

Islamizing Social Science

The Politics of Islamization of Science on Several Higher Education Institutions in Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

The epistemology of sciences in the academic world is experiencing the challenges and dynamics of today. The dynamics of sciences in the disruptive era experienced significant movement. There are various paradigm shifts within the scope of a particular study. One of them is the development of islamization of science at universities in Indonesia. Islamization of the epistemology of conventional sciences that is considered secular not only in natural science, but also in social science. This is a distinct challenge for social sciences in responding to the islamization of science. Some universities in Indonesia make islamization of science as a new policy in academic even a new vision in the institution. This needs further study, to find out the future epistemological studies of social sciences in response to the islamization of science. In addition, this study is also needed in order to know the dynamics of the study of the social sciences in Indonesia in responding to the islamization of sciences through various policies and institutional vision of higher education. This study will explain the analytical descriptive of the islamization of sciences at several universities in Indonesia. Based on literature studies, this study attempts to explain the dynamics of social sciences especially in respond the islamization. Politics of islamization policy of sciences exist in Indonesia have complex implication to related institution and also academics who are involved in social sciences field.

Keywords: epistemology, islamization of science, university policy

Introduction

The rise of the religious spirit in the contemporary era had a significant impact on the dynamics of science development. The discourse of religious values integration into science appears to respond to the absent of metaphysical recognition in the epistemology of modern science (Armas & Kania, 2013). In addition, the discourse of globalization and post-colonialism has participated in inspiring the movement of integration of religious values towards science, especially in the movement of Islamization of science. Orientalism's discourse and the colonialization of knowledge by the West towards the eastern countries encouraged the emergence of alternative scientific paradigms that were not loaded with western or eurocentric interests.

Conventional science, both natural sciences and social sciences are considered loaded with western interests and culture because of the hegemony and universalize western values into global values. An attempt to apply Islamic principles to conventional science was explored by several Muslim scientists. They are Ismail Raji Al-Faruqi, Sayyed Hosein Nasr, and Syed Naquib Al Attas who at least theoretically formulated plans and actions for the Islamization of science itself. But until now the debate was still limited to theoretical debates and had not yet reached a realistic level to be easily implemented. Although some educational institutions try to carry out the mandate of the Islamization of science optimistically, there is little criticism of the movement of Islamization of science which is seen as utopian and too normative.

The discourse of Islamization of science developed from America to Asia. Such as Faruqi, who is domiciled in America, started the idea of Islamization of knowledge. Then emerged from Iran who also studied in America, namely Sayyed Hosein Nasr. In Malaysia, there is Syed

Naquib Al-Attas. Each of them has a perspective on the Islamization of knowledge that seeks to be applied through institutions affiliated with them. These institutions are like IIIT (International Institute of Islamic Thought) in America and at IIUM (International Islamic University Malaysia) in Malaysia. Institutions engaged in the field of education have tried to make the Islamization of science into a vision and mission that must be achieved. These institutions are trying to apply the act of Islamization of knowledge through sharing strategies.

Indonesia as the country with the largest Muslim population in the world has several universities that have applied the principles of Islamization of science. In the process of interaction between Islam and science, most tertiary institutions are mainly Islamic religious colleges that adhere to two major schools in relation to Islam and science. The two major schools are scientification of Islam and the Islamization of science. The scientification of Islam has a very large influence on Islamic state higher education institutions, where historically it can be traced that many lecturers who teach in these universities are graduates from Islamic studies degree from western countries. Whereas the second flow is the Islamization of science which will be discussed further in this paper. In contrast to scientification of Islam which seeks to apply scientific principles when studying religious phenomena, the Islamization of science seeks to apply Islamic principles and adapt scientific principles to fit the Islamic spirit. Universities that adhere to the flow of Islamization of knowledge in Indonesia are like the University of Darussalam in Gontor, Ibn Khaldun University in Bogor, and other universities which will be discussed further in this paper.

This paper will discuss the dynamics of Islamization of science in several universities in Indonesia at an applicative level and the implications that are manifested in the strategies of Islamization of science within the campus made by the university. Using the study of the latest literature related to the Islamization of science activities in various universities, this paper seeks to trace the strategy and goes further into the broader epistemological implications and political implications of the higher education climate in Indonesia.

Literature review

Regarding the role of a scientific production context that has to do with an interest such as in the context of the Islamization of science, Yusof (2012) has discussed the relationship between power and academic representation in the context of religious and state or political discourse. Academic space becomes a space that is not neutral and becomes a space filled with contestation of political discourse and the legitimacy of power. Academic space legitimates knowledge and produces knowledge that is loaded with interests, especially in the context of western and Islamic concepts. He took examples such as in Malaysia and Turkey. If it is associated with the Islamization of science, the Yusof study can be relevance with the relation of knowledge and power and representation, where institutions that embrace the Islamization of science can be a mirror or representation of certain interest groups (Yusof, 2012).

