### ISLAMIZATION OF KNOWLEDGE OF ISMAIL RAJI AL-FARUQI IN TYPOLOGIES OF SCIENCE AND RELIGION

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**Abstract:** This paper discusses the Islamization of knowledge according to Ismail Raji al-Faruqi. The description of the scientific background and historical intellectuality of al-Faruqi who later initiated the idea of Islamizing knowledge and science, its arguments, methods and ways of working, as well as the objectives to be achieved with the concept are described analytically. This paper concludes that Islamization of knowledge is positioned as filter group, dialogue and confirmation models in typology of science and religion. The Islamization of knowledge seeks to distill the sciences with Islamic values as a filtering tool. It is also a form of dialogue typology between modern science and religious values. Moreover, it is also seen as a form of scientific confirmation of Islam. The way it works refers to the 5 (five) principles of monotheism or oneness (tawhid), namely: the oneness of God, the unity of the universe, the unity of truth and the unity of knowledge, the unity of life and unity of mankind, with the belief that of all the final set of goals, wills and desires that are built by the estuary finally is God.

**Keywords:** Islamization of knowledge, typology of science and religion, Ismail Raji al-Faruqi.

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Preliminary

Etymologically, Islamization is derived from the word Islam, and Islamization means referring to the meaning of being Islamic or Islamizing activities, such as the word standardization, naturalization, or Christianization. Broadly speaking, the notion of Islamization of knowledge is understood as a step in the effort to embody Islamic values in all disciplines. Islamization seeks to represent knowledge that has character and Islamic identity as a philosophy of life or perspective, that perspective as a whole encompasses the concepts of science (epistemology) and the concept of God (theology). The basic assumption of the Islamization of knowledge is that in Islam science is shaped and sourced from the Islamic perspective of life based on the basic structure of Islamic metaphysics, this basic structure is actually in line with the revelations, traditions, reason, experience and intuition which the series is formed through the educational process. However, the influence of the Western view through the process of westernization and globalization, in the end Islamic education loses its role in linking science with the Islamic way of life. Meanwhile, Islamic beliefs should lead a person to become a perfect Muslim, and the process towards perfection is a process towards the best identity, which is called "Islamization".

According to Mehdi Gulshami, the entry of modern science into Islam at the beginning of the 19th century was accompanied by various reactions from Muslim intellectual circles. However, it happens to be more dominated by its philosophical content, not modern science itself, which influences the views of Muslim intellectuals. Therefore, in his article, Abbas said that Gulshami groups scholars' reactions to science into 4 (four) large groups, namely; 1) groups that reject, 2) groups that accept, 3) groups that filter, and 4) groups that combine.

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This classification is similar even though it is not the same as the four typologies of the relationship between science and religion created by Ian G. Barbour, namely: (1) Typology of conflict, which involves the nature of scientific materialism and biblical literalism. (2) Independent typology, which is to separate the two types in two different regions. (3) Typology of dialogue, which considers presuppositions in scientific endeavors, or explores in the alignment of methods between science and religion. (4) Integration, which consists of natural theology, theology of nature, systematic synthesis (science or religion contributes to the development of inclusive metaphysics).

Meanwhile, John F. Haught divides the approach of science and religion into: conflict, contrast, contact, and confirmation. With that, where is the position of Islamization of knowledge of al-Faruqi? And how does it work? This paper will discuss these two questions.

A Glimpse of Al-Faruqi’s Intellectual Odyssey

Ismail Raji al-Faruqi is a Muslim scholar who is famous for being very prolific and influencing other Muslim scholars in the modern age. He spawned a lasting contribution in the world of Islamic education and is relevant in the study of the development of knowledge in the contemporary era. His thoughts include the study of Islamic religious fields, in which including history, culture, education, interfaith dialogue, economics and even women's issues.

