



# Intellectual Ethnography of Indonesian Muslims

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**Abstract:** *Even though science is considered neutral, the struggle to Islamize science continues to be carried out by Muslim intellectuals. Al Attas is one of the critical intellectuals in this field whose influence has significantly impacted a group of Indonesian Muslim scholars within the INSISTS community. One of the INSISTS figures concerned about the Islamization of knowledge is Hamid Fahmy Zarkasyi. This study attempts to discuss why and how this Islamization was carried out by Indonesian intellectual Muslim. This study uses ethnographic methods in the INSISTS community with literature studies. This research shows that the involvement of Muslim intellectuals in islamization is related to the intention of da'wah, the implementation of the Islamic Worldview, and is made possible by the socio-cultural situation of a democratic Indonesia. The strategy of Islamization of knowledge is carried out by focusing on young intellectual regeneration, writing, and the presence of charisma that supports this vision. Theoretically, this study strengthens Sherry Ortner's opinion that agency is formed by three components of intention and socio-cultural construction and adds a charisma component as the fourth component that includes agency.*

**Keywords:** *Intellectual Ethnography, Agency, INSISTS, Islamization of Knowledge*

## Introduction

Islamization of science (hereinafter abbreviated as 'Islamization of science') is the process of liberating humans from magical, mythological, animistic, national-cultural, and secular traditions, then incorporating elements of basic Islamic concepts into every discipline (Al Attas, 1993). As a thought and movement, the Islamization of science usually refers to two Muslim intellectuals, Ismail Raji Al Faruqi (1921-1986) through the International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT) and Syed Muhammad Naquib Al Attas (1931-) through the International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization (ISTAC). Quoting Edward W. Said, both can be called "true intellectuals (who) create order in society" (2018:2).

In Indonesia, not all Muslim intellectuals agree with the term 'Islamization', instead some choose words or concepts such as transcendental structuralism (Kuntowijoyo), tree of knowledge (Imam Suprayogo), interconnection (M. Amin Abdullah), unity of being (Mulyadhi Kartanegara), or Islamic integralism (Armahedi Mahzar) (see Mustofa, 2018). In general, the term was created to implement Islamic values into knowledge. Regardless of the choice of the word, the Institute for the Study of Islamic Thought and Civilization (INSISTS) community—formed by students and lecturers of ISTAC, Malaysia in 2003 and then moved its movement to Indonesia—chose the term Islamization of knowledge and

continued to preach it to the academic and general public in Indonesia, in addition to “spreading ISTAC’s views in Indonesia” (Kersten, 2018).

One of the main figures of INSISTS is Hamid Fahmy Zarkasyi (hereinafter referred to as ‘Zarkasyi’). Since 2020, Zarkasyi has been a professor of Islamic philosophy at the campus. In everyday life, he is more familiarly called “Ustadz Hamid”, “Pak Hamid” or now “Professor Hamid.” In addition to Zarkasyi, INSISTS also has other founders from Gontor, namely Syamsuddin Arif, and Adnin Armas. Other founders are Adian Husaini, Ugi Suharto, Anis Malik Thoha, and Nirwan Syafrin.

So far, the writing that specifically discusses the thoughts and movements of Hamid Fahmy Zarkasyi is the work of Anton Ismunanto (2018) regarding Zarkasyi’s role in developing higher education based on the Islamic Worldview, an important concept that he often preaches on various occasions. Other writings (such as Imron, 2018; Firdaus, 2013; Fata & Fauzan, 2017) review INSISTS by including Hamid Fahmy Zarkasyi as one of the objects of study. Bachtiar (2017) also discusses INSISTS from the perspective of the history of the Islamic struggle which began with HM. Rasjidi’s criticisms of liberal groups.

