernisasi menuju milenium baru* (Logos Publisher, Jakarta, 1999), 94.

⁷ Rosnani Hashim, *The Idea of Islamization of Contemporary Knowledge: History, Development and Direction of Goals*, (Jakarta, Islamia Magazine: Islamic Thought and Civilization. Year II No. 6, 2005), 29.

by itself⁸, Rosnani Hashim (2005), divides the pro and con groups into four groups, namely: First, the group that agrees with this idea in theory and concept and tries to realize and produce works that are in line with the intention of Islamization in their disciplines. Second, the group that agrees with this idea in theory and concept but does not try it practically. Third, groups that disagree and instead mock, ridicule and play with this idea. Fourth, they prefer to follow the developments pioneered by other scholars or they do not care about it.⁹

The Islamization of Knowledge initiated by Ismail Raji al-Faruqi provides a breath of fresh air regarding the discourse of Islamic epistemology and its impact on the development of science. Criticism of modern knowledge in al-Faruqi's view creates a conflict between revelation and reason among Muslims, the separation of thought from action, and the dualism of culture and religion. For this reason, it is necessary to have the Islamization of Knowledge based on the teachings of Tawhid. Science in the Islamic tradition does not explain and understand reality as a separate entity that is independent of absolute reality (Allah SWT), but considers it as an integral part of the existence of Allah SWT. Therefore, the Islamization of Knowledge according to al Faruqi must lead to conditions of analyzing and synthesizing the relationship between the reality being studied and the model of God's law (divine mode).¹⁰

The efforts to Islamization of Knowledge initiated by Al Faruqi include the principles, goals and steps of the Islamization of Knowledge To re-cast the discipline of science under the framework of Islam means creating theories, methods, principles and goals that are subject to 5 principles/aspects,¹¹ namely:

- 1) The Oneness of Allah SWT (Tawhid),
- 2) The Unity of the Universe,
- 3) The Unity of Truth and Knowledge,
- 4) The Unity of Life,
- 5) The Unity of Humanity.

Differences in views regarding the pros and cons of the idea of Islamization of Knowledge lead researchers to present objective arguments related to science as an epistemological view, objective nature and giving place to certainty that is believed in accordance with what was conveyed by Immanuel Kant with his criticism. In short, Immanuel Kant's critical philosophy intends to distinguish between pure and impure knowledge, which has no certainty.

⁸ Alvin Khoiron, *Diskursus Islamisasi Ilmu Pengetahuan dalam Pemikiran Ismail Raji al-Faruqi dan para pengkajinya*, (Manado, Aqlam: Journal of Islam and Plurity. Vol.7 No.1. IAIN Manado, 2022), 83.

⁹ Rosnani Hashim, *The Idea of Islamization of Contemporary Knowledge: History, Development and Direction of Goals*, (Jakarta, Islamia Magazine: Islamic Thought and Civilization. Year II No. 6, 2005), 30.

¹⁰ Sholeh, *Islamisasi Ilmu Pengetahuan (Konsep Pemikiran Ismail Raji al-Faruqi dan Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas)*, (Pekanbaru, Al Hikmah Journal, Vol.14 No.2, FAI UIN Pekanbaru, 2017), 4.

¹¹ al-Faruqi, *Islamization of Knowledge: Problems Principles and Prospective*, in *Islam: Source and Purpose of Knowledge*, (Jeddah, King Abdul Aziz University, Herndon Publishing, 1984), 56-97.

wants to cleanse knowledge from its attachment to all temporary appearances by avoiding the one-sided nature of rationality and the one-sided nature of empiricism.¹².

