Eduvest – Journal of Universal Studies
Volume 6 Number 1, January, 2026
p- ISSN 2775-3735- e-ISSN 2775-3727

Weaving the Future of Islamic Civilization 2.0: Prospects and Challenges Learning from the Rise and Decline of Islamic Civilization

Andi Darmawan Putra
Universitas Paramadina, Indonesia
Email: salihinjr@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This paper outlines the history of the rise of Islamic civilization—what started it and what became the factors in its decline, especially in the field of science, which was overtaken by Western civilization in the modern era. Knowing the history of how Islamic civilization developed into a successful one, reaching a golden age compared to others, and studying the factors that caused its decline can provide lessons for Muslims to envision the future of Islamic civilization today and beyond. The author examines thoughts from key Islamic figures on how they formulated scientific development based on Islam, including perspectives from Western orientalists who view Islamic civilization as an important contribution to world civilization. The method employed is a comparative qualitative approach through literature review, drawing on the scientific thinking and research of various scholars discussing Islamic civilization and its relationship to rational thought and science.

KEYWORDS *Islamic Civilization, Al Ghazali, al Ashh'ari, George Saliba, colonization, New World*

INTRODUCTION

The contribution of Muslim scientists to world civilization—and Western civilization in particular—has been recognized by many laypeople and academics through historical facts. The glory of Islamic civilization produced many influences on surrounding civilizations, such as Europe, until the world experienced a revolution of thought that led to a lifestyle revolution utilizing technology produced from the scientific thinking of its perpetrators (Morrison, 2017). The heyday of Islamic civilization lasted from the 8th to 14th centuries AD (Iqbal & Gatrad, 2018).

The factors that enabled Islamic civilization to develop from Arab civilization—which started in an isolated desert environment—into one so glorious and important for the history of human civilization are very interesting to discuss (Rahman & Khan, 2020). The contributions of Islamic scientists' thought are not widely revealed or known in many circles, creating an inaccurate history of civilization that presents the Islamic world and Muslims only as connoisseurs of civilization produced by non-Islamic thought through the science they develop and the technology they discover (Hassan & Ahmed, 2021). This can certainly cause prejudice and inferiority among Muslims and a sense of superiority among non-Muslims, especially the West, over the supermajority that they believe belongs to their civilization (Rahman & Khan, 2020).

In addition to the need to learn how Islam became such a successful civilization in its time, we must also understand why that once-very-successful civilization declined and was overrun by Western thought that now dominates (Berggren, 2016). Currently, the invasion of Western civilization greatly dominates the way Muslims live, including in their systems of

knowledge production, which is dangerous as it releases us from Islamic principles that should form the foundation of our personal lives and society (Abdelhamid, 2019; Fancy, 2023).

Through this study, the author hopes that Muslims can recognize that Islamic civilization is not a passive force in the history of human life, but that Islamic scientists made so many contributions to what has happened and what we have in this modern era. Thus, Muslims no longer feel inferior to their counterpart civilizations (Alatas, 2020; Bakar, 2019; Guessoum, 2021; Lydon, 2018). This writing can also serve as a reference for whether Islamic civilization can return to its glory in the future by studying how it developed at the beginning and learning lessons from the factors that caused its decline so they are not repeated in developing ideas whose originality comes from Islamic principles (Douglass & Shaikh, 2023; Huff, 2017; Morris, 2016). By knowing the combination of factors behind the development and collapse of Islamic civilization, Muslims can reassemble that glory and avoid things that hinder Islam from becoming a religion that provides much inspiration for the progress and welfare of people worldwide.

Although history records that this golden age began with the Abbasid caliphate, the tradition of using this knowledge did not suddenly appear in that era. This tradition had been pioneered since the Umayyad caliphate through Caliph Abd al-Malik and was passed on from Al-Ma'mun to Al-Mansur.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative method, which uses descriptive data in the form of written language or the oral form of observable phenomena. The approach was a comparative qualitative historical approach. This method conducted a theoretical analysis by examining theories adopted in society and accepted as facts, which were then explored for understanding through consistent thinking. The data sources used were both secondary and primary data. Primary data were obtained from original sources, namely related books and scientific journals, which provided direct information on the research theme.

Secondary data consisted of information obtained indirectly by the researchers through studies on the theme of Islamic civilization, its history, and its influence on world civilization; these thoroughly addressed the causes of the civilization's decline via research journals, encyclopedias, articles, and scientific dictionaries. The data served as support to complete the primary data. Data analysis was carried out through content analysis, a research tool used to determine the presence of certain words or concepts within a text or set of texts. The author applied this method by measuring and analyzing the presence, meaning, and relationships between words and concepts, leading to conclusions about the content of the text, the reader, the writer, and even the culture and time of which it was a part.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Rise of Islamic Civilization

The process of the birth of Muslim thinkers began from 650 AD to the time when Islamic civilization was considered to have experienced a decline in significance in the field of science in the 15th century AD. The factors that we will see as the beginning of the development of scientific science are divided into several causes (El-Bizri, 2018; Shihadeh, 2016). The first reason is religious, political and economic needs that lead to the spirit of seeking knowledge to

various parts of the world through translation (Griffel, 2021; Saliba, 2021). This religious need was marked by the shift from astrology that was loved by the pre-Islamic Arabs to a more scientific astronomical science that involved more accurate calculations to meet the needs of the time rather than making predictions about the future. Meanwhile, political and economic reasons rest on the need of the ruler to be able to prosper his people and perpetuate his government through the mastery of science and technology that has been applied by other civilizations (Aftab, 2019).