Other studies such as Mustofa (2019) analyze in more depth the methodological framework used by INSISTS in the Islamization of science and find that the formulation of the Islamic Worldview in INSISTS is “an attempt to reconstruct the traditional thinking model” in the interpretation of Islamic values by incorporating philosophical values into the study of science. The effort to incorporate these philosophical values was successful, at least in the words of one of my informants who previously did not have the capacity for philosophical thinking then had philosophical capacity after joining INSISTS.

Based on the the several studies, I believe that none have specifically discussed the study of INSISTS figures using an ethnographic approach that links charisma and agency. In fact, religious charisma cannot be separated from the intellectual subjects in the INSISTS community, as well as their ability to ‘change the world around them’ due to agency. Agency or the ability of agents to change their environment is formed by components of intention, socio-cultural construction and power relations (Ortner, 2006). In this paper I see that Hamid Fahmy Zarkasyi’s agency ability is also formed by the three components of agency plus the charisma inherent in the agent. Related to this gap, this paper is intended as an ‘intellectual ethnography’ by highlighting one of these intellectual agents who intends to Islamize science in Indonesia.

## Methodology

This article is part of ethnographic research at the Department of Anthropology, FISIP UI. In practice, I conducted a participant-observation method, interviews with intellectual subjects in the INSISTS community regarding their views on the figure of Hamid Fahmy Zarkasyi, and supplemented it with analysis of various documents such as books, journals, articles, and social media owned by INSISTS and INSISTS researchers. Quoting Emerson, Fretz and Shaw (1995), I entered the research setting and met INSISTS members, conducted participant-observation and wrote down the results of observations, interviews, and informal dialogues in the form of fieldnotes continuously.

In this research, I attended various INSISTS events both onsite and offline and wrote down various impressions in the immersion, including writing down various keywords, symbols, phrases ('specific unique words') obtained in the field. Specifically, interviews with a focus on questions related to Hamid Fahmy Zarkasyi to informants were conducted since 2018, but informal observations of INSISTS in general have begun since 2008 when I became interested in the movement. Specifically related to informants, I also conducted a series of interviews with informants by snowballing from one subject to another. The interviews were held in Jakarta, West Java, and Yogyakarta and also online via zoom, email, and Whatsapp. I then processed the various rich data by coding and memoing (Saldana, 2013) and found powerful, main, and symbolic words in the thoughts of the informants which were then analyzed. As a study of religious anthropology, this study seeks to understand religious practices, in this case the phenomenon of the Islamization of knowledge, and beliefs from an emic perspective or insider perspective (Sidky, 2015).

## Result and Discussion

In this section I will explain three things, namely the intellectual history of Hamid Fahmy Zarkasyi, why he has a strong intention to be involved in the Islamization of knowledge as an idea and movement, and how he strategizes to change the world around him with the Islamization of knowledge. The explanation of these three points of findings is very important to understand why intellectual agents carry out intentional actions to change the world around them. Quoting Sherry B. Ortner (2006), intention is understood as a concept that includes things like plots, plans, schemes, goals, ideals, desires, wishes, and needs that are carried out consciously. As a concept, the actor's intention in this paper includes "all the ways in which actions—cognitively and emotionally—are directed towards a goal" (p.13). Intention is part of the formation of agency that is not formed by itself but through what Anthony Giddens calls "structuration", namely the creation and re-formation of larger social and cultural formations (Ortner, 2006).

### 1. Short Biography of Hamid Fahmy Zarkasyi

One day, while attending an INSISTS event, I saw Hamid Fahmy Zarkasyi who was calm, neat, and when he spoke he was structured with deep ideas. When he went on stage, the participants were mostly silent, paying attention to what he said, even taking notes of important points from him. There was a kind of personal charisma in him, that was my impression when attending one of the INSISTS activities hosted by Zarkasyi. Hamid Fahmy Zarkasyi was born into a modern Islamic educational institution, namely the Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor, Ponorogo, East Java (abbreviated as 'Gontor') on September 13, 1958. As the 9th son of one of the founders of the Pondok Modern Gontor, KH. Imam Zarkasyi, Hamid has gone through internalization of Islamic values in the small town of Gontor and modern elements in the education system used by Gontor based on inspiration from other institutions at home and abroad such as (such as Al Azhar University, Egypt in the waqf system and others). This hereditary factor of the *kiai* made Zarkasyi entangled in a power relationship that influenced his activities.

