

# The Thought of Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi and Its Influence in Western and Islamic Civilization

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**Abstract**—The results of previous studies show that the Epistemological Concept of Isma'il Raji al-Faruqi includes: Instilling Islamic Insights, Obligations to study Islamic culture, Islamization of Modern Sciences, the use of creative methods, and Tawhid as the orientation of all studies and science turns out to have a strong influence both in the West and Islam, so as to bring up new ideas in the development of modern science, such as the emergence of religious studies in the West and various critical studies of Eastern figures (Muslim) about the Islamization of science, research entitled *The Thought of Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi and its influence on Western Civilization and Islam* "aims to find the influence of Isma'il Raji al-Faruqi thought in the West and Islam. The descriptive –analytical-critical with philosophy theory and religious methods was used in Library Research. The results of this research are: The West which at first did not have the study of Religious Studies as a scientific discipline established it as one of the scientific disciplines in Western universities. While in the East (Islam) emphasizes the implementation of Tawhidullah in studying and developing various scientific disciplines.

**Keywords:** *Islamization of knowledge, Tawhid*

## I. INTRODUCTION

The development of modern science in the West has produced various advances in various aspects of life, especially abundant material benefits, due to various new scientific and technological discoveries. This happened because of the development of the philosophical flow of Rationalism Descartes and David Hume's Empiricism. Unfortunately, that the development of these two streams goes diametrically and unfriendly so that they seem to claim each other for their respective truths without realizing that both have contributed to the birth of scientific and technological advances in the West. [1].

The use of the ability of reason (rationalism) and the senses (empiricism) without being accompanied by values, caused environment with various miseries. then appears Immanuel Kant's criticism tries to combine racialism and empiricism, even though its function still adds elements of value which he calls the imperative category [2]. On the one hand in the East (Islam) there has been a stagnation in various fields especially thought, because the main factor is to assume that the door to ijtihad (the source of the dynamics of knowledge) is closed,

and many Muslims are westernized by modern discoveries. In the midst of the decline of the Muslim community, a prominent figure, Isma'il Raji al-Faruqi, was known for his idea of "Islamization of Knowledge" [3].

Through the creative ideas of Isma'il al-Faruqi in sharing the fields, Muslims are awakened from their deep sleep and begin to rise with new ideas and thoughts due to the influence of a-Faruqi. Likewise, in the West, at first they studied religion without doing studies on other religions called comparative religions, through religious studies conducted by al-Faruqi by way of comparison, then the West began introducing studies of Religious Studies in tertiary institutions.

## II. METHOD

This study examines various literatures relating to epistemological studies, so this research includes literature research. the sources of data used in the form of primary data are Isma'il Raji al-Faruqi's monumental work "Islamization of Science" and secondary data derived from written materials that are relevant to the topics discussed. Research using descriptive-analytical-critical-methods, aims to examine the primary idea of a "scope of problems" enriched by relevant secondary ideas. the focus of critical analytical writing is to describe, discuss and criticize the primary idea. This research uses philosophical-religious analysis. methodologically this research also uses a philosophical approach, trying to think critically, meaning that it is able to show the boundaries of a problem, able to formulate a problem, be able to, be able to place an understanding in its proper position. in this case using the philosophy of science approach (epistemology). religious, so that it can provide a moral foundation for scientific axiology, namely integrating religious understanding related to the development of the islamization of science. philosophical, because this research is carried out in depth, radical, systematic, and universal [4].

### A. The Technique Collection of Data

The collection of data is done using documentation techniques, meaning that data is collected from documents, both in the form of books, journals, magazines, articles, and other scientific works, relating to the title appointed by the researcher.

### B. *The Data Analysis Technique*

In this study, after the data was collected, the data was analyzed to get a conclusion. data analysis is the most important stage of writing, because at this stage it can be done and utilized in such a way as to produce a delivery that can really be used to answer the problems that have been formulated. Descriptive analysis method is an attempt to collect data and compile a data, then analyze the data. the above opinion is reinforced by, the analysis of descriptive data is data collected in the form of words and images not in the form of numbers. this is due to the application of qualitative methods, besides that all that is collected is likely to be key to what has been investigated.

## III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### A. *The Definition Epistemology and Islamization of Knowledge*

There are three main issues studied in epistemology:

First, what are the sources of knowledge? Where does the right knowledge come from and how do we know it? Second, what is the nature of knowledge? Is there really a world beyond our thinking? If there is, can we find it? This is a problem of what is seen (appearance) versus reality. Third our knowledge correct? How do we know right from wrong? This is a matter of validity or verification [5].

Ziauddin Sardar argues that the concept of 'ilm' in Islam, although interpreted as 'knowledge', is different from the concept of Western knowledge in terms of accompanying moral dimension. He said "the concept of 'ilm' combines the effort of hunting knowledge with values, combining factual understanding with aspects of metaphysics, and encouraging insights regarding the balance and original synthesis." [6].