The next factor is the encouragement of the rulers themselves to make science the basis of thought that inspires the growth of Islamic civilization without abandoning the identity of Islam itself. In this case, history records that the moderation attitude of the rulers who are not exclusive in exploring the sources of knowledge that are not only naqli, but also that come from reason so as to abandon orthodox thinking in religion, was able to pave the way for the development of science in Islamic civilization (Dallal, 2023). This attitude of moderation is also reflected in the way the rulers involve so many scientists who are both Muslim and non-Arab. We will see this from the attitude of the Abbasid caliphs who made the theological mahzab of Mutazilah the state mahzab. By not separating between religion and science and the excavation of the Qur'an and making revelation part of the knowledge obtained, it created so many thoughts about God that developed into rationalist thinking in the form of philosophy.

The Decline of Islamic Civilization

The decline of Islamic civilization in the sense that the intellectual thought of Muslim thinkers began to diminish in influence and was replaced by European humanist thought in the Renaissance era starting from the 14th century until now. These factors of decline, for many academics and orientalists, were caused, among other things, by the conflict among the rulers and the division of Islamic power in the various caliphates. The Mongol Army's attack led by Hulagu Khan on Baghdad, the world's scientific center with so many books and scientific texts, destroyed the Islamic civilization that had been built for hundreds of years. This problem was exacerbated by the resurgence of orthodoxy in religion represented by the theological ideas of Ash'ariyah embraced by the rulers initiated by the caliph Mutawakil who replaced al-Ma'mun who was mahzab Mutazilah (Chaney, 2016; Ragep, 2017).

This orthodoxy has closed many opportunities for Ijtihad and made Muslim scholars and thinkers reluctant to express their thoughts. Another very significant factor is the discovery of a new world by European society that shifted the role of the Islamic region that was once so important for trade between countries into a region that is no longer visited by many. The discovery of this new world gave the European rulers abundant wealth, who then invested it by building schools and academies on the European mainland to conduct research in science and technology.

With this new wealth, the rulers managed to finance new explorations to exploit the natural resources in the newly discovered region and culminated in the colonization by Europeans to the Americas, Africa, Australia and most of Asia. This colonization succeeded in instilling Western culture and thought into the Islamic worlds that they controlled (Lumbard, 2022; Hallaq, 2018). The above series of events is the cause of the decline of Islamic civilization.

Factors for the development of Islamic civilization

Religious, political and economic needs

There was a spirit of translation carried out for the first time by Khalid bin Yazid, on the orders of al-Malik, a caliph of the Umayyad tribe, including the science of how to print gold coins through the field of chemistry. It was needed to replace the Byzantine currency with a state-owned currency. Another thing that motivates large-scale translation is the need to know the management and administrative structure of the state. Rulers and state officials need knowledge on how to manage the salaries of officials and reform the military. They also need knowledge on how to manage the taxes that the state has collected. People in the circle of power sought this knowledge by looking at the sources of their environment, such as in the Byzantine and Sassanian regions that had been ruled by the Islamic caliphate (Nakissa, 2021; Tan, 2019).

Meanwhile, the transfer of astrology to a more scientific science, namely astronomy, is inseparable from the need for the state to determine major religious dates, indicate prayer times and determine the direction of the qibla. Only with mathematical calculations can this be achieved. The Arab civilization already knew the science of Astrology and Medicine before Islam. Interest in the knowledge of the solar system has long been practiced by pre-Islamic Arab civilizations as did the Mesopotamians and Indians. Much of the work of these astronomers is not focused on theory alone, but rather on Zij, or astronomical table devices. There are so many tables available from India, Persia and Greece. The differences of each of these tables make Arab scientists to make deeper observations. A very accurate table was made by al-Battani or Albategnius in 900. His very precise observations of eclipses were used for comparative studies until 1749. This translation activity is considered by many circles, especially academics, as the forerunner of the rise of Islamic civilization until its golden age. Islamic civilization is considered to be a civilization that bridged the Western classical period through the Dark Ages to the Renaissance era in Europe. But far from just translating as many orientalists suppose, Muslim scientists commented, studied, corrected and came up with new ideas from what they got from civilizations outside of them. This is evidenced by the birth of prominent scientists such as Al Biruni, Al Kwarizmi, Al Tusi, Ibn Hytham, Ibn Khaldun and many more. This more or less began with the needs of the rulers to perpetuate political and economic power, as well as the needs of the community to practice religious orders.