In this context, Gramsci discusses the role of certain ideologies in the production and reproduction of knowledge. Ideology seeks to produce institutions that are hegemonic in a society that has a latent function in maintaining the political stability of the community. Not only in the context of maintaining the status quo, but the ideology referred to here can also be interpreted as an alternative ideology that appears to be a hegemonic preference in that society. Like conservative Islam or political Islam which is an inseparable part of a certain group of Muslim communities. If it is linked in the context of the Islamization of science with the political concept, a common thread can be drawn in which institutions that have the power to try to produce and reproduce legitimate knowledge such as the Islamization of science. The

effort is perpetuated so that mutual relations occur, where institutions or political groups have strong legitimacy by producing knowledge, namely knowledge that has been "Islamized" and the Islamization of knowledge has institutions that can guarantee the continuity of its vision in Islamizing science (Yusof, 2012).

Islamization of science can be seen in the context of feelings of marginality. Davies (1991) explains that the sentiment of the marginality of Muslim societies can be understood in that context. It is not only in reality that Muslim societies experience fragmentation, destabilization, and colonization, but psychologically such sentiments take root. Marginality, in this case, cannot be separated from the reality of Muslim communities who experience social problems such as poverty, environmental issues, the economy, political instability, and others. Modernity is seen as a regression or setback, which from Islam as the principle of the totality of life becomes back to the era before modernity. Western-style modernity is full of secularism and makes it a single solution to all existing problems.

Knowledge is not present in empty space but is bound by the context of civilization in the Islamization of science. Islamization of science has a vision in building a more civilized civilization. This new intellectual discipline can be seen as an alternative effort in responding to various problems that he considers to be resolved with principles and values that can create a new reality of civilization (al-Attas, 1995). Therefore, the Islamization of science encompasses all aspects of disciplines that build elements of civilization, such as technological developments. The discipline of the natural sciences and the social sciences is the main object of the Islamization of science itself. An example is the institution of Islamic banks that emerged from Islamic economics. The Islamic economy cannot be separated from the process of Islamization of science itself.

Al-Attas views that the Islamization of science is an attempt to assert humans from mythological traditions that are contrary to Islam and from secular understandings (Daud, 1998). Islamization of knowledge for al-attas arises because science is not free of value, but is loaded with certain values. Conventional knowledge is considered a hegemony from the west. This certainly has implications for western values which are full of animating current knowledge production. Al-Attas views that western civilization is not feasible to be consumed before being selected first (Taufik & Yasir, 2017).

Many criticisms were existed against the Islamization of science. Rahman explained that science is actually neutral and cannot be Islamized. Science is something that is pure and free of elements of error. That is, errors are the responsibility of the user, not the knowledge. For Rahman, the Islamization of science itself is an unnecessary effort. For Abdul Karim Soroush, the Islamization of science is impossible and illogical. Science is determined by scientific truth propositions and not in terms of Islam or not Islam (Salafudin, 2013)

Tibi (1995) in his study saw the Islamization of knowledge as a project of the politics of fundamentalist knowledge. Using claims of de-modernization, this project takes refuge behind the postmodern narrative. By trying to elaborate on the Gellner approach, he saw this project based on postcolonial and postmodern arguments such as Orientalism and western hegemony. Islamization of knowledge manifests resistance to the west or infidel. According to Tibi, this is an indigenization process which is a response from third world countries. Islamic world conflict cannot be separated from the reality of "the rise of the west".

Tibi (1995) also describes the dilemma of Muslim fundamentalists who simultaneously adapt the instruments of modernity but reject the cultural dimensions that are generated such as their

values. Another dilemma in which Muslim fundamentalists schedule Islamic Islamization is not traditionalists, but modernists. Sardar (1985) explains that the west has done epistemological imperialism and Islamic epistemology is an alternative to that. Tibi (1995) sees this as a rejection of the Cartesian methodology considered as a threat to religious beliefs. Al-attas responded to this by de-dewatering knowledge.

Stenmark conducted a comparative study of the perspective of science that uses religious labels, which he called partisan science. He made a comparison of Islamic science, Christianity, femininity, and others. he criticized the concepts of particularization of science as in that context (Stenmark, 2005). Usep fahrudin criticized the Islamization of science. Islamization of science is considered piracy. Modern scholarship develops science while the Islamization of science is just about doing the recognition of the work. This means that it can be said in the perspective of Islamization of knowledge, Fahrudin considered that this kind of captured the work of others and Islamized it. Abdul Salam and Pervez Hoodhboy who once received a Nobel Prize doubted the indigenous results of science such as Islamic science, Christianity, Jewish science, etc. Abdul Karim Soroush also claims that the reality of the object of science is not about islami or not(Salafudin, 2013).