Born in Jaffa, Palestine on January 1, 1921, his father was named ‘Abd al-Huda al-Faruqi who was a qādi (governmental judge), after the Israeli invasion of his country, he and his family fled to Beirut, Lebanon. Al-Faruqi received religious education from his family at home and in the mosque. He studied at the French Dominican Colege des Freres (St. Joseph) school in 1926. After graduating from high school, he continued his studies at the College of Arts and Science of the American University of Beirut. He received his bachelor's degree in 1941, then after that he returned to his country and began a career in the administration of government. His first assignment was to serve as

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Registrar of Cooperative Societies (1942) under the mandate of the British government in Jerusalem. He served until 1945, at the same year he became the District Governor of Galilee in the Palestinian government.

However, in 1948, Israeli Jews occupied Palestine and deprived him and his family of the right to live freely on their land. It seems that, as a form of resistance he carried out many actions on the ground, but was annoyed at the unity of Muslims to fight, finally he decided to move and pursue a career in America.\(^{11}\) Since he was in America, he enrolled at Indiana University’s Graduate School of Arts and Science in 1948. In the following year, he completed his studies for an M.A in the field of philosophy, he did not linger immediately submit an application of study to Harvard University to continue at the same field. He obtained his M.A for the second time in 1951, and in the same department he was very sufficient to continue the doctoral studies. He then wrote a dissertation entitled "Justifying the Good: Metaphysics and Epistemology of Value". However, he decided to return to Indiana University, submit his dissertation here and then obtain a PhD in 1952.\(^ {12}\)

Throughout his studies in America, he experienced many financial difficulties, and to support his financial problems, he worked on various translation projects in collaboration with the American Council of Learned Societies. Indeed, he also worked as a building contractor. His taste and artistry attracted buyers. Even actually he can get many benefits in this field, but he chose to dedicate his life as an academic. In early 1953, he and his wife were in Syria, moved to Egypt and studied at al-Azhar University in Cairo, then obtained another PhD in traditional Islamic sciences, his wife also professionally learned Arabic. Thereby, he was academics with combined science from the West and the Middle East.\(^ {13}\)

On May 27, 1986 (18 Ramadan 1406), al-Faruqi and his wife Lois Lamya al-Faruqi, a professor in Religion and Art on the same campus, were found brutally killed at his home in Wyncote, Pennsylvania. They were killed on a day when they were busy preparing for the welcome and Eid celebration that year. Al-Faruqi, Lois Lamya, and


\(^{12}\) Muhammad Shafiq, *Growth of Islamic Thought in North America: Focus on Ismail Raji al-Faruqi*, p. 87.

\(^{13}\) Muhammad Shafiq, *Growth of Islamic Thought in North America: Focus on Ismail Raji al-Faruqi*, p. 8.
Anmar, their pregnant daughter were attacked and stabbed many times repeatedly, until they were both killed at last and only Anmar survived because she tried to hide to protect Tayma, her youngest sister.\(^{14}\)

**Problems before the Islamization of knowledge**

The Islamization of knowledge was begun with al-Faruqi's difficulties along with his colleague, al-Attas, seeing the situation of Muslims who were increasingly conservative and retarded in the development of science as if making Islam loses strength as well as self-confidence. Muslim became weak and backward in the eyes of the world. Facing this situation, most political leaders moved to westernize in order to compete with the West,\(^{15}\) Muslims were secularized, westernized, and de-Islamized either inside or outside.\(^{16}\) Unfortunately, such efforts are not enough to compete, aside from these efforts failing, Muslims are seen to have become independent and increasingly dependent on the West, thus the problems continually occur among Muslims from day to day.\(^{17}\)

The fact that cannot be negotiated is that Muslims consist of billions of people, large areas and rich land, and their enormous human potential must be able to defeat the skewed view of what is labeled with Islam today. In addition, this is the world's knowledge of belief in Islam; namely the fact that Islam is an integral, beneficial, and realistic religion, where contemporary humanitarian problems must be easily resolved.\(^{18}\)

This setback then has a moving effect on three components:\(^{19}\) political character, economic character, and cultural character.\(^{20}\)


\(^{15}\) Muhammad Shafiq, *Growth of Islamic Thought in North America: Focus on Ismail Raji al-Faruqi*, p. 87.


\(^{17}\) Muhammad Shafiq, *Growth of Islamic Thought in North America: Focus on Ismail Raji al-Faruqi*, p. 87.