After completing his education at the “Islamic Teachers College” or Kulliyyatul Mu’allimin Al Islamiyah (KMI) Gontor, Zarkasyi continued his education at a higher education institution in the Gontor area, namely the Darussalam Education Institute (IPD, now called Darussalam University or abbreviated as ‘Unida’) in 1982. After graduating from IPD, he migrated to Pakistan and continued his studies at the Institute of Education and Research University of Punjab, Lahore, Pakistan and received a Master of Arts in Education (MA.Ed) in 1988 with a thesis entitled “Educational Thought of Al Ghazali.” The choice of the title ‘educational thought’ and the figure of ‘Al Ghazali’ explains that since he was young, Zarkasyi was interested in studying Islamic thinkers. This intention on Islamic thought is also seen in his thesis for the Master of Philosophy (M.Phil) degree in 1998 at the University of Birmingham, England entitled “Ibn Taimiyyah’s Critique of Philosophy” and his doctoral dissertation entitled “Al Ghazali’s Concept of Causality” at the International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization (ISTAC), a campus that focuses on the Islamization of knowledge. Zarkasyi earned his doctorate at the age of 48 and his dissertation book was published in 2018.

His experience as an intellectual with integrity and persistence is sufficient provision for the birth of a Muslim thinker with integrity and global insight, such as Al Attas or Wan Daud. Judging from its history, Zarkasyi has similarities with Al Attas in Wan Daud in terms of learning experiences in the Malay or Nusantara world with the ‘Western world’. Indeed, Zarkasyi was greatly influenced by Al Attas in seeing the condition of the multidimensional bankruptcy of Muslims based on worldview” (Thoha, 2021). To strengthen his understanding of Al Attas’ concept, Zarkasyi even translated Wan Daud’s book related to Al Attas’s fairly thick educational concept.

## **2. The intention of agent involvement in the idea and movement of Islamization of science**

INSISTS as an institution is a continuation of the routine studies of ISTAC students and lecturers from Indonesia with the main issue related to “the multidimensional bankruptcy of Muslims based on thought” (Thoha, 2021). Some of the routine studies were held under shady trees while drinking coffee around the ISTAC campus and some were held at the house of an ISTAC student. The chats under the shady trees were attended by ISTAC students such as Syamsuddin Arif, Adnin Armas, Iskandar Arnel, Baharuddin, Zulfan Haidar, and also ISTAC lecturers Ugi Suharto, Zaidi Ismail, and also ISTAC Deputy Director Wan Mohd Nor Wan Daud. Muhammad Arifin Ismail (2021) said that Adian Husaini’s arrival at ISTAC also had an impact on the development of the chat into a serious study called the INSISTS Study Club. As a ‘senior da’wah activist’, Adian both influences and receives influence, for example from Zarkasyi who invited him to study for a doctorate at ISTAC.

Zarkasyi’s influence factor on his colleagues is indeed quite high. One of my informants, initials ‘AR’ (interview, February 5, 2022) said that his attention to the

dynamics of Islamic thought in Indonesia was initially just attention to reading-researching, then after listening to information from Zarkasyi regarding the turmoil of Islamic thought in Indonesia represented by Ulil-Abshar Abdalla's writing in *Kompas*, finally his attention changed to reading-researching-criticizing liberal thought in Indonesia. He got this information update quite intensively in his interactions with Zarkasyi. Zarkasyi's influence, in that context, can be seen in the asymmetrical power relations that Zarkasyi is an 'updated person', 'not just reading books', 'a senior', and 'charismatic person' whose sentences are listened to.