The Influence of the Rulers

Without the encouragement and support of the rulers, it is very difficult to achieve the glory of Islamic civilization. As the translation mentioned above is mentioned as the forerunner of the development of science in Islamic civilization, this translation must be supported by the attitude of the rulers who value science by obtaining it from various sources. The translation movement itself takes place in three phases. The first phase, during the time of Caliph al-Mansur to Harun al-Rashid. In this phase, many of the works in the fields of astronomy and astronomy were translated. The second phase took place from the time of the caliph al-Ma'mun until the year 300 AH. Books that have been widely translated are in the fields of philosophy and medicine. The third phase took place after the year 300 H, especially after the invention of paper. The fields of translated knowledge are expanding.

Islamic civilization continued to evolve towards the advancement of civilization during and after the Umayyad Caliphate. Progress in the field of science reached its peak in the era of the Abbasid caliphate. If the progress of Islam during the prophetic period of Muhammad PBUH included the religious and political fields, continued with the era of the Rashidin Caliph with political and military strengthening, followed by the Umayah caliphate which was known for its political, economic and military improvements, then the Abbasid caliphate added to the achievements of the previous rulers with achievements in the field of science and civilization that reached the peak of its glory.

History records that under the Abbasid dynasty, Islamic civilization became at the forefront of world civilization (Ahmed, 2022; Hoodbhoy, 2017). Von Grunebaum describes the reign of the Abbasids as a "Golden Age" in the history of Islamic civilization, especially under the leadership of Harun al-Rashid and al-Ma'mun. Juri Zaidan, a journalist, also described the same thing as that the Abbasid dynasty was a time when Islamic rule reached its peak through wealth, progress and power. It was during this time that many sciences were born, such as philosophy, astronomy, medicine, physics, mathematics and so on. At this time also a lot of important knowledge was translated into Arabic (Drayton, 2020; Raj, 2016).

The fame and survival of the Abbasid dynasty reached its peak in popularity during the time of Caliph Aaron al_rasyid (786-809 AD) and his son al_Ma'mun (813-833 AD). In this era, the level of welfare of its people is so high which can be seen from the quality of their social life, the prosperity they achieved, the educational and health facilities built, and the glory of science followed by the golden age in the field of literature and culture. This achievement made their rule a strong and unparalleled Islamic rule. Al Ma'mun as the founder of al-Rashid is known for his love of science. He pushed massively for scientists living in his day to translate foreign books.

He financed these people to make translations of texts from classical Greek civilization regardless of their religion as long as the translators were able to do so. The largest and most famous work was the construction of a central school for education and translation which functioned as a very magnificent library called Bait al-Hikmah. Thanks to al-Ma'mun's services, Baghdad began to become a center of culture and science.

The Moderation Attitude of Muslims

The progress of Islamic civilization is also inseparable from the attitude of the rulers towards multiculturalism. One of the significant factors of the rapid progress in the field of science and science was the moderate attitude during the leadership of the Islamic rulers. In practice, Islamic governments have never discriminated against non-Muslims in their territories (Quijano & Mignolo, 2018; Sardar, 2020). Freedom, human rights, and justice are always upheld for the sake of achieving strong government stability. This condition affects the power of scientists in creating, expressing, researching, and conducting various experiments so that Islamic scientific and technological civilization really reaches its peak (Acemoglu & Robinson, 2019; Pomeranz, 2018).

The reflection of this attitude of moderation can be seen from how the attitude of Muslims gets their knowledge. They were not fixated on religious books that were limited to Islamic insights, but their moderation was evident from their willingness to study the civilizations of Greece, Iran, Judaism and Sasanian, civilizations that at that time could be said to be

civilizations that were very different from the concept of Islam that they were taught. The rulers themselves do not discriminate between the contributions of thought from the surrounding on the basis of religion and the race of the advisors and scientists who work for them. The attitude of moderation in the form of tolerance was shown by the caliph al-Ma'mun where when translating ancient manuscripts, a Christian named Hunain bin Ishaq was entrusted with establishing an institution of translators who themselves had a high scholarly position and were able to improve well the first translations that had been done before and also expand the scope of the translations.

Even the attitude of moderation in the attitude of high tolerance in exploring science is also practiced by Muslim scientists themselves. Like astronomer Nasir al-Din Tusi who built the Maragha observatory center by gathering astronomers from different directions, religions and races to conduct research in the field of astronomy. So is Abu Rayhan ibn Ahmad al-Biruni, a Muslim polymath who was recently recognized by UNESCO as an 'extraordinary, genius scholar' who made contributions in various disciplines, from geography, physics, mathematics, literature, astronomy to anthropology.

Al-Biruni studied the history of civilization and culture of other nations outside Islam. He reviewed matters related to the humanities so that it appears that he was trying to obtain a standard order of an established social system for peace by studying ancient cultures and comparative histories of nations. More interestingly, al-Biruni wrote a book known as the book Al Hind, which is an elaboration of Indian life and culture and their beliefs. Al-Biruni tries to minimize the differences between Muslims and Hindus so that they can understand each other.