\(^{18}\) Muhammad Shafiq, *Growth of Islamic Thought in North America: Focus on Ismail Raji al-Faruqi*, p. 87.

\(^{19}\) Namely countries with Muslims divided politically, not independently and economically underdeveloped, and interest in literacy is very small, ignorance and superstition of development which then has an impact on becoming dogma and blind faith. Even in terms of art, Islamic society seems to have no identity of its own and everything is oriented toward the West.

Speaking of political character, it can be seen how the character of Islamic politics when facing divisions. Islamic countries which were once in the same spirit and umbrella of goal then now running the nation separately and even instead having fight each other.\textsuperscript{21} This has become one of the deterioration. Whereas the things happen oppositely, Islam and Islamization will gain its upturn. In the term of economic character, it explains that Muslims are confined, undeveloped, and left behind, and the reason for this happens is that most Muslims maintain illiteracy. A weak literacy culture adds to this underdevelopment. Likewise with the cultural character, that Muslims fall asleep with the inherited comfort before, they unconsciously born ignorant attitude, they turns to be ignored original cultural values and Islamic traditions. At that time, Western culture and tradition begin to take over.\textsuperscript{22}

Ismail Raji al-Faruqi in his book, *Islamization of Knowledge: General Principles and Work Plans*\textsuperscript{23} and Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas in his book, *Islam and Secularism*\textsuperscript{24} acknowledged initiation of the birth of the Islamization of knowledge. The Islamization of knowledge first emerged during the first world conference on Muslim education at King Abdul Aziz University, Mecca, in 1997. The idea of the concept of Islamization of knowledge was first put forward and carried by Ismail Raji al-Faruqi along with his colleague Muhammad Naquib al-Attas at the conference. According to both of them, the biggest challenge faced by Muslims lies in the challenge of knowledge, that the Islamic education system has been printed in a Western mindset, whereas Western science has been detached from human and divinity values.\textsuperscript{25}

In his book, Muhammad Shafiq states that the basic problems according to Al-Faruqi are:\textsuperscript{26}

1. *Fiqh* and *Fāqih* (*Ijtihād* and *Mujtahid*). Attempts to reform the backwardness and conservative attitude have failed for two reasons: first, *ijtiḥād* has been limited to

\textsuperscript{23} Ismail Raji al-Faruqi, *Islamization of Knowledge [Islamization of Knowledge Series; No. 1]* ed. Abdul Hamid Abu Sulayman, (Herndon, USA: The Internation Institute of Islamic Thought, 1989).
\textsuperscript{26} Muhammad Shafiq, *Growth of Islamic Thought in North America: Focus on Ismail Raji al-Faruqi*, p. 87-88.
the Islamic educational system of traditionalist scholars due to the lack of literacy in contemporary Muslim world. In fact, the only way to revive the ability to think creatively is to spread Islamic education and literacy. Second, traditionalist religious thinkers are not trained in modern science, so they are not able to see contemporary issues as a whole.

2. Contradiction and separation between revelation and reason. Contradicting revelation and reason is the most tragic thing that happened in the history of Muslims where this separation is totally unacceptable and contrary to the spirit of Islam. The Qur'an comes with the need for thought and reason is a constant need as is their need for the use of reason and intelligence itself.

3. Separation between action and thought. In Islamic history there is no such thing as separation. A leader is a thinker and a thinker is also a leader. When the separation of these two things happens, that is when there Islam reaches its decadence.

4. Culture and religion dualism. As with the previous points above, culture and religion dualism gave birth to a branching in the life of the Islamic community namely educational institutions with excessively spiritualistic tendency and with excessively materialistic neglectful of the substantial values, and these two continued to conflict with each other.

The idea of Islamization was born from the loss of consciousness and the decline of knowledge which is essentially natural in nature, because science cannot stand free of value. On the contrary, science is full of values. The Islamization of science aims to realize all aspects of knowledge, including aspects of terminology, epistemology, framework or framework, concepts, assumptions, theories and methodologies and the process merges into the worldview and the principles, values and norms of Islam.