The establishment of INSISTS and the mutual influence among its colleagues can be seen as an effort to jointly spread Islamic thought while fighting the corruption of thought caused by the infiltration of Western thought into Muslims. Although there are unintended consequences of their actions, for example their thoughts are used by certain groups only as a 'tool to hit' different groups without a strong desire to study Islamic thought comprehensively. In fact, INSISTS' intention is that their thoughts can contribute to the deepening of Islamic thought rather than simply using their thoughts as a tool to fight different groups.

The synergy of INSISTS agents occurs in harmony. Anis Malik Thoha (2021) said that their ability to unite in different backgrounds of specialization is "by the permission of Allah SWT" and "... perhaps this synergy is indeed a project of Allah SWT" as the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad SAW, "Those souls are like troops gathered in units, those who know each other will easily link each other, those who feel strange between them will easily disagree with each other" (HR. Muslim). Synergy is of course intentional, which Sewell (1992) describes as synergy that is projected forward, towards a 'definite goal', and the methods are consciously and actively motivated.

Interactions between agents in INSISTS run "like siblings" (Thoha, 2021) without any personal interests except for the same vision in the struggle. One of my informants, initials 'AR' (interview, February 5, 2022) said: interactions between agents in INSISTS occur in an atmosphere of synergy and compromise. He explained, "...some want blue and some want yellow...in the end it's not too blue and not too yellow." This compromise attitude is based on the awareness that "we are facing the same opponent"; therefore, "the characteristics of each [difference] are ignored" to achieve "victory for all", or a win-win solution. When determining who the supreme leader of INSISTS would be, the study forum agreed to choose Hamid Fahmy Zarkasyi, a senior ISTAC doctoral student in terms of age, with extensive intellectual experience and the future successor of Pondok Modern Gontor Ponorogo, an Islamic boarding school with a "deep-rooted network" that also supports the spread of INSISTS thinking to various regions in Indonesia (Bachtar, 2017: 161). After the structure was formed, they immediately opposed the thinking of the Liberal Islam Network (JIL) directly and indirectly.

Zarkasyi's involvement in the Islamization of science movement is inseparable from concerns about the damaging impact of Western thought. This



concern takes the form of intentional awareness that drives them to reflect, plan, and act to “intervene in the world” with something in their minds (Ortner, 2006). This concern is actually in line with Al Attas and Wan Daud who see that the spread and development of secularization as a philosophical movement is a very powerful challenge to thought (Wan Daud, 2021). Zarkasyi and the INSISTS community see that Western civilization has various contradictions and is irrelevant to be adopted by Muslims; therefore, various relevant Western ideas and concepts will be used but those that are not relevant will be discarded. This thought can be seen, for example, in Al Attas’ book *Islam and Secularism* and *Prolegomena*.

Zarkasyi also does what Wan Daud (2019) calls a “critical-respectful” attitude towards those who are different, which is important in seeking the truth in learning from and improving the results of previous and contemporary human thought. Daud gave an example of how Aristotle (384-322 BC) when he had a difference of opinion with his teacher Plato (428-348 BC), he said, “Although we respect Plato, we respect the truth even more.” The attitude of respect and criticism towards thought has even been present in the Muslim intellectual tradition such as the great Sunni mufti and founder of the Shafi’i school, Imam Shafi’i (767-820) and a tabi’in and founder of the Hanafi school, Imam Abu Hanifah (699-767) who studied with the expert in fiqh and hadith and the founder of the Maliki school, Imam Malik bin Anas (711-795). Although Shafi’i and Hanifah respected and loved their teacher, they had different views with their teacher and created their own school of thought (p.81).