B. Method

Based on the background described above, this study uses a library research method with a descriptive-critical approach that relies on qualitative data in the form of primary and secondary texts.¹³ The main primary data sources include Ismail Raji al-Faruqi's fundamental work "Islamization of Knowledge" (1984/1988) and Immanuel Kant's magnum opus "Critique of Pure Reason" as epistemological foundations. Data analysis is conducted through thematic comparative analysis techniques by comparing key concepts from both thinkers, particularly regarding the limits of knowledge, the role of reason, and the integration of values in epistemology. Through this approach, the study seeks to find common ground and differences between al-Faruqi's Islamization of Knowledge and Kant's critique, while also identifying potential creative syntheses that can overcome the science-religion dichotomy in the contemporary context

Result and Discussion

Islamic Epistemology, Islamization of Knowledge and Critical Perspective

Islamic Epistemology and Islamization of Knowledge

Epistemology in Islam is closely related to the basic metaphysical structure of Islam that has been formulated in line with revelation, hadith, reason, experience and intuition.¹⁴ Science in Islam can be interpreted as a product of understanding (*tafaqquh*) of revelation that has universal, permanent (*tsawābit*) and dynamic (*mutaghayyirat*), definite (*muḥkamāt*) and vague (*mutasyābih*) concepts, the basic (*usul*) and the non-basic (*furū'*). Therefore, understanding of revelation cannot be seen dichotomously: historical-normative, textual-contextual, subjective-objective, and so on. Revelation, first of all, must be understood as the reality of a conceptual building that brings a new outlook on life. The reality of this conceptual building must then be explained and interpreted so that it can be used to understand and explain the reality of the universe and this life. The reason is, the conceptual building in revelation that forms the worldview is full of principles about science, so epistemology is the most important part of it. It is not surprising that the intellectual tradition in Islamic civilization can live and develop progressively.¹⁵

¹² Benny Baskara, Intrepetasi Kritisisme Immaneul Kant dalam Budaya Jawa Moder, (Yogyakarta, Gadjah Mada University, Philosophy Journal, Volume 35, No.3, 2003), 261-262

¹³ Kaelan, Penelitian Kualitatif dalam Bidang Filsafat, (Paradigma Publisher, Yogyakarta, 2005), 70.

¹⁴ al-Attas, S.N. A Commentary on the Hujat al Siddiq of Nur al Din al Raniri (Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia Ministry of Education and Culture, 1986), 484-485.

¹⁵ Zarkasi in M. Kholid Muslih, et al., Epistemologi Islam: Prinsip2 Dasar ilmu pengetahuan dalam Islam, (Unida Gontor, Directorate of Islamization of Knowledge (DIIP), in collaboration with INSIST, Ponorogo, 2021), xiv.

As one of the branches of study in philosophy, epistemology is fundamentally concerned with the nature, sources, and limits of knowledge, a subject that holds a certain "mystery" and is not easily.¹⁶ This understanding of epistemology is a significant concern for expert, but they approach it from profoundly different points of view. As a result, the field is characterized by a diversity understandings, leading to disagreements not merely in wording but in the very substance of the problem. For instance, the long-standing debate between rationalists, who posit that reason in primary source of knowledge, and empiricists, who argue for sensory experience, exemplifies this deep-seated divergence in epistemological foundation.¹⁷ This lack of consensus underscore the complex and dynamic nature of epistemological inquiry, where even the most basic questions about what it meansto "know" something remain to debat.¹⁸

Meanwhile, in the tradition of Muslims according to Harun Nasution (1975),¹⁹ the study of epistemology itself has been going on since the classical period (650-1250 AD), the middle period (1250-1800 AD). This historical engagement is further analyzed by contemporary scholars who note that the classical period established foundational epistemological frameworks based on revelation, reason, and intuition.²⁰ The modern period (1800 AD-present). The modern development period as the third period is seen as a period of revival of Muslims after sinking during the Middle Ages. The rise of modernism has generated diverse reactions and created tension within the Muslim community. With the presence of modernism in all fields in several countries, such as Egypt entering the liberal age. Liberalism grew and flourished which resulted in the emergence of a number of ideas about the separation between religion, culture and politics.²¹