The emergence of a neutral science debate or partisan science is at the point of integration of values that exist in the scientific discipline. Modern sciences are considered secular and claim against them lack of spirituality. Western modern science is considered Weber as being used as a division of the world, for Elliot such as empty load, and Markuzel as being sub-human. This problem raises a discourse on science whether it is seen as value-free or value-added (Sajjadi & Barkhordari, 2008).

Kartanegara agrees with the Islamization of science, with a few notes. First, the element of Islam in the word Islamization does not have to be understood strictly as a teaching that must be found literally in al-Quran and hadith but should be seen from its spirit which must not conflict with fundamental Islamic teachings. Secondly, the Islamization of science is not merely labeling science with verses of the Qur'an or hadith which are deemed suitable for scientific discoveries but operate at the epistemological level. Third, the Islamization of science is based on the assumption that science is never totally free of value (Kartanegara, 2005).

Methods

This paper seeks to analyze the Islamization of science and its reality in several universities in Indonesia and its impact on the academic climate and the contestation of scientific discourse and Islam in Indonesia. By using a qualitative analytical approach, this paper elaborates secondary data such as the latest literature related to the Islamization of science and the various current activities of activities which tend to apply to the Islamization of science in higher education. Secondary data such as magazines or journals produced from institutions or higher education that adhere to the principle of Islamization of science are examined further in this paper. The literature study of the academic debate on the Islamization of science is elaborated with the reality of Islamization of science in several universities in Indonesia.

Purposively, this paper focuses on the discussion of Islamic private universities, especially those that have the vision to internalize the principles of Islamization of science in the campus academic climate. Symptoms of the application of Islamic values in science reflected in various policies and applicative steps in several universities related to the Islamization of science need a more in-depth discussion regarding the impacts that have significance to the existing academic climate by conducting this study.

Results and discussion

Islamization of science in several higher education institutions in Indonesia: Strategies and Dynamics

Some universities in Indonesia began to make Islamization of science the main agenda applied in the campus academic climate. Some of these universities are Ibn Khaldun University in Bogor, Darussalam Gontor University in Ponorogo, Sultan Agung Islamic University in Semarang, Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta, Muhammadiyah University of Yogyakarta, and several other universities. The campuses that apply Islamization of science are mostly private universities affiliated with foundations that are engaged in Islamic fields. Whereas the Islamic higher education of the country is more inclined towards the flow of Islamic scientification because it seeks to integrate Islam and science by expanding the method of Islamic study so that it can be touched by the western scientific method. Whereas Islamization of science aims to Islamize scientific methods claimed conventionally from the west.

The development of the Islamization of science in Indonesia cannot be separated from the emergence of important figures. The important figures are Adian Husaini, Hamid Fahmi Zarkasyi, Anis Matta, and other figures. The term of *ulama yang intelek dan intelek yang ulama* is an important terminology to be understood by these figures. The new movement of the Islamization of science has become an alternative scientific movement born of a background of anxiety towards western science which is considered to be empty of the values of civilization (Husaini, 2010). The discourse on the Islamization of science in Indonesia was initiated by scholars who had Islamic boarding school backgrounds. Like Hamid Fahmi Zarkasyi who is the caregiver of the modern Gontor Islamic boarding school and several other figures.

Modern boarding schools have a university whose main goal is to develop the Islamization of science. One of the leaders from there was Hamid Fahmy Zarkasyi who was an important figure who contributed to the development of Islamization of knowledge at the University of Darussalam Gontor, Ponorogo, East Java. Zarkasyi was very active in propagating the Islamization of knowledge through various print media (initiating Islamic thought journals in the *Republika* newspaper and Islamic magazine) and through studies. In the University of Darussalam, there is the Center for Occidental Studies as the center of Western studies. Besides that, there is also a center for Islamization of sciences. These study centers have produced products such as college books from an Islamic perspective. In addition to through study centers, the university applies courses that must be taken by each department, namely Islamic worldview courses. This course is the basis for forming the mindset of how to integrate Islam in science while still making Islam the main guideline. The university has general and religious study programs.