When the Indonesian Ministry of Religion campaigned for the book *Religious Moderation*, Zarkasyi responded to it with a critical attitude. When speaking at the AQL Islamic Center hosted by preacher Bachtiar Natsir on October 15, 2021, Zarkasyi saw that the book contained a somewhat misleading sentence such as “the truth becomes multiplied.” According to Zarkasyi, the word contains a relativistic ideology that sees that there are many truths. In fact, according to him, there is only one truth, and people who believe are people who believe that only their religion is true. So, we cannot respect other people’s religions, let alone believe that other religions are also true; instead, what we can do is believe in the truth of our religion and not attack people who have different religions. Not attacking each other is considered more important than acknowledging the truth of other religions.

In Islamic references, Zarkasyi is very careful, especially towards intellectuals who have different views. He does not explore the thoughts of Fazlur Rahman, Wan Daud’s teacher in America. Instead, he focuses more on Al Attas and Wan Daud. For Rahman’s reviewers, there is a view that social harmony in Indonesia can become a social phenomenon when Rahman’s concept of Islamic moderation is practiced comprehensively (see Ridwan, Rahman, Budiana, Safrudin, and Septiadi, 2022). However, in INSISTS Rahman’s name is not familiar, except for being known as one of the liberal Islamic figures. Zarkasyi (2016) is also careful about adopting foreign concepts. In fact, in one of his writings he said that intellectuals who adopt foreign concepts as if they were ‘new concepts’ should not be given the title of reformer or

*mujaddid*. The adoption of Western concepts that he meant was like making a dichotomous approach between textual-contextual, historical-normative understanding, which shows confusion in thinking (p.19). According to Zarkasyi, Al Attas' Islamic Worldview offer—which was systematically formulated by Alparslan Acikgenc, Al Attas' colleague at ISTAC—is important to pay attention to several of its concepts such as life, the world, humans, values, and knowledge. These five concepts form a single concept that dominates our way of thinking and functions as a framework for thinking (Zarkasyi, 2016).

Another explanation related to Zarkasyi's involvement in the Islamization of knowledge movement is to fight two religious extremes, namely radical extremes (radicalism) and liberal extremes (liberalism), citing Ugi Suharto (2021). This resistance is based on the belief in the importance of the role of Muslim intellectuals in the preaching of *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar* in the field of thought. In Islam, every Muslim is obliged to convey Islamic preaching, as the dictum "*fi ayyi ardin tata'u fa-anta mas'ulun 'an islamiha*" which means wherever you stand, you are responsible for Islam (Thoha, 2021). As JIL's role faded, INSISTS then focused on various Islamic thought programs, both free and paid. During the Covid-19 pandemic, INSISTS chose to carry out activities online for at least two years (early 2020 to late 2022). Tiar Anwar Bachtiar wrote that INSISTS was not specifically established as a response to the establishment of JIL or the hustle and bustle of Liberal Islamic thought that became a trending topic in Indonesia but to "rebuild Islamic civilization" (Bachtiar, 2017: 157), but the nuance of INSISTS as a "conservative counter-movement to liberal and progressive groups" (Bruinessen, 2014: 19) cannot be denied, at least as a "whip" or trigger for the birth of new institutions against liberal ideas and movements that according to Adian Husaini, "damage faith" (Kersten, 2018: 71).

The presence of INSISTS and the active involvement of Hamid Fahmy Zarkasyi in the Islamization of knowledge cannot be denied due to the democratic socio-cultural situation in Indonesia that allows alternative thinking to be developed. That is, I agree with the view of John L. Comaroff and Jean Comaroff (1992) who do not want to get caught up in individual agency excessively as if individual intentions are more important than the socio-cultural process which is also complex. On the contrary, social and cultural forces also have a complex role in shaping human intentions. This means that INSISTS activities are possible because the socio-cultural situation provides an opportunity for it, namely the agency capacity of INSISTS agents to change the environment influenced by the cultural construction (Ortner, 2006) of open and democratic Indonesia.