Referring to the trend explained above, the concept of epistemology and the idea of Islamization of Knowledge initiated by Ismail Raji al Faruqi himself is more appropriately classified into the second group, with Islamic principles as the basis but on the other hand providing space for the development of science that is present factually today. The Islamization of Knowledge initiated by al Faruqi can be understood as a reaction to the negative impacts caused by Western science with its secular epistemological basis and impacts and clashes with Islamic epistemology (integration of religion-science) with a culture and values that are different from the West. The key concept of the Islamization of Knowledge initiated by al Faruqi, includes basic principles, objectives and steps that must be taken to realize the Islamization of science, including:

¹⁶ Matthias Steup & Ram Neta, Epistemologi. In E. N. Zalta (Ed), The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (2020), 1.

¹⁷ Robert Audi, *Epistemology: A Contemporary Introduction to the Theory of Knowledge* (3rd ed.). Routledge, (2010), 2

¹⁸ Laurence Bonjour, p. Bonjour, L. (2002). *Epistemology: Classic Problems and Contemporary Responses*. Rowman & Littlefield. (200), 5

¹⁹ Harun Nasution, *Pembaharuan dalam Islam: sejarah pemikiran dan gerakan*, (Jakarta, Bulan Bintang Publisher, 1975), 12-14.

²⁰ Osman Bakar, *The History and Philosophy of Islamic Science*. (Cambridge: Islamic Texts Society. 2019). 23.

²¹ Ibrahim M. Abu Rabi', *Islam Liberalism in The Muslim Middle East Viable?* in Hamdard Islamicus (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press,) vol. XII, no. 4, 1991), 50.

- 1) Principles/aspects, namely: The Oneness of Allah SWT (Tawhid), the unity of the Universe, the unity of truth and knowledge, the unity of life, the unity of humanity.²²
- 2) The objectives of the Islamization of science, including several things, namely: Mastering modern scientific disciplines, mastering the treasures of Islam, determining the relevance of Islam for each field of modern science, seeking creative synthesis between the treasures of Islam and modern science, directing the flow of Islamic thought to paths that achieve the fulfillment of God's plan (Allah SWT).²³
- 3) The steps that are priorities, namely; Mastery of modern scientific disciplines, survey of scientific disciplines, mastery of Islamic treasures: anthologies, Mastery of Islamic scientific treasures: analysis stage, determination of the unique relevance of Islam to scientific disciplines, critical assessment of modern scientific disciplines: current level of development, assessment of Islamic treasures: current level of development, survey of problems faced by Muslims, survey of problems faced by mankind, creative analysis and synthesis, reintroduction of modern disciplines into an Islamic framework and dissemination of knowledge that has been Islamized.²⁴

Al Faruqi emphasized the importance of Islamic epistemology and knowledge integration as an urgent necessity. In the context of Islamic knowledge, knowledge integration involves harmonization between modern sciences and Islamic values and principles. Al Faruqi seems to emphasize that science should not be separated from Islamic ethics and morality. Knowledge must be used for the good of humanity and to achieve noble goals in this world and the hereafter.

Perspective of Immanuel Kant's Criticism: Basic Principles

Immanuel Kant's critical philosophy emphasizes the limitations and inadequacies of human reason in understanding reality. According to Kant, human knowledge is limited to *phenomena* (appearances) and unable to reach *noumena* (reality in itself), because a priori cognitive structures such as space, time, and the twelve categories of understanding shape how we experience the world.²⁵ As explained in the Critique of Pure Reason, this distinction between *phenomena* and *noumena* is a consequence of Kant's efforts to prove the possibility of scientific and mathematical knowledge, while simultaneously questioning the status of metaphysics as a science. Through this approach, Kant advocated the autonomy of reason in the search for truth and moral judgment.

²² al Faruqi, *Islamization of Knowledge: Problems Principles and Prospective, in Islam: Source and Purpose of Knowledge*, (Jeddah, King Abdul Aziz University, Herndon Publishing, 1984), 56-97

²³ al Faruqi, *Islamization of Knowledge: Problems Principles and Prospective, in Islam: Source and Purpose of Knowledge*, 98.