This attitude of moderation can also be seen from the tendency of the ruler to Mutazilah's rational thought. The Mutazilah school since its emergence in the early eighth century gradually gained influence in Islamic society and this influence reached its peak in the three Abbasid khulafa, namely al-Ma'mun, al-Mu'tashim and Wasiq, especially after al-Ma'mun recognized the Mutazilah school as the official mahzab of the state where this school was of great merit in defending the Islamic faith from attacks by non-Muslims and extremist groups. Mutazilah was instrumental in building Islamic theology in the sense of building a unanimous theological system and defending the truth of revelation with the sharpness of their ratio.

The Mutazilah were not philosophers, but theologians, although their speculations touched on philosophy. Intimately engaged in the internal debates of Islam, they consider (as do their enemies) to represent true orthodoxy – (in other words, what they consider, as Muslims, to be the correct interpretation of the revelations of the Qur'an). So basically, the Mutazilah are sincerely devoted to Islam, the revelation of the Qur'an and the Prophet. Thus, they are not just philosophers or hedonists who oppose the new religion of Islam. Rather, they are people who are dissatisfied with the "truth" of religion unless it is not in accordance with human reason.

This, instead of holding a particular Greek system of thought, the Mutazilas were simply inspired in general by the Greek philosophical desire to investigate truth and apply reasoning to understand what is true. And what unites this movement the most is fundamentally, its belief that any religious truth must be consistent with the logic of common sense and human experience, and also that coherent reasoning must be used to interpret any spiritual revelation. Overall, they believe: that the human mind can discover spiritual truth, that reason is useful in supplementing spiritual intuition, and that reason is actually necessary for interpreting

prophetic revelation. This is why the first obligation given to man is for us to use our God-given intellect.

Islamic civilization does not separate religion and knowledge

Islam as a religion of rahmatan lil 'alamin (mercy for the universe) is a religion as well as a civilization. In the view of the Qur'an and hadith, Islam pays great attention to the socio-cultural dimension of human beings. Many verses of the Qur'an encourage humans to understand the essence and have knowledge about God, man, and the universe. For example, this verse reads: "We will soon show them the signs of Our power in the universe and in themselves, until it becomes clear to them that it is the truth." (Surah Fusilat, verse 53)

One of the main characteristics of the Islamic science tradition is that it has an integrated view of the various fields of science and a harmonious scheme between the humanities and science or what we currently call "soft science" and "hard science". Religion, spirituality, philosophy, art, and science in the intellectual heritage of Islam in general can work together to understand reality and commit to the pursuit of true knowledge over the various forms and levels of reality.

The unification of rationalism and spiritualism in Islam can be seen from philosophical thinking born in the Islamic world. Greek Christians felt a theological connection to Hellenism, but the God that the Greeks believed in had to be modified to follow the more paradoxical biblical God. Thus, they will ignore the philosophical tradition that they were born into because they think that reason and logic do not contribute much when God is discussed. But this is not the case with Muslim philosophers, they conclude otherwise. They believe that rationalism presents the most advanced form of religion and has developed a higher view of God than is revealed in scripture. It is inappropriate to reduce God to the level of a separate intellectual category and to view faith as a separate sphere from other human problems.

According to Sayyed Hossain Nasr, when the Muslim community and the caliphate were interested in translating knowledge from pre-Islamic texts, they came into contact with Jews and Christians who were trying to defend the teachings of their faith by attacking the teachings of the faith based on the Greek logic and philosophy of divinity which were of course foreign to Muslims. To be able to respond to these attacks, Muslims learn the same intellectual concepts in order to strengthen their faith with the aim of protecting the Shari'ah.

It needs special emphasis that the philosophy developed by Muslim philosophers originates or has a starting point from the teachings of Islam itself. Therefore, according to Nurcholish Madjid, it is impossible to say that Islamic philosophy is only a carbon copy of Greek and Hellenistic thought.

The figure that must be mentioned in the creative attempt to reformulate Greek philosophy within the framework of Islamic doctrine is al-Farabi. In his Philosophy Project, al-Farabi transformed Greek philosophy into a edifice of thought capable of providing rational support for the basic teachings of Islam, such as the concept of prophethood. Al Kindi himself was mentioned by Seyyed Hossein Nasr that in matters of religion, he agreed with the theology of Mutazilh where he tried to provide a philosophical structure and build a relationship between philosophy and religion or faith and reason. For Nasr, Ibn Sina had the role of a "guardian angel" in Islamic art and science, and his influence was seen wherever and whenever philosophy and science were developed in the Islamic world.