### **3. Agent strategy in changing the world around him with the Islamization of knowledge**

As an INSISTS leader, Hamid Hamid Fahmy Zarkasyi has the intention to change the world around him from un-Islamic to Islamic, or as explained by Tiar Anwar Bachtiar that the community aspires to rebuild Islamic civilization starting from the way the Prophet brought Islam by changing the thinking of the Arab

Jahiliyah society (Bachtiar, 2017:157). Hamid understands that Islam must be fought for through Islamic thinking. In the midst of the confusion of thought, Hamid chose to focus on “thought preaching” with various strategies of Islamization of knowledge through various channels, places, and collaborative networks. The following are the strategies he uses in changing the world around him with the Islamization of knowledge.

My research in the field shows how the Islamic Worldview is Zarkasyi’s ‘favorite theme’ on various occasions. A researcher of Zarkasyi’s thought and influence, Anton Ismunanto (2019) explains the big idea of Zarkasyi’s Islamic worldview which can be narrowed down into several things. First, the Islamic Worldview begins with the testimony (*syahadah*) of the oneness of God or tauhid. From that tauhid, a more complex cluster of basic beliefs is formed in the eyes of the heart, the thoughts and feelings of a Muslim. This basic belief becomes operational because it is supported by reason and is rational. This basic belief then becomes a Muslim’s perspective or vision regarding reality and truth, and explains the visible and invisible forms or existences. Furthermore, this basic belief turns into a principle of human behavior that is personal and social, scientific and technological. The peak is that this basic belief becomes a more complex system of rules or *nizam* that is applied in all aspects of life (Ismunanto, 2019). The Islamic worldview above is somewhat ‘Attasian’, or refers a lot to the philosophical Al Attas. The philosophical approach is indeed quite dominant at INSISTS because generally INSISTS researchers are philosophy researchers.

The impact is the emergence of ‘philosophical awareness’ in INSISTS study participants, as expressed by one of my informants with the initials ‘KA’ (interview February 14, 2022) in the following fieldnotes: “Before joining INSISTS, ‘KA’ said: he was not sensitive enough regarding philosophical issues. Previously, when he was still active in other organizations, ‘KA’ had indeed shown ‘intellectual search’ but did not get satisfaction from his teachers. However, after reading the Islamia Journal, ‘KA’s’ thoughts then felt right. At that time he also began to get to know the works of Al Attas, Wan Daud, and began to interact with INSISTS researchers. At INSISTS, ‘KA’ got ‘Islamic answers’ to contemporary problems without having to ‘lose his identity as a Muslim’ as he saw that there were intellectuals who answered contemporary problems but lost their identity as Muslims.”

This data shows a change in the capacity of INSISTS participants from previously not caring about the ‘philosophical approach’ to being interested. In fact, when invited to an official forum in parliament, the informant also chose to explain current socio-cultural problems with a philosophical approach. Furthermore, I also saw that Zarkasyi deliberately chose to be involved in the formation of intellectual institutions that focused on the Islamization of knowledge and da’wah. At least, there are two organizations that Zarkasyi was actively involved in establishing and leading, namely INSISTS which was founded in Kuala Lumpur and then moved to Jakarta and CIOS which was founded as one of the Islamization units of knowledge



owned by Darussalam Gontor University. Involvement in the formation of these two institutions explains that Zarkasyi has a structural strategy to create the desired world. Since its founding in 2003 to 2023, INSISTS has been led by Zarkasyi whose various activities are held through deliberation, but as the highest leader he has the “right of veto” to determine whether a program or initiative can be agreed upon or implemented.

Zarkasyi also believes that the cadre formation of young Muslim intellectuals is very important for the creation of Muslim individuals. As a Muslim intellectual, Zarkasyi realizes the importance of cadres in intellectual preaching amidst the various challenges faced by Muslims. In one of the post-Covid-19 pandemic events, he even came specifically to Jakarta to be a speaker. This was possible because of the idea of ‘cadre formation’. The cadre formation was carried out through various institutions that could be accessed for that with varied involvement.