The term 'Islamization of knowledge' was first designed in Mecca in 1977 which was followed up by other conferences in various Muslim countries. The term only sees light in this conference which reveals new and modern aspects of discourse. *The Islamization of Knowledge* by Ismail Raji al-Faruqi came from this conference and effectively functioned as a manifesto of political Islam and the main source of ideology and inspiration for followers throughout the Muslim world [7].

Abasa Mona defines Islamization of Knowledge (IOK) as "the impact or significance of Islamization process on the concept and pursuit of knowledge." IOK is stated by Naquib al-Attas as "the liberation of man first from magical, mythological, animistic, nation-cultural tradition, and then from secular control over his reason and his language." He further explains that Islamization involves firstly with languages, "Language thought and reason are closely interconnected and are indeed interdependent in projecting to man his world view or vision of reality. Thus, the Islamization of language brings about the Islamization of thought and reason. This fact is demonstrated by the Holy Qur'an itself when it was first revealed among the Arabs." [8].

### B. *The Influence Thought of Isma'il Raji al-Faruqi in West*

Isma'il Raji al-Faruqi was appointed as Professor at the Faculty of Religion at Temple University, Philadelphia which was only founded in 1968 until his death in 1986, where the study of new religions was initiated as a new academic field of study, so it was promoted as a basis for all branches of knowledge [8].

Professor Philips appointed al-Faruqi as professor of Islam at Temple University after reading the first article in the field of interfaith dialogue, (Islam and Christianity). a comprehensive and interdisciplinary approach combined with an Islamic rationalist approach to monotheism. From the perspective of religious history, he discovered the emergence of Islam as a movement in the tradition of Arab monotheism - a madzhab in the universal history of religions [9].

As a scientist, Al-Faruqi has held various important positions, such as: Head of Islamic Studies at Temple University in the United States, Director of the Islamic Institute at Chicago University, Director of the International Institute of Islamic Thinkers in Washington, and President of the Washington Advanced Study Institute [8]. Subsequently moving to the Islamic studies program at Syracuse University, New York, in 1968, he moved to Temple University, Philadelphia, as a professor and established the Center for Islamic studies at the Institute. In addition, he is also a visiting professor in various countries, such as at Mindanao City University, Philippines, and at Qum University, Iran. He is also the main designer of the curriculum of The American Islamic College Chicago.

Faruqi's contribution in the field of modern historical and phenomenological approaches to religious studies is parallel to the work of non-Eurocentric contributions to knowledge such as by Edward Said, Romila Thapar, Syed Hussein Alatas, Annemarie Schimmel, Nurcholish Madjid, Asghar Ali Engineer, VY Mudimbe, and Walter Mignolo, etc. [9].

### C. *The Influence Thought of Isma'il Raji al-Faruqi in Islam*

The concept of Tawhid as the basis of the Islamization of Science.

If a question is raised from which concept should Islamic science be built? to answer that, we must look at and re-explore the concept of monotheism (unity), and this concept will be implicated in theories of science (science). Al-Faruqi's Islamic thinking about the Islamization of science has had considerable influence on subsequent scientists. Especially in formulating the concept of monotheism as a foundation in the study of science.

The concept of monotheism is usually translated as the Oneness of God [10]. This concept is an all-embracing value if it is later confirmed to be the unity of humanity, unity between humanity and nature, and unity between science and values. It is the essence of Islamic social thought and behavior. From monotheism emerged the concept of the *khilafah*: that humans are not independent of God, but are responsible to God both for their scientific and technological activities. The concept of representation (*khilafah*) implies that humans do not have anything exclusive, but are responsible for maintaining and

maintaining harmony in their homes on earth. Thus, the heroic concept of science, whereby scientists may conquer and dominate nature, has no place within this framework [6].

Conversely, by performing contemplative obligations (worship), awareness of monotheism and *khilafah* will arise. It is contemplation (worship) that will act as a factor that integrates scientific activities with Islamic value systems. Worship or contemplation about the oneness of God has various manifestations, where the search for knowledge is one of the greatest [6].

Monotheism is a macro paradigm, and the *khilafah* is a suitable principle within the framework of extracting science (science) to improve 'adl (all forms of justice) in the interests of society (*ishtishlah*) [11]. But is the pursuit / search of all knowledge a worship? The concept of science, *ilm*, which is one of the values developed within the Islamic framework, is one of the most widely written and debated concepts.