²⁴ al Faruqi, *Islamization of Knowledge: Problems Principles and Prospective, in Islam: Source and Purpose of Knowledge*, 88-118

²⁵ Christine Serck-Hanssen, The Phenomenon/Noumenon Distinction: A Framework for Kant's Critical Philosophy. In *The Cambridge Companion to Kant's Critique of Pure Reason*, (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge. (2020), 138.

1) The Limits of Reason: Phenomena vs. Noumena

A fundamental pillar of Immanuel Kant's critical philosophy is the assertion that human reason has inherent limitations, limiting our knowledge to the realm of *phenomena*. Kant argued that we can never know noumena, or "things-in-themselves" (*Dinge an sich*), because our perceptions are always filtered through the *a priori* structures of our minds, human vision (senses) of an object is very much determined by the mental devices that have been formed in the human mind due to the formation of space and time. The influence of space and time is what Kant formulated as categories in the mind that act as a kind of glasses for the vision (senses) of the eyes. If someone wears blue glasses, then objects outside will appear blue.²⁶

In the Critique of Pure Reason, he established that space and time are pure forms of our sensory intuitions, while categories such as causality and substance are pure concepts of our understanding. These structures act as immutable "lenses" through which we experience the world, meaning we only have access to the world as it appears to us (*phenomena*), not the world as it exists independently (*noumena*). As Kant stated, "*Thought without content is empty, intuition without concepts is blind*".²⁷ This synthesis requires that all knowledge originates from experience but is shaped by our innate mental apparatus. Therefore, while science can achieve certain and universal knowledge in the phenomenal world, it is forever prevented from making definitive claims about the ultimate nature of reality itself. This epistemic limitation serves as a powerful critique of metaphysical claims that claim to possess knowledge of entities such as the soul or God, relegating them to the realm of thought rather than verifiable knowledge.²⁸

The position of *phenomena* and *noumena* in Immanuel Kant's epistemology can be said to be a consequence of his efforts in proving knowledge (science and mathematics) that is considered possible and questioning how metaphysics is possible or impossible as a science. Kant (1787/2000) himself divided human knowledge into three stages, namely the sensing stage (aesthetic) which is connected to space and time, the understanding stage (*verstand*) is processed through twelve categories owned by the ratio and the reasoning stage (*vernunft*) works syllogistically to make conclusions based on decisions that have been formulated including categorical, hypothetical and disjunctive decisions,²⁹ The process of organizing in reason uses transcendental ideas (Soul, World and God) as a guideline and allows for coherence between the propositions that have been produced so that a system of thinking is formed that can explain the world as something that makes sense/rational or is called science.³⁰

²⁶ Bertrand Russel, Sejarah filsafat Barat, (Yogyakarta, trans. Sigit Jatmiko, et al. Pustaka Pelajar Publisher, 2004), 923-924.

²⁷ Kant, The Critique of Pure Reason (1787), translated J. M. D. Meiklejohn, Bohn's Philosophical Library, London, Blackmask Online (1872/2000), 45.

²⁸ G. Dicker, Kant's Theory of Knowledge : An Analytical Introduction, (Oxford University Press, 2004), 12.

²⁹ Kant, The Critique of Pure Reason (1787), translated J. M. D. Meiklejohn, Bohn's Philosophical Library, Blackmask Online, London (1872/2000), 121-122.