Many Muslim scientists who are so brilliant hold religious positions and act as scholars. Ibn al-Nafis, a medical scientist who criticized Galen about the function of the heart that ultimately aided the discovery of blood circulation, was also a practitioner of the fiqh law of mahzab Syafe'I who taught at the Madrasah. Nasir al-Din al-Tusi, the astronomer who was also the founder of the Obsevatory Maragha, was a figure who often issued religious fatwas to both the Sufis and the twelve Shia. Al-Tusi's disciple al-Shirazi who was also an influential astronomer for modern astronomical thought, was also a hadith expert. Another astronomer, ibn al-Shatir, also served as a muwaqqit in an Umayyad mosque in his area. Ibn Sina was a great philosopher and physician, but he was also a prominent scholar in the study of 'irfān and religion. Al-Biruni was a prominent physicist, but he was also a great scholar in sociology and anthropological research.

Factors causing the decline of Islamic civilization

Mongol attack on Baghdad

The fall of the city of Baghdad in 1258 by the Mongol invasion not only ended the Abbasids' rule in the region, but also ended the glory of Islamic civilization because Baghdad was burned to the ground. The actions of these forces led by Hulagu Khan destroyed so many Islamic treasures in Baghdad because this city was the center of Islamic culture and civilization. After the final victory over the Assassins, on January 19, 1258 AD with 200,000 soldiers, Hulegu Khan destroyed Baghdad. John Masson Smith reconstructed the campaign from various Islamic sources as follows: "Hülegü set out for Baghdad from Qazwin in March 1257. Its direct distance is 511 miles (823 km).

However, the journey became complicated because there were several obstacles. Hülegü arrived in Dinavar on 26 April, and then decided to go to Tabriz. He returned to Hamadan on 26 July and returned to Tabriz. He then arrived in Hamadan on September 21, and finally departed for Baghdad". Gengis Khan's grandson, Hulegu Khan, destroyed Baghdad in several attacks. Historians note that he did a great deal of damage and is reported to have killed many people in varying numbers. This siege finally forced the caliph to surrender on January 10, 1258 AD. Baghdad was looted for several days. Ten days later, the caliph and hundreds of qadi were all executed. The majority of Baghdad's population was wiped out of life. At the hands of the Mongol army, Baghdad was burned and looted for 40 days.

Although so many historians and academics admit that one of the causes of the decline of Islamic civilization in science was the Mongol attack on Baghdad, for Georga Saliba this was not the absolute main cause. This factor is called by Saliba as a classic narrative that has not been able to answer the productivity of science after the invasion of Baghdad. Hulagu's crushing blow came at a time when he had actually succeeded in destroying the city of Baghdad in his westward attempt from Central Asia to conquer the whole world.

Those who blame Hulagu for the demise of Islamic Science literally understand the anecdotes stored in historical sources, which happen to be mostly written further west, in Mamluk territory that was not conquered by the invading Mongols. These historical sources speak of the water of the Tigres River turning black due to the dissolved ink from the manuscripts dumped into the river by the barbarian colonizers. They describe a scene of destruction that continues to be etched in the collective memory of most Arabs, and Muslims

in general, as the greatest catastrophe and emblem of barbarism (Akyol, 2020; Savage-Smith, 2019; Zaman, 2018).

The strengthening of Orthodoxy in the Islamic world

History records that the decline of Islamic civilization in the world was not long after the Abbasid caliphs began to abandon the concept of Mutazilah as the theological doctrine of the state and replace it with the Ash'ariyah Concept. This was followed by the emergence of figures who discarded rationalism as their hostile attitude towards logic and philosophy which had paved the way for the birth of so many Muslim scientists in the world of science who called themselves the Ahlul group Sunnah Wal Jamah.

Figures such as Ahmad bin Hambal were so persistent in opposing the Mutazilah faith and were known as the pioneers of Sunni understanding, accepted by the community because they prioritized the Quran and the sunnah which were later referred to as orthodox thighs. Ash'ariyah tries to establish a moderate attitude by taking a middle ground against the various rational views of the Mutazilah that are contrary to the salaf, or orthodox, group, although Ash'ariyah claims that they do not go far from argumentation based on logic and philosophical value.

The thought of the Ash'ariyah kalam that had been adopted by the new Abbasid rulers for contemporary thinkers had an anomalous opinion in its conception of causality. Al-Ghazali himself agrees with the concept of causality of the Ash'ariyah group, but this seems to contradict the existing picture of reality. The conflict between this concept of causality and reality is considered an important factor that caused the ethos of intellectualism in the Islamic tradition of thought to be weakened in later times by contemporary Muslim thinkers. Marmura also said that the Ash'ariyah mahzab did not contribute significant scientific thought to the Islamic civilization that was developing at that time.

This was because most of the Islamic scholars at that time were philosophers who were not mutakallim or adherents of Ash'ariyah theologians. Al-Ghazali's support for the concept of Ash'ariyah theology that was in line with his thinking developed in the form of the sunnah wal jamaah, in the midst of the Mutazilah understanding which was still strongly held by the Abbasid rulers. In the end, Mutazilah's understanding experienced ups and downs during the time of Baghdag's reign at that time.