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Islamization of Knowledge

The Islamization of knowledge according to al-Faruqi should move from within the Islamic community itself. According to him, the decline of Muslims is very evident in the field of science. In this context, Islamization of sciences as gift from God is human are keeping endeavours to understand nature and His creation. It signifies re-testing process of the two sources of knowledge; religious interpretation of revealed knowledge and human knowledge of the world to avoid and eliminate the contradiction between the both.28 The Islamization of knowledge does not mean to produce an absolute rule sentence, because there will certainly be more than one theory or statement for each of the existing issues. At one time, one theory can be proven true and at another time it is proven wrong.29

According to al-Faruqi, the biggest problem faced by Muslims in the 15th Hijri century was how to solve the problem of education. For him, there is no hope of becoming better and reviving knowledge, barring by changing and reforming the education system in a new form. The dualism and bifurcation system in science which divides the educational model into Islamic and secular models must be eliminated. Both must be combined into one form. Again, newer developing systems must be incorporated into the spirit of Islam, and must function as an integral part of ideological programs.30

Science in Islam should no longer be in the form of imitation or tracing from the Western world, knowledge in the Islamic world should find its own identity. The education system must have a mission where the mission is solely aimed at realizing advanced Muslims. What is sought from the Islamization of knowledge is to realize understanding and rethinking and rebuild human values, social and natural science disciplines by giving them a basis of consistency based on Islam.31

For al-Faruqi, the approach used was to reclaim all the treasures of Western science in an Islamic framework, to rewrite textbooks and various scientific disciplines

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with an insight into Islamic teachings. In line with al-Faruqi, al-Attas said that the first path of the Islamization of Science is that western science must be cleansed first of the elements that contradict Islamic teachings, then be formulated and integrated with Islamic elements and essential key concepts, thus rebuilding comprehensive science.

The Islamization of knowledge means to Islamize or sterilize science that has been absorbed from the West and developed and used as a reference in the discourse of the development of the Islamic education system and its institutions. The goal is to obtain science that is closely related to Islamic character and characteristics which includes aspects of faith, goodness and justice for people individually and socially between humans. This Islamization of science movement has the goal of advancing Islamic civilization which has currently fallen into the progress of science and technology, and decreasing the deterioration of the conditions of the people, and also the Islamization of this science can align or integrate religious and modern science in the education process.

From this, it can be understood that what is desired by the Islamization of knowledge is that how the developing science can run and adapted to Islamic values and corridors, so that science becomes directed, properly based on Islam, religious, and moral, and does not develop on the contrary it has secularistic, materialistic implications and is diametrically opposed to Islamic values. In America, this term is like a symbol of great enthusiasm to give the style of Islam into various branches of scientific discipline. Even so, the idea of the Islamization of knowledge invited a response from various Muslim intellectual circles for various reasons. Both supporting and rejecting, each of them with their argument. The Islamization of knowledge according to al-Faruqi is an attempt to Islamize scientific disciplines, producing handbooks at the university level by re-establishing modern scientific disciplines with Islamic vision.

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Principles of Islamization of Knowledge

Islamization according to al-Faruqi is an attempt to redefine, rearrange data, rethink arguments and rationalization related to the data, reassess conclusions and interpretations, re-project objectives and do all of them in such a way that these disciplines enrich the insights Islam and beneficial for the cause (ideals). The Islamization of knowledge in the view of Ismail Raji al-Faruqi must refer to several principles, namely:

1. The principle of monotheism/oneness of God/tawḥīd (The Unity of Allah). The concept of monotheism becomes the most basic principle of Islamic teachings and in relation to the Islamization of knowledge (integration of knowledge), has become the most important principle of the principles of Islamic epistemology, so that it also becomes the unifying principle or integration of human knowledge.

2. The Unity of Creation. The unity of the universe means that the universe created by God is an integral whole because it is a single creation. All forms of the universe and their order, their circulation and beauty have all been arranged by Him in accordance with the sunnatullah (materialized provisions of God).