³⁰ M.R. Nirasma, Dialami tanpa mungkin diketahui : sebuah sanggahan atas Penapsiran Noumena Immanuel Kant sebagai Entitas Metafisis, (Jurnal Human Narrative, Vol.1, No.2, UNINDRA, Jakarta, 2020), 81-82

2) The Autonomy of Reason and the Categorical Imperative

The sub-chapter of Immanuel Kant's transcendental deduction in his book *Critique of Pure Reason* contains arguments that strengthen the principle of the twelve categories.³¹ Kant's twelve categories of understanding—which include quantity (unity, plurality, totality), quality (reality, negation, limitation), relation (substance, causality, community), and modality (possibility, existence, necessity)—have objective validity in shaping human knowledge. Kant states in G. Dicker (2004) that the twelve categories have an *a priori* function, possessing undeniable objective validity and categories serve as fundamental principles of thought, enabling *a priori* knowledge of the foundations of human experience.³² These twelve categories can essentially be summarized into five, as the basis of thought: breadth, reality, subject, basis, and whole.³³ Through this framework, Kant rejects both rationalism that prioritizes the *a priori* and empiricism that absolutizes experience, offering a synthesis that maintains methodological rigor while recognizing the limits of human reason.³⁴

Kant's criticism is an approach that emphasizes the limitations and abilities of human reason in understanding the world. He proposed that our knowledge is limited to *phenomena* (not noumena) and is governed by a priori structures such as space, time, and categories of understanding. These principles direct us to be more critical of knowledge claims and encourage the autonomy of reason in the search for truth and moral judgment. The basis of experience (in the framework of space and time) in the form of a representation (sensibility) of sensation directs that knowledge is something that can be known through experience and sensory observation by calling it a phenomenon (the world experienced and understood).

Despite reason's theoretical limitations in understanding the *noumenal* world, Kant argued for its absolute autonomy in the practical realm of morality. Freed from the deterministic natural laws that govern the phenomenal world, the human will can become the source of self-governing moral laws. This autonomy is the foundational principle of Kant's highest principle of morality: the Categorical Imperative. In contrast to conditional, hypothetical imperatives (e.g., “if you will X, you must do Y”), the Categorical Imperative is an unconditional command that is universally binding on all rational beings. Its most famous formulation states: “*Act only in accordance with the principle by which you can, at the same time, will it to be a universal law*”³⁵. This means that a moral action is one whose fundamental principle can be applied consistently to everyone without contradiction. For example, making a false promise is immoral because if everyone did it, the institution of the promise itself would collapse, making the principle

³¹ Sebastian Gardner, *Kant and the Critique of Pure Reason*, (Routledge, London, 2003), 130.

³² George Dicker, *Kant's Theory of Knowledge: An Analytical Introduction*, (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2004), 84-85.

³³ Paul Guyer, *Kant: Review*, (Cambridge University Press; Routledge, London, 2006), 131.

³⁴ Dicker, *Kant's Theory of Knowledge : An Analytical Introduction*, (Oxford University Press, Oxford 2004),

³⁵ Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* (1785). M.Gregor, Trans.& Ed. (Cambridge University Press, Original work Published, Cambridge, 1998), 31

contradictory when universalized. The Categorical Imperative does not derive morality from consequences, emotions, or divine commands, but solely from the formal structure of rationality itself. By obeying the laws we impose on ourselves through reason, we achieve true moral freedom and dignity, affirming the power and autonomy of practical reason as the foundation of ethical life.³⁶

Understanding the Islamization of Knowledge According to Ismail Raji al-Faruqi: Perspective of Immanuel Kant's Criticism

Islamization of Knowledge According to al-Faruqi

Explanation of the Islamization of Knowledge initiated by Ismail Raji al-Faruqi When viewed from the perspective of Immanuel Kant's Criticism, of course, it will place the Islamization of Knowledge in the framework of dualism analysis, starting from dogmatics and criticism, phenomena and noumena, differences and similarities (meeting points) between Al Faruqi's Islamization of Knowledge and Immanuel Kant's Criticism and its implications. Dogmatism itself can be understood as a concept that underlies views on concepts of substance or monade, regardless of whether reason has an understanding of its own nature, breadth and limits of its capabilities. Dogmatic philosophy accepts the truths of something for granted, without being critically responsible for it. Dogmatism considers objective recognition as something that is in itself. According to Kant, this is wrong, because someone must ask "how is objective recognition possible?" therefore it is very important to answer questions about the conditions for the possibility of recognition and the limits of recognition.³⁷