The concept of "ilm" in traditional Islamic terms [12], is as knowledge that originates from the principal's order and goes to the principal's order as well [12]. Knowledge in Islam is the Holy. This can be seen with the mention of the nature of Allah, the All-Knowing (Knower, 'Alim) on everything. All Knowledge comes from God, and He is the source of reality and originality. Allah is All-Right (Al-Haq / the Truth) and all knowledge in Islam leads to the discovery of truth (al-Haqiqah) like the word of Allah Q.S. 37: 38 [13]. In the modern world there is a reduction of the conception 'ilm, before all knowledge including mathematics, considered sacred, became the conception of science as a purely profane form of knowledge [14].

In general, science is divided into two categories: namely revealed science, which provides an ethical and moral framework; and non-revealed knowledge, that is, livelihoods become an obligation for Muslims under the guidance of worship. Non-revelation science is further divided into two categories: *fardhu ain*, which is essential for each individual to maintain ethics and morality, and *fardhu kifayah*, which is necessary for the survival of society as a whole. In this framework, the search for knowledge for the benefit of individuals or communities is worship. There is no place here for ideas: science for science. " That purely utilitarian science as an end in itself is also an idea rejected by this framework [6].

Citing the opinion of Zianuddin Sardar, who mapped a comparison between Western science and Islamic Science, Sardar gave the parameters of both sciences. Measures of Western science include: 1. Belief in rationality; 2. Science for science; 3. The only method, a way to find out reality; 4. Emotional neutrality as a key prerequisite for reaching rationality; 5. Be impartial, a scientist must care only about the products of new knowledge and the consequences of their use; 6. Absence of bias: the validity of scientific statements depends only on the evidence of their application, and not on the scientist who carries them out; 7. Dependency of opinion: scientific statements are only made on the basis of convincing evidence; 8. Reductionism: the dominant way to achieve scientific progress; 9. Fragmentation: science is an activity that is too complicated, so it must be divided into disciplines and

sub disciplines; 10. Universalism: although science is universal, its fruits are only to those who can afford it, thus taking sides; 11. Individualism: which believes that scientists must keep their distance from social, political, and ideological problems; 12. Neutrality: science is neutral, is it good or bad; 13. Group loyalty: the results of new knowledge through research are the most important activities and need to be upheld; 14. Absolute freedom: every restraint or mastery of scientific research must be resisted; 15. The purpose of justifying means: because scientific research is noble and important for the welfare of humanity, every means - including the use of live animals, human life, and the fetus - is justified for the sake of scientific research [6].

The measurements of Islamic science, namely: 1. Believe in revelation; 2. Science is a means to gain Allah's pleasure: it is a form of worship that has a spiritual and social function; 3. Many methods are based on reason and revelation: objective and subjective, all are equally valid; 4. Emotional commitment is very important to elevate spiritual and social science endeavors; 5. Siding with the truth: that is, if science is a form of worship, then a scientist must care about the consequences of his findings as well as the results; worship is a moral action and its consequences

must be morally good; preventing scientists from becoming unscrupulous agents; 6. Subjectivity: the direction of science is shaped by subjective criteria: the validity of a science statement depends both on the evidence of its implementation and on the goals and views of the people who carry it out; the recognition of subjective choices in the emphasis and direction of science requires that scientists respect their limits; 7. Test opinions: scientific statements are always made on the basis of inconclusive evidence; to be a scientist is to be an expert, as well as a moral decision maker, on the basis of inconclusive evidence so that when convincing evidence is gathered it may be too late to anticipate the destructive consequences of one's activities;

9. Holistic: science is an overly complex activity that is divided into smaller layers; it is an interdisciplinary and holistic understanding; 10. Universalism: the fruit of science is for all humanity and science and wisdom cannot be exchanged or sold; something immoral; 11. Community orientation: the extraction of science is the obligation of the community (*fard al-kifayah*), both scientists and the public have rights and obligations that believe there is interdependence between the two; 12. Value orientation: science, like all human activities, is full of values; it can be good or bad, halal or haram; the science which is the seed of war is evil; 13, loyalty to God and His creatures: the result of new knowledge is a way to understand God's verses and must be directed to improve the quality of His creation: human, forest and environment. It is God who provides legitimacy for this endeavor and, therefore, must be supported as a general act and not a business of a particular group; 14. Science management is an invaluable resource: it cannot be wasted and used for crime; it must be managed and planned well and must be compelled by ethical and moral values; 15. Objectives do not justify means: there is no difference between science goals and means: both should be permitted (halal), that is, within the limits of ethics and morality [6].

Science, which is understood to be limited meaning as objective, organized, and orderly knowledge of the order of the universe, is not merely the product of modern thought. These forms of knowledge also grew extensively in pre-modern civilizations such as China, India, and Islamic civilization. These pre-modern sciences differ from modern science in terms of their goals, methodologies, sources of inspiration, and philosophical assumptions about humans, knowledge, and the reality of the universe.

Knowledge of the One, about God and His Oneness. It is worth repeating that the principle of Divine Unity (monotheism) is the central message of Islam. In the classification of Islamic knowledge throughout history, knowledge of monotheism is always the highest form of knowledge and the ultimate goal of all intellectual endeavors [15].