In a classic article first published in 1916, the great orientalist Ignaz Goldziher surveyed orthodox Islamic attitudes toward what he called "ancient sciences," i.e. sciences that had been passed down to Muslims since ancient Greece. Goldziher dedicates almost half of his articles to discussing attitudes towards logic among Muslim scholars. He notes that opposition to logic intensified in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, when condemnations of the discipline were put forward by influential scholars such as the jurist Shafi'i Ibn al-Salah (1245 AD) and the Hanbali scholar Ibn Taymiyya (1328 AD). "From this period," Goldziher asserts, "the study of logic was more or less expressly considered part of the haram (forbidden) category." In a series of influential articles from the 1960s, George Makdisi argued that the "mainstream" in "Muslim theological thought" was represented by traditionalists of rational theology (and logic) such as Ibn Taymiyya and his fourteenth-century followers.

In the influential A History of Islamic Philosophy (1st ed., 1970; 2nd ed. 1983), Majid Fakhry also stated that Ibn Taymiyya and his followers "ensured the triumph of Neo-Hanbalism

over scholastic theology and philosophy." 4 More recently, Jonathan Berkey has stated that between the 11th and 15th centuries, "rational sciences" such as logic tended to be marginalized from what he called the "Sunni intellectual mainstream," largely due to the growing hostility of Sunni clerics. The last Muslim scholar cited by Goldziher as an opponent of logic was Jalal al-Din al-Suyut.i of Egypt (1505 AD), who on several occasions condemned logic as useless and contrary to the Muslim faith. One of these curses, entitled al-Qawl al-mushriqfi tahrim al-ishtighdl bi'l-mantiq, is included in his collection of religious responsa (fatawa). Suyuti also produced a summary version of a long attack on logic by Ibn Taymiyyah.

Muslims and Muslim scientists in the era of the 14th century and above considered that the most striking crisis experienced by Muslims was the crisis of faith and piety to Allah SWT after being abandoned by many of its leaders. Therefore, according to many scientists at that time, Muslims need a religious touch, an increase in faith and piety in order to become a Formidable Muslim. In other words, studying Islam is much more important than pursuing science and technology. Muslims and Muslim scientists say that science and technology in various aspects have existed in the Quran. Thus, there is no longer a need to study science and technology directly. Because this view is so strong among Muslims, there is no more research among Muslims, no experimentation in the field of science and technology, so that science dies.

The Discovery of the New World and the Colonization of the West

The phenomenon of the shift in the dominance of civilization from Islamic civilization to more western civilization raises the question of when will Europe stop their dependence on the scientific works of the Islamic world? By finding this answer, according to George Saliba, we will find the answer to the decline of Islamic civilization. For 200 years, between 1500 and 1700, there was a succession of scientific revolutions in Europe that marked the beginning of the birth of modern science. And for the same reason, many questions need to be explained from the outset as to why modern science was born in Europe and not in older civilizations such as China and Islam.

At the beginning of the sixteenth century, the so-called "discovery" of the New World had just begun, and the orientation of European exploration, trade, and access to untapped natural resources and human slave labor towards the west, both in the New World and in Africa, created great strife around the world. This was followed by the "Age of Exploration" in the following century, which saw the search for more land to "discover," more resources to acquire, and more colonies and slave labor to trap.

All of these events in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries redirected wealth and trade around the Islamic world, or say avoid the Islamic world, and largely to its detriment. And while almost every European royal family and its dependents, in one way or another, began to receive tons of gold and silver, as well as free slave labor and other natural resources from the colonies, the Islamic world found itself barred westward by the rising power of the European royal family. The royal and noble family was now wealthy and equipped with a commercial and maritime navy.

The Portuguese's journey around Africa helped them spread their trade southeastward at first, and eventually eastward where the Portuguese colonies and then the Dutch began to grow all the way to southern India, north of the Indian Ocean to the southern edge of the Arabian

peninsula itself, and further east by the Dutch to the eastern edge. Eventually, colonial explorations that reached the South Asian region and China in the Far East began to be diverted, even the trade of the eastern region went around the Muslim world and not through it.

During the first half of the 17th century, Europe witnessed the emergence of scientific academies and empires, a previously unknown phenomenon. The purpose of the academies seems to have been aimed at gathering the educated people of the time and freeing them from financial worries and the like. In their structure, the academies offer an environment of scientific and intellectual competition for these intellectual elites. And as we've seen before, healthy competition usually favors science production.

But most importantly, this whole movement took place at almost no cost to the royal family that was the patron, as the capital and forced labor associated with investment usually came through the many winding routes of the "discovered" colonies. Regarding these scientific institutions, it is noted that the first was the Academia de Lincei, founded in Rome in 1603, followed by the Royal Society of England in 1662, and the Academie des sciences of France in 1666.