The idea of the Islamization of Knowledge that has been initiated by Ismail Raji al Faruqi and other Muslim intellectual figures is not just an idea, they initiated the idea through a debate and discussions conducted in some world seminars. Although the idea is still widely rejected, the idea of the Islamization of Knowledge can be applied in the field of education today. Therefore, in order to implement the idea of the Islamization of Knowledge properly, al Faruqi made a work plan or goal, including several things.³⁸

- 1) Mastering modern scientific disciplines
- 2) Mastering the treasury of Islam
- 3) Determining the Relevance of Islam for each field of modern science
- 4) Finding a creative synthesis between the treasury of Islam and modern science
- 5) Directing the flow of Islamic thought to paths that achieve the fulfillment of Allah SWT's plan

To realize the goals in accordance with the principles of oneness, unity of nature, unity of truth and knowledge, unity of life and unity of humanity, a number of steps must be taken according to a logical sequence that determines the priorities of each step,³⁹ namely;

- 1) Mastery of modern scientific disciplines

³⁶ Paul Guyer, Kant, (Cambridge University Press,: Routledge, London, 2006), 33

³⁷ Benny Baskara, Intrepetasi Kritisisme Immanuel Kant dalam Budaya Jawa Modern, (Yogyakarta, Gadjah Mada University, Philosophy Journal, Volume 35, No.3, 2003), 266.

³⁸ Benny Baskara, Intrepetasi Kritisisme Immanuel Kant dalam Budaya Jawa Modern, 98

³⁹ Benny Baskara, Intrepetasi Kritisisme Immanuel Kant dalam Budaya Jawa Modern, 88-118

- 2) Survey of scientific disciplines
- 3) Mastery of Islamic treasures: anthology
- 4) Mastery of Islamic scientific treasures: analysis stage
- 5) Determination of the relevance of Islam that is unique to scientific disciplines.
- 6) Critical assessment of modern scientific disciplines: current level of development.
- 7) Assessment of Islamic treasures: current level of development.
- 8) Survey of problems faced by Muslims.
- 9) Survey of problems faced by humanity
- 10) Creative analysis and synthesis
- 11) Re-pouring of modern disciplines into the framework of Islam
- 12) Dissemination of knowledge that has been Islamized

The work plan outlined for the Islamization of Knowledge presents a highly systematic and comprehensive methodological framework. Its strength lies in its logical sequence, which progresses from the essential task of mastering modern and Islamic intellectual traditions to the more complex stages of critical assessment, creative synthesis, and eventual dissemination. This structured approach provides a clear and gradual roadmap for scholars and institutions seeking to align modern disciplines with Islamic principles, making the abstract philosophical project more actionable.

Perspective of Immanuel Kant's Criticism

Understanding the Islamization of Knowledge put forward by Ismail Raji al Faruqi from the perspective of Immanuel Kant's criticism must be placed within the framework of phenomena as objects of study that can be reached not only by experience, reason and ratio as a method to understand it and of course not dogmatic. The principles of Tawhid, the unity of nature, the unity of truth and knowledge, the unity of life and the unity of humanity according to al-Faruqi reflect an effort to unite theological and moral aspects in human life, but in Immanuel Kant's eyes, these principles will be criticized (rejected) if they are considered to exceed the boundaries of human epistemology and rationality. Kant will also emphasize the importance of maintaining the autonomy of reason and morality from the influence of theological dogma, and ensuring that knowledge and morality are based on principles that can be tested and accepted universally. The work plan that includes the goal of Islamization of Knowledge in al-Faruqi's view initiated to re-propose the writing of scientific curricula and literature to be in accordance with Islamic perspectives and principles, this involves filtering and revising scientific concepts to ensure that they are in line with Islamic teachings. Meanwhile, for Immanuel Kant, this approach is seen with skeptical possibilities because it changes the way of viewing science based on rationality and empiricism into something influenced by theological dogma, the writing of the curriculum and literature can be considered sacrificing critical principles and the autonomy of science, unless between the development of science and the principles of Islamic teachings produce a meeting point in terms of objectivity and universality.