Zarkasyi chose to write as a means of transforming his thinking to the Indonesian public. Since his undergraduate studies at the Darussalam Education Institute (IPD), Zarkasyi’s writing ability has been apparent. He was once an Indonesian language teacher for grades 5 and 6 at Gontor, as well as the editor-in-chief of *Himmah Magazine* at IPD Gontor. According to Muhammad Arifin Ismail, before continuing his studies in Pakistan, in 1981, Zarkasyi had formed a “limited group” to foster an atmosphere of knowledge and thinking among students coupled with writing skills to produce writings of scientific value. The participants were Arifin Ismail, Mukhlisin Saad, Hamam Thonthowi, Amin Zaini, Taufik Hartono. The group was inspired by the “Limited Group” which was established in the 1970s in Yogyakarta which included A. Mukti Ali, Nurcholish Madjid, Johan Efendi, Dawam Raharjo, who were later known as writers, figures, and thinkers. At that time, the Gontor “Limited Group” required members to read media articles that entered Gontor such as *Kompas*, *Sinar Harapan*, *Panji Masyarakat*, *Majalah Prisma*, and so on, to then analyze the thoughts that developed from the writings. The analysis they carried out was based on the views of the books studied in the Islamic boarding school and the views of the *bashirah* (‘eyes of the heart’) of the kiai. The “limited group” trend was also inspired by the “Wina Circle” which gave birth to writers and thinkers of Western civilization (Ismail, 2021). The culture of academic discussion was also continued by Zarkasyi when he met Arifin Ismail when he met Zarkasyi at Punjab University, Pakistan.

According to one of my informants, initials ‘HI’ (interview February 29, 2022), who was once involved in the management of *Islamia Magazine*, Zarkasyi is a typical person who is meticulous, careful, firm, and authoritative: he determines the incoming articles and the appearance of the magazine. Meanwhile, in *Republika*, in addition to publishing articles by INSISTS researchers and the general public, Zarkasyi also regularly writes reflective scientific-popular essays that attract attention. Later, a collection of these essays was published with a white cover entitled *Misykat: Reflections on Westernization, Liberalization, and Islam*. The book was published

collaboratively by two institutions led by Zarkasyi, INSISTS (since March 2003) and MIUMI (since January 2012). This means that three months after becoming the Chair of MIUMI, Zarkasyi published the book on behalf of two organizations as the saying goes “while diving, drink water” or “once rowing two also exceeded” in the sense of carrying out one activity with the intention of getting several results.

One interesting thing about Zarkasyi’s writing is his ability to contextualize a story with the importance of the Islamization of knowledge. For example, he once started his writing on *inpasonline.com* (November 6, 2019) with a story between two Indonesian Muslim intellectual figures, Mukti Ali and Baiquni. According to the story, Mukti Ali disagreed with the Islamization of knowledge, but Baiquni answered regarding “assumptions and presuppositions of science in the West that do not see God or theology” which eventually became secular and anti-God. Commenting on the story, Zarkasyi said that generally Muslim scientists who disagree with the Islamization of knowledge do so because they do not understand or do not see the epistemological side. In fact, it is a clear fact that modern science in the West is a product of a secular worldview. Here, Zarkasyi’s intelligence is visible and adds a charismatic aura to him. In addition to that story, in other writings (for example in *Misykat* 2012) there is also a passion for facilitating heavy studies in the form of light stories but with depth and a conceptual basis for the Islamic Worldview.