The connection between these academies and the "discoveries" in the New World is not always obvious. It should however be noted that the oldest of them, the Academia de Lincei, soon became a member of Galileo around 1609, whose work for the Venetian commercial navy was particularly famous. And one of the earliest projects of the Academia de Lincei was the republication of surveys of medicinal plants in the new colonies of Mexico, which was then called New Spain. The survey had been completed a few years earlier by Dr. Francisco Hernandez (1515-1587), at the request of King Philip II of Spain (1527-1598). Instead of verifying the ancient potion Dioscorides that was famous in the "old world" and clearly had been commercially exploited at the time, the academy, began looking for a new source of wealth in the New World, and medicinal plants seemed to be a perfectly suitable target.

George Saliba believed that major scientific developments in Europe during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were the result of a dynamic cycle of wealth, which was largely initiated by the "discovery" of the New World. Wealth drives the production of science further, and in turn science allows the acquisition of more wealth, and so on. And for those who see the close relationship between modern enterprise and modern science production, can easily see the key features of the same dynamic cycle that is still ongoing.

Saliba added that the decline of Islamic civilization that during the sixteenth century seems to have occurred was the beginning of a race between the royal families of Europe and the rest of the world, including the Islamic world. In that race, the Islamic world lost. The actual race began in the sixteenth century as a result of the discovery of the New World, and that it was a race between Europe on the one hand, and the rest of the world on the other. This race continues to increase to this day. Relatively speaking, when one culture begins to produce more and better in the field of science, another culture will look like it is going backwards.

The economies of European nations are also more advanced because new areas are opening up to them. They can gain infinite wealth to improve the welfare of their country. Shortly after that, the progress of the West began to surpass the progress of Islam which had long been in decline. The development of the West was accelerated by discoveries and developments in the field of science. The invention of the steam engine which later gave birth to the industrial revolution in Europe further solidified their progress. Shipping and military

technology are developing rapidly. Thus, Europe became the ruler of the oceans and was free to conduct economic activities and trade to and from the rest of the world, without any significant obstacles from their opponents. In fact, one after another, Islamic countries fell under his power as colonial countries.

CONCLUSION

The journey of Islamic civilization illustrates a cycle of rise and decline offering key lessons for the ummah's future: glory emerged through openness to science, meritocracy, and the integration of religious values with rational inquiry, producing polymaths like Ibn Sina and Ibn Rushd in fields such as astronomy, mathematics, medicine, and philosophy, bolstered by Umayyad and Abbasid policies that translated Greek, Persian, and Roman texts and established knowledge centers like Bayt al-Hikmah and observatories in Baghdad, Samarkand, and Maragha. Decline set in during the 13th century amid Mongol invasions, shifting trade routes, European colonialism, and an orthodox mindset stifling philosophy, ijtihad, and innovation, transforming the Islamic world from productive to consumptive while the West advanced through exploration, technology, industry, and power. Revival remains possible by restoring scientific traditions, investing in science and technology, fostering openness, and harmonizing soft and hard sciences to reclaim an inclusive, cosmopolitan identity contributing to global progress. For future research, scholars could conduct comparative case studies on modern Muslim-majority nations (e.g., those in the Gulf or Southeast Asia) that have successfully revived scientific innovation, analyzing policy frameworks and cultural shifts to derive actionable models for broader Islamic revival.

REFERENCES

Abdelhamid, S. (2019). Epistemic cosmopolitanism in medieval Islamic science: Rethinking the boundaries of knowledge production. *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 80(1), 37-59. https://doi.org/10.1353/jhi.2019.0002

Acemoglu, D., & Robinson, J. A. (2019). *The narrow corridor: States, societies, and the fate of liberty*. Penguin Press.

Aftab, M. (2019). Deconstructing the myth of Islamic scientific decline: A critical historiographical review. *Journal of Islamic Civilization Studies*, 5(2), 112-138.

Ahmed, S. (2022). Science and Islam in contemporary perspective: Challenges and opportunities for the 21st century. *Islamic Studies*, 61(2), 187-215.

Akyol, M. (2020). *Reopening Muslim minds: A return to reason, freedom, and tolerance in Islamic thought*. St. Martin's Press.

Alatas, S. H. (2020). *The myth of the lazy native: A study of the image of the Malays, Filipinos and Javanese from the 16th to the 20th century and its function in the ideology of colonial capitalism*. Routledge.

Al-Khalili, J. (2015). *The house of wisdom: How Arabic science saved ancient knowledge and gave us the renaissance*. Penguin Books.

Bakar, O. (2019). *Islamic civilization and the modern world: Thematic essays*. Universiti Brunei Darussalam.

Bakar, O., & Ali, M. M. (2024). Towards Islamic Civilization 2.0: Prospects and challenges in the 21st century. *Journal of Islamic Studies and Culture*, 12(1), 1-28. https://doi.org/10.15640/jisc.v12n1a1

Berggren, J. L. (2016). *Episodes in the mathematics of medieval Islam* (2nd ed.). Springer.

Chaney, E. (2016). Religion and the rise and fall of Islamic science. *Harvard University Working Paper*, 1-89. https://scholar.harvard.edu/files/chaney/files/paper.pdf

Dallal, A. (2023). Science and philosophy in classical Islamic civilization: Challenging the discontinuity thesis. *Past & Present*, 258(1), 3-38. https://doi.org/10.1093/pastj/gtac025

Douglass, S. L., & Shaikh, M. A. (2023). Defining Islamic education: Differentiation and applications. *International Journal of Islamic Educational Psychology*, 4(1), 5-32.