The development of the methodology of Islamic science raised by al-Faruqi, includes the principles of unity (Tawhid), justice and welfare and has implications for the integration of the

educational curriculum between Islamic studies and modern science. In the perspective of Kant's criticism, emphasizing the importance of universal and autonomous methodology in science, the development of methodology based on religious principles because it can be considered to reduce freedom and innovation in science and related to the Kantian educational curriculum seems to be in line with the importance of education that develops critical abilities and individual autonomy, but on the other hand Kantian criticism criticizes the Islamization aspect put forward by al-Faruqi if the education tends to restrict students' intellectual freedom by overemphasizing dogma or religious teachings outside the space of rational criticism. The steps of the Islamization of Knowledge when viewed from the perspective of Kantian criticism, will appreciate the critical elements in al-Faruqi's approach, such as the emphasis on critical study and rational identification of problems. Kant seems to be very skeptical of the integration of revelation (the Qur'an) and theological values in science, because in his criticism when studying science must remain in a domain that can be tested and verified by reason and experience, every step towards the Islamization of Knowledge must pay attention to the epistemological limitations of humans and maintain the autonomy and objectivity of science.

Dogmatic vs criticality: Principles of Islamic Knowledge & Perspective of Rationalism

Autonomy

The principles of the Islamization of Knowledge by al-Faruqi and the concept of rationalism autonomy by Kant, have several points of agreement and several fundamental differences. The concept of Tawhid (Monotheism) related to the belief in the oneness of God (Allah SWT) is the core of Islamic teachings, all aspects of a Muslim's life must reflect the belief in Tawhid including being the most important aspect of the Islamization of Knowledge which has implications for knowledge, ethics and law all come from and are in harmony with the will of Allah SWT. The concept derived from Tawhid will be related to revelation (the word of Allah SWT) which has authority and is the basis for all forms of knowledge and behavior (according to sharia provisions), then its relationship to the potential of reason and independent reasoning (Ijtihad) which emphasizes individual autonomy within certain limits within the framework of the guidance of revelation (the Word of Allah SWT) in its relevance to new situations and conditions.

In contrast to the conceptual basis of the Islamization of Knowledge initiated by al-Faruqi, Immanuel Kant's thoughts on the Autonomy of Rationalism in criticism emphasize that individuals must use their reason freely to seek the truth, which has implications for knowledge that must be testable and accountable through rational methods that are free from external authority. In Kant's epistemology, knowledge comes from experience/empirical (a posteriori) and principles that can be known before experience (a priori) and have implications for knowledge that is a phenomenon that can be observed and analyzed rationally. In Kant's principle of morality, it is based on the categorical imperative, which means that actions must be carried out based on principles that can be applied as universal laws, which implies that morality must be universal and rational, independent of religious beliefs or revelations.

The interaction (meeting point) and convergence (difference) between the Principles in the Islamization of al-Faruqi's science with Immanuel Kant's Criticism When mapped will be

related to several key points, namely: First, the use of Reason which is equally valued, the Islamization of Knowledge considers reason important for understanding revelation and creating knowledge, while criticism emphasizes freedom of thought and rational analysis. Second, Ethics and Morality in the Islamization of Knowledge are rooted in revelation and sharia, while in Kantian rationalism it is rooted in rational principles and categorical imperatives. Both approaches ultimately aim to promote the realization of universal and ethical moral principles. Third, the Limits of Knowledge in the autonomy of rationalism limit knowledge to observable phenomena, while the Islamization of Knowledge accepts revelation as a source of knowledge about noumena (things beyond sensory experience) and Fourth, the Islamization of Knowledge values *ijtihad* and independent reasoning as part of freedom of thought but within the framework of revelation guidance, while Kant's rationalism emphasized a broader freedom of thought, free from the constraints of religious authority, al-Faruqi's Islamization can be read not as a rejection of autonomous reason, but rather as an expansion of the foundations of moral science. These two approaches are complementary—on the one hand, Kant frees reason from dogmatism, while al-Faruqi directs that freedom within a responsible ethical framework. Thus, the integration of rational freedom and Islamic values enriches the epistemology of science, rather than limiting it.