In addition, the Ibnu Khaldun University also applied the perspective of Islamization of science in its academic climate. Islamization of science became the main vision in scientific development at the university (Hafidhuddin, 2013). The figure who plays an important role in this matter is Adian Husaini and Didin hafidhuddin. Adian Husaini served as chairman of the Islamic education master program at the university. While Didin Hafidhuddin was a postgraduate director at the university. The thought of Husaini is seen in his contribution to integrating worldview courses in his curriculum as a compulsory subject. Adian Husaini is a figure who is aggressively propagating the importance of *adab* in science. He was influenced by al-Attas' thinking about *adab* in education.

On the campuses of the Muhammadiyah Foundation, such as the Muhammadiyah University of Yogyakarta and Muhammadiyah of Surakarta University that carry out Islamic integration in the social sciences humanities which gave birth to Islamic economic disciplines and Islamic education. Muhammadiyah University of Yogyakarta collaborated with the International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT) to develop the Islamization of science, especially in the economic field. While the postgraduate of the Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta began to carry out Islamic scientific integration in the form of Islamic worldview courses in its Islamic education master's program.

And there are still several universities in Indonesia that make the Islamization of science their main vision. Generally, the strategy used to internalize the Islamization of science in the curriculum is to integrate Islamic worldview courses, Islamization of lecture textbooks, lecturers' training on Islamization of science in collaboration with the center of the study of Islamization of science such as with IIIT, and others.

Negotiating social sciences with Islamization of science paradigm: a case on political science context

Universities that apply the Islamization of knowledge can be seen as a tendency for preference and political affiliation in a liquid manner. Islamization of knowledge in the role of reproducing vital knowledge of knowledge, for example, is related to Islamic politics. In this context, Islamic politics in the question is studied not only scientifically hegemony with a secular approach but also based on the revelation of God because the Islamization of knowledge recognizes the revelation of God as a source of knowledge. The discourse contestation that takes place is when the interpretation of religious doctrines which are the main principles in academic studies is an understanding that can be understood as a particular political representation, especially Islamic conservatives. Many concepts are often debated in academic spaces and public spaces, such as non-Muslim leadership, religious and political relations, and other concepts which tend to be Islamization of science trying to apply value-added in its academic studies. Conventional political science is considered to be created in a secular space in the west and is irrelevant to its application to the Indonesian Muslim majority. Of course, higher education which embraces the Islamization of science produces political discourse that seeks to fight the western secular political discourse.

As an exemplar, in an article in *Islamia* magazine (Muammar, 2009), the topic is dewesternization and desecularization. *Islamia* magazine is a weekly magazine published by INSISTS (Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization). INSISTS was affiliated with the pioneers of Islamization of science project. The analysis of Tibi (1995) becomes very relevant to be applied in this context. In the article, a discussion about conventional political models was criticized based on Islamic perspectives. This article criticizes the failure of democracy which creates various problems such as money politics and criticism of political secularism. Furthermore, the call to de-modernize and desecularize conventional political models by applying Islamic principles in politics. Political Islamization is a necessity for the Islamization of science. This discourse will often clash with secular conventional political discourse. For example, in non-Muslim leadership. Using theological legitimacy elaborated with criticisms of secularism, leadership in politics is also based on religious principle.

Not only in this article, but other articles as a result of the process of Islamization of knowledge are also in the *Jurnal Pemikiran Islam Republika*. There also touches on contemporary issues that are relevance to the principles of Islam. For example in reviewing things that are morally often justified, such as LGBT, Communism, and others. Not only that, many sensitive themes tend to be politicized by certain interests with theological propositions. The politicization of

religion in various discourses of knowledge about public space is actually a major tendency in the project of Islamization of science.

Contestation of discourse in matters of religious and political relations is complicated. Neutral academic space can be a wet space for certain political interests especially as the legitimacy of Islamic conservative groups in the Islamization of this knowledge. Higher education can be the main political base negotiated by a certain group with the legitimacy of the interpretation of Islamic doctrine that is more conservative than the other groups. The Islamization perspective of science seeks to develop the spirit of religious revivalism so that religious values can live in every aspect of life including aspects of education. The principle of totalism which is accompanied by traditional religious interpretation makes a sharp criticism made by liberal Islamic circles. Liberal Islamic groups do not know the term Islamization of science. Science is a neutral space that cannot be immediately Islamized.

Conclusion

Islamization of science is a new alternative to the scientific paradigm that integrates Islamic values into the epistemological structure of modern social sciences that are considered to be loaded with western values. By using a unique strategy, the Islamization of science has a warm place to develop in universities that are affiliated with Islamic education foundations such as Muhammadiyah and Gontor. Its nature that is in favor of certain values has the potential to become the legitimacy of certain Islamic groups in terms of the politicization of religion. The politicization of religion with the legitimacy of science has far more complex implications to be further deepened in social science discourse.

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