Zarkasyi’s personal charisma and the institutional charisma of Gontor and INSISTS are major assets in spreading the idea of Islamization of knowledge to the community. This means that the idea and movement of Islamization of knowledge will not have a broad impact if not supported by the presence of personal and institutional charisma at the same time around the intellectual subject of Zarkasyi. Zarkasyi’s legitimacy as an intellectual was obtained from his learning trajectory from various world campuses, while his institutional legitimacy was obtained directly as a descendant of kiai from a large Islamic boarding school in Indonesia and a group of young Muslim intellectuals from INSISTS. Studies on charisma in anthropology, such as Keping Wu (2013) show the existence of “internal power” in certain figures that have an impact on their followers. According to Wu, the charismatic ritual of a figure shows that the appearance has a transformative impact on his congregation while strengthening the relationship between leader and followers (Wu, 2013). Zarkasyi’s appearance in various INSISTS programs and events such as lectures, writings, and audio recordings have a positive impact on the creation of trust, intellectual-religious awareness, and the strengthening of long-term relations between leaders and their followers. Institutionally, Gontor and INSISTS are two authoritative organizations in the realm of Islamic education and thought.

As an Islamic educational institution, Gontor has been trusted before the 20th century to educate Muslims which was then perfected in a 'modern Islamic boarding school' in the 20th century. Meanwhile, to fortify Muslims from Western and deviant thinking, CIOS was formed at Darussalam Gontor University. These two organizations, Gontor and INSISTS, each work hand in hand to produce cadres of

da'wah with a strong Islamic vision. This authority is obtained from the consistency of the institution in educating Muslims, as well as the framing—through various programs and events—created by the institution to display the personal charisma of its figures. Quoting Weber (in Wu, 2013), charisma also depends on the framing order to realize the charisma.

Zarkasyi's charisma can also be seen from "his father's guidance through dreams." Muhammad Arifin Ismail, Hamid Fahmy Zarkasyi's colleague at Gontor, once asked about his impressions in writing a master's thesis on "Al Ghazali's educational theory" at Punjab University, Pakistan. Zarkasyi replied that in solving several problems that arose in the thesis, sometimes he seemed to be guided by his late father (KH. Imam Zarkasyi), through dreams, or memories of conversations that had occurred between him and his father (Ismail, 2021). This experience was a 'something supernatural in Islam' that added to the charisma of Hamid Fahmy Zarkasyi who was *guided* by supernatural powers through dreams to solve his worldly affairs. Indeed, in the INSISTS community, supernatural things like that are rarely considered, but in my observation, the charisma of a figure is not only formed by intellectual achievements—for example, from a good educational trajectory—but also by spiritual experiences that have an impact on the figure. Peripheral things, such as the supernatural story above, seem simple, but in my opinion, they more or less form the charisma of a Muslim intellectual figure. In my opinion, charisma even forms the capacity of an agent to change the world around him.

## Conclusion

Based on the description above, I am of the view that why and how Indonesian Muslim intellectuals change the world through the Islamization of knowledge is carried out in various intentions and strategies. The intention of the role of Muslim intellectuals in *amar ma'ruf nahi mungkar* makes INSISTS agents motivated to join one organization and be involved in various programs. In addition, concerns about the negative impact of Western thought, the urgency of implementing the Islamic worldview in Muslim individuals to rebuild Islamic civilization can be realized with the existence of a socio-cultural situation in Indonesia that allows the spread of the idea of Islamization of knowledge. The socio-cultural construction (Ortner 2016) of an open and democratic Indonesia is an important component that allows agents to change the surrounding environment that is considered not yet Islamic.

The strategy of Islamization of knowledge is carried out by intellectual agents by strengthening the idea of the Islamic Worldview, forming intellectual institutions that focus on the preaching of Islamization of knowledge, cadreship of young intellectuals in various institutions, writing consistently regarding the Islamization of knowledge and utilizing the role of personal charisma and institutional charisma to support the vision of the Islamization of knowledge. Some of these things are formed thanks to the support of strong personal cognitive and emotional intentions from intellectual agents to carry out "rebuilding Islamic civilization" through the Islamization of science. In general, this paper finds that Hamid

Fahmy Zarkasyi's agency capacity is formed from three components of agency, namely intention, socio-cultural construction, and power relations as conceptualized by Ortner (2016). However, I add one more thing, namely the charisma component as a shaper of agency that impacts how an agent is motivated to intervene in the world more than just carrying out routine practices.

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