An attempt to offer a creative synthesis between Kantian criticism and al-Faruqi's Islamization of science through the construction of an "Islamic Criticism" framework as an innovative epistemological solution to address the problem of the science-religion dichotomy that has long plagued the world of Islamic education. This synthesis does not simply combine two seemingly contradictory paradigms, but rather creates a productive dialectic in which Kant's critical method serves as an analytical tool to deconstruct the claims of objectivity of modern science, while al-Faruqi's principle of monotheism serves as the foundation for the reconstruction of a value-integrated science. The proposed Islamic Criticism framework operates through four systematic stages—deconstruction, purification, reconstruction, and application. The deconstruction stage uses Kantian critical analysis to dismantle modern science's claims of objectivity and universality by exposing hidden cultural biases and metaphysical assumptions. Purification carries out epistemological filtering of secular, materialistic, and counter-tawhid elements without rejecting all Western scientific findings. Reconstruction integrates the purified knowledge into a tawhid framework through a creative synthesis that makes the principle of divinity the constitutive foundation. Meanwhile, application implements the reconstructed knowledge in the form of educational curricula, public policies based on *maqasid sharia*, and ethical technological innovation that maintain methodological rigor while oriented toward human welfare. The integrative orientation of Kantian criticism and al-Faruqi's Islamization of Knowledge not only provides an alternative epistemology to the deadlock of the science-religion dichotomy, but also paves the way for the birth of an integrative scientific paradigm that is relevant to the Indonesian context and the challenges of the contemporary era.

D. Conclusion

The effort to analyze the idea of Islamization of Knowledge through the lens of Kant's criticism, at least it can be concluded that the identification that is present refers to several challenges and potential integration between the two, namely: First, the relationship with the

limitations of reason in metaphysics, where in this case al-Faruqi places the principle of the oneness of God (tawhid) as the basis of epistemology which means that science must be integrated with the metaphysical belief that God is the source of all knowledge and sees the oneness of God as the principle that guides science. Meanwhile, in the view of Kant's criticism, this will be problematic because Kant limits human knowledge to the world of phenomena and will most likely question how belief in God can be applied in the realm of empirical science even by placing metaphysical knowledge as noumena. Second, the relationship regarding the role of ethics in science initiated by al-Faruqi in the Islamization of Knowledge at least has similarities with Kant's criticism in terms of the importance of ethics in science. al-Faruqi and Kant emphasized that science should not conflict with morality and should advance humanitarian goals that serve the welfare of humanity, should not only pursue narrow secular interests, or in other words, both agree that science should be guided by moral principles.

Although there are fundamental differences between Ismail Raji al-Faruqi and Immanuel Kant related to epistemology and metaphysics, both at least have similarities in placing ethics as the foundation for the development of science. Kant, with his limitations of reason and morality, offers a perspective that can criticize al-Faruqi's approach which tends to include metaphysical elements into science. Kant's and al-Faruqi vision of ethical science and advancing human welfare shows that there is a meeting point in this discourse. Therefore, the integration of Kantian views and al-Faruqi's Islamization project can produce a more holistic approach to the development of science that is not only rational but also related to morality. Islamic criticism as a creative synthesis between Kant's criticism and al-Faruqi's Islamization of science not only offers an innovative epistemological solution to the problem of the science-religion dichotomy through its four operational stages—deconstruction, purification, reconstruction, and application—but also gives birth to an integrative scientific paradigm that is relevant to the Indonesian context and is able to answer contemporary challenges while maintaining methodological rigor and an orientation towards human welfare.

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