Spiritual knowledge is not limited to the world of the holy spirit. It also deals with the manifestations of the spirit in various levels of reality that make up the universe. The fundamental component of Muslim knowledge about God is knowledge of the universe as one of the effects of divine creative action. Knowledge of the relationship between God and the world, between Creator and creation, or between Divine Principles and cosmic manifestations, is the most fundamental basis of unity between science and spiritual knowledge. In Islam, the most important sources for this kind of knowledge are the Qur'an and the hadith of the Prophet [15].

The Qur'an is a source of Islamic intellect and spirituality. It is the basis not only for religion and spiritual knowledge but for all kinds of knowledge. It is the main source of inspiration for Muslim views on the integration of science and spiritual knowledge. This idea of cohesiveness is a consequence of the idea of cohesiveness of all kinds of knowledge. The latter in turn is derived from the principle of the Oneness of God which is applied to the realm of human knowledge.

Humans obtain knowledge from various sources and through various ways and means. But all knowledge ultimately comes from the Knowing God. According to the Qur'anic view, human knowledge about spiritual objects and things is possible because God gave him the faculties needed to know. Many Muslim philosophers and scientists believe that in the act of thinking and knowing, the human mind gets enlightened from the divine mind.

The Qur'an is not a book of science. But he gave knowledge of the principles of science, which he always associated with metaphysical and spiritual knowledge. The call of the Qur'an to "read in the name of your Lord" has been faithfully obeyed by every generation of Muslims. The commandment has been understood with the understanding that the search for knowledge, including scientific knowledge, must be based on the foundation of our knowledge of God's reality. Islam, in fact, gives validation to a science only if it is organically related to the knowledge of God and about the spirit world. Therefore, Islamic science has a religious and spiritual character. According to Ibn Sina, a science is called true science if it connects knowledge about the world with knowledge of Divine Principles [15].

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#### *D. The Contribution of Isma'il Raji al-Faruqi's to Environmental Preservation*

As well as a book of revelation, according to Nasr, the entire contents of the Qur'an call man back to Allah SWT. The Qur'an not only guides life in this world but also continues to call people to the source, to the Original. That is why often one or several verses relating to certain ideas about humans or social rules are interspersed with a call back to Allah, and by mentioning His Name all creatures receive His blessings, His care and His laws [14].

Isma'il Raji al-Faruqi has given sharp criticism on the progress of the west that does not pay attention to the environment, because actually humans are responsible for environmental sustainability in carrying out its function as the *Khalifah Fil Ardh* [14].

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The Koran is a message that lives in society so that it requires an unsubstantiated decipherment. The position of God in Islamic thought is very important. because He is the Essence that becomes the estuary for all human actions. If we look carefully that every time we want to do something, we must start with intention [16].

Human relations and God have an impact on relationships between people. This relationship is built on the basis of what has been revealed by God in the Scriptures in the form of concrete commands and rules, not only that the rules are in the form of imperatives, but at the same time have the effect of legal sanctions, both in the form of fines or physical.

At the same time God, in human relationships, caring for nature is their shared responsibility so that God's commands are not merely limited to human attitudes toward others, but also to nature, a place to preserve life [16].

The relationship between God and humans can be used as a reference to further understand the relationship between humans and humans and at the same time with nature. Not only, nature is a human secret, but also as a place for humans to realize their humanity. Besides humans before God, humans and nature are the same position before God that is equally creatures.

God as the highest focus of all human behavior and nature. This depiction at the same time shows us, that each aspect shows a close and inseparable relationship. Humans cannot just consider nature without paying attention to what God has to say about the environment.

In addition, we can see that the position of nature is also equal to humans, and this shows that we cannot treat nature arbitrarily because the position as caliph on the earth is not automatically given the power to dredge the wealth of the earth without regard for eco-system and balance. On the basis of the explanation of the three closely related, it appears in the picture below:

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Through an in-depth study of the influence of Isma'il Raji al-Faruqi's thoughts on Western civilization and Islam, it can be explained as follows: **First**, in the West studying religion cannot stand alone as in the past, but through the comparison of religion which is one of the scientific disciplines in tertiary institutions. **Second**, in the modern era studying religion can use scientific theories such as phenomenology and history.

The West can learn from Isma'il Raji al-Faruqi how to manage nature for the welfare of the human race and its environment.

**First**, Muslims realize the need to develop knowledge based on the concept of Tawheed, so that the results are in accordance with the will and pleasure of Allah. **Second**, existence and the universe with all its contents are God's gifts

to be managed as well as possible by following the rules / laws of God so that they become *rahmatan lil'alam* not damage the environment. **Third**, the Koran, God's revelation is the guideline of human life and must be the basis for the progress and development of knowledge that is not value-free

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