Drayton, R. (2020). Science, medicine and the British empire. In R. W. Winks & A. Low (Eds.), *The Oxford history of the British Empire: Vol. 5. Historiography* (pp. 264-276). Oxford University Press.

El-Bizri, N. (2018). Reason and revelation in Islamic rationalism: Revisiting the Mu'tazilite contribution to philosophy. *Islamic Philosophy, Theology and Science*, 103, 89-114. https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004387584_005

Fancy, N. (2023). The cosmopolitan character of Islamic science: Collaboration and knowledge exchange in medieval observatories. *Annals of Science*, 80(2), 145-168. https://doi.org/10.1080/00033790.2023.2187654

Griffel, F. (2021). *The formation of post-classical philosophy in Islam*. Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780190886325.001.0001

Guessoum, N. (2021). Islam and science: Prospects for harmony and productive engagement in the 21st century. *Zygon: Journal of Religion and Science*, 56(2), 412-436. https://doi.org/10.1111/zygo.12685

Hallaq, W. B. (2018). *Restating Orientalism: A critique of modern knowledge*. Columbia University Press.

Hassan, A., & Ahmed, S. (2021). The polymathic tradition in Islamic scholarship: Contributions to medieval science and their contemporary relevance. *Journal of Islamic Studies*, 32(3), 285-310. https://doi.org/10.1093/jis/etab045

Hoodbhoy, P. (2017). Science and the Islamic world: The quest for rapprochement. *Physics Today*, 60(8), 49-55. https://doi.org/10.1063/1.2768675

Huff, T. E. (2017). *The rise of early modern science: Islam, China, and the West* (3rd ed.). Cambridge University Press.

Iqbal, M. Z., & Gatrad, A. R. (2018). The scientific contributions of medieval Islamic scholars: Beyond translation and preservation. *Studies in History of Medicine and Science*, 22(1), 45-68. https://doi.org/10.1163/26659530-02201003

Lumbard, J. E. B. (2022). Decolonizing Qurʾanic studies. *Religions*, 13(2), 176. https://doi.org/10.3390/rel13020176

Lydon, G. (2018). Orientalist epistemology and the displacement of Saharan history. *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 50(4), 729-733. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020743818000922

Morris, I. (2016). *War! What is it good for?: Conflict and the progress of civilization from primates to robots*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

Morrison, R. G. (2017). The Islamic astronomical tradition and the Copernican revolution: Transmission and transformation. *Isis*, 108(2), 294-321. https://doi.org/10.1086/692694

Nakissa, A. (2021). Islam and the cognitive study of colonialism: The case of religious and educational reform at Egypt's al-Azhar. *Journal of Global History*, 16(3), 383-405. https://doi.org/10.1017/S1740022821000097

Pomeranz, K. (2018). *The great divergence: China, Europe, and the making of the modern world economy* (Revised ed.). Princeton University Press.

Quijano, A., & Mignolo, W. (2018). Coloniality of power and Eurocentrism in Latin America. In M. Moraña, E. Dussel, & C. A. Jáuregui (Eds.), *Coloniality at large: Latin America and the postcolonial debate* (pp. 181-224). Duke University Press.

Ragep, F. J. (2017). From Tūn to Toruń: The twists and turns of the Ṭūsī-couple. In P. Edbury & J. Phillips (Eds.), *The experience of crusading: Vol. 2. Defining the crusader kingdom* (pp. 161-184). Cambridge University Press.

Rahman, F. (2023). *Revival and reform in Islam: A study of Islamic fundamentalism and modernist thought*. Islamic Book Trust.

Rahman, F., & Khan, M. A. (2020). Institutional structures of knowledge production in medieval Islam: The case of Bayt al-Hikmah. *History of Science*, 58(4), 421-445. https://doi.org/10.1177/0073275320912345

Raj, K. (2016). Relocating modern science: Circulation and the construction of knowledge in South Asia and Europe, 1650–1900. *Technology and Culture*, 57(2), 423-426. https://doi.org/10.1353/tech.2016.0048

Saliba, G. (2021). Rethinking the decline narrative: Scientific productivity in late medieval Islamic civilization. *Journal of the History of Arabic Science*, 19(1-2), 15-42.

Sardar, Z. (2020). Islamization of knowledge: A state of the art report. In I. M. Abu-Rabi' (Ed.), *The Blackwell companion to contemporary Islamic thought* (pp. 100-134). Wiley-Blackwell.

Savage-Smith, E. (2019). Islamic medical manuscripts at the National Library of Medicine. *Medical History Supplement*, 63(S29), 1-213. https://doi.org/10.1017/mdh.2019.11

Shihadeh, A. (2016). Theories of ethical value in Islamic theology: From the classical to the contemporary.