3. The unity of truth and knowledge (The Unity of Truth and Knowledge). Unity of truth and unity of knowledge mean that emerging knowledge requires a critical reason for truth. Reasoning ability does not always obtain truth if it is not guided by the existence of revelation.

4. The Unity of Life, in fact one is the creation of God of all kinds, skin color, flow, tribe and such. Man living in his nature is given the duty of worshiping to Allah. There is no exception for them. Everyone has the same position beside him except the highest level of devotion will be placed in a position of glory.

5. The Unity of Humanity. The unity of mankind means that man was created by God as one people, even though in reality human beings live in tribes and nations but in fact one being.

A Muslim, according to al-Faruqi, considers God merely as an order to be followed and His patterns are actually the ethical needs of creation. The logical

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consequence is that a Muslim must accept the objective reality of the unity of the universe. In addition, al-Faruqi's "monotheistic" view does not seem to wish to be solely trapped by the classical discussion of theological matters, he seeks to direct it to the sociological "function" aspect, which means monotheism becomes a spiritual zeal in process of fundamental dialectics in society. For al-Faruqi, monotheism is the essence of Islamic civilization. In addition to being the core of religious experience, it should also be a worldview in the life of a Muslim, with full awareness that God is the ultimate of all series of final desire and purposes.37

**Criticism of Al-Faruqi's Thoughts**

As a scientist, al-Faruqi's work is not without flaws and criticism. Nevertheless, his efforts to create a progressive and independent Muslim community should be duly appreciated. The Islamization of al-Faruqi science has a fundamental principle in making reforms that hold to the beliefs and essence of Islam as a religion that is believed by Muslims. From the concepts he offered, many were inspired by establishing of schools and sort of institutions which accommodate fundamental Islamic values. Unfortunately, for a project that contains such brilliant concepts and thoughts, his efforts have not reached its final yet. He outlines the basic principles of the Islamization of knowledge both as a concept and as a project. He did explain the principles that are the basis of the Islamization of science both as a concept of thought and as a project, but if this is called a project, then this project has not yet appeared in its complete form.

I argue there are a few points that are missing from this project which should be fulfilled to realize the purpose of Islamization of knowledge raised by al-Faruqi, namely:

1. Al-Faruqi explained in detail the concept of this Islamization project, but he did not show explicit examples or evidence of the work of Islamization of knowledge. However, this is quite reasonable, because the Islamization of knowledge is a project that requires long-term work, while he turns out to be dead before he finished it.
2. The second problem which I think it is strongly influential in the development of concept and project of Islamization of knowledge itself is Islamization raised by al-

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Faruqi is "definitive" one, viz. redefining all knowledge especially those coming from the West, into values and principles of Islam. This is a very difficult thing to do, and this also should be the reason why Islamization of knowledge moves slowly. Only few people continue to work or apply it not to call it nothing at all.

**Conclusion**

Basically the Islamization of knowledge refers to efforts to purify and release the construction of science from thoughts that are in opposition to Islam. Islamization is not just an activity of Islamic verses and labeling of a science, but rather a process of fostering and building an appropriate methodology based on the Islamic concept, so that the emerging knowledge will follow the construction outlined by Islam which originates from God Almighty.

Based on the classification and typology of the relationship between science and religion according to Mehdi Gulshami, Ian G. Barbour and John F. Haught, according to the author the position of Islamization of knowledge is in the filtering group, typology of dialogue and confirmation models. The Islamization of knowledge seeks to distill the sciences with Islamic values as a filtering tool. The Islamization of knowledge is also a form of dialogue typology between modern science and religious values. The Islamization of knowledge can also be seen as a form of scientific confirmation of Islam.

The workings of the Islamization of knowledge based on Ismail Raji al-Faruqi basically refers to the 5 (five) principles of monotheism or oneness namely: the oneness of God, the unity of the universe, the unity of truth and the unity of knowledge, the unity of life and the unity of mankind. For al-Faruqi, monotheism is the essence of Islamic civilization. Monotheism for him in addition to being the core of religious experience, monotheism should also be a worldview in the life of a Muslim, with full awareness that God is the ultimate goal, that God from all series of finalities of all goals, built will and desire.
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