

Mapping the Intellectual Landscape of Islamic Modernity: A Bibliometric and Critical Discourse Analysis of Global Scholarship

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Received: 09/07/2025		Revised: 20/10/2025	Accepted: 05/11/2025
Abstract	This research aims to explore the state of the art of Islamic modernity research using a VOSviewer bibliometric study. The research draws on the 5-year (2020-2025) SCOPUS database, utilizing the keyword "Islamic Modernity." The results were analyzed descriptively and put into a visualization. In each criterion, when possible, regional interpretations are presented to support further analysis. Afterwards, a cross-sectional critical discourse analysis is conducted heuristically. The findings indicate that the number of publications on "Islamic modernity" increases significantly from 2023 to 2024, and this trend continues into 2025. It also suggests that Islamic modernity discourse falls into two poles of intellectual motives: one, more epistemological in the form of theory construction, and the other, more political, as it pays more attention to political issues by scrutinizing the internal dynamics of Islamic society through a political interpretation. Thus, future research could contribute to critiquing the Eurocentric paradigm and foster epistemic justice in the global theory of knowledge.		
Keywords	Bibliometric Analysis; Islamic Modernity; Knowledge; Politics.		
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1. INTRODUCTION

The discourse of modernity has received interesting development recently. Previous critiques are either manifested in dismantling the whole project of modernity, in the form of postmodernity, or in reconstituting modernity by rejecting its negative aspects. At the same time, the first approach annihilates modernity, whereas, even with different assumptions and strategies, the second approach still regards modernity as a uniform entity.

As a critique of this uniformity, Samuel Eisenstadt develops what he calls multiple modernities. In this view, modernity is one, but it can manifest in different forms. Eisenstadt criticizes the arbitrariness of postmodern and postcolonial theory, which views modernities as fragmentary, void, and detached from traditions (Jung, 2024, p. 37). An example of a postmodern attitude towards modernity is that of Frederic Jameson, which assumes modernity as a singular ontology of the present. This shallow concept considers only a periodic break with tradition as the precedent and postmodernism as the antecedent (Jameson, 2002). The postcolonial perspective on modernity emphasizes the entanglement of modernity with the colonial project and assumes its rupture with premodern history. Thus, both postmodernism and postcolonialism work with certain historical discontinuities, with the former from modern times and the latter from premodern history (Ingham & Warren, 2003). On the other hand, the multiple



modernities theory does not endorse such discontinuity, but rather views modernity as a joint venture of the European cultural program and local values (Jung, 2024, p. 34). Therefore, to Eisenstadt, there are many different and independent paths of modernity across the globe.

This multiple expression of modernity implies certain universal cores. To Eisenstadt, human agency and participation are parts of them (Jung, 2024, p. 37). To Taha Abdurrahman, the majority, criticism, and universalism are the general characteristics of modernity, referred to as the spirits of modernity (Abdurrahman, 2016). If Eisenstaedt recalls the Hegelian nature of antinomies and contradictions as essentials of modernity (Jung, 2024, p. 37), Abdurrahman emphasizes ethics as the cornerstone of Islamic modernity (Abdurrahman, 2020). It is within the Eisenstadt-Taha approach that modernity is regarded as both having conceptual unity and differences; this article specifically addresses Islamic modernity. Technically, while accommodating all keywords related to Islamic modernity available in the database, the authors view Islamic modernity as a unique, ethics-based expression of Islamic modernity.

Before this recent articulation, Islam and modernity were generally understood by most intellectuals, whether Western or Islamic, as being in a state of fierce contestation. According to Weber, Islam is accused of incompatibility with rationalization, a fundamental force of modern capitalism (Farooqi, 2013). Some Islamic scholars are facing a dilemma between Western modernity and Islamic traditional heritage (turath) (Abed al-Jabri, 2011, p. 175). It seems like there are three options on the table: to choose western modernity, the Islamic way, or an eclectic reconciliation. Although Al-Jabri rejects this false choice and urges the construction of a unifying mode of thought, his framework nevertheless calls for a rupture with tradition, as he deconstructs the mode of thought on which the entire Islamic tradition is built (Hallaq, 2019, p. 257). Al-Jabri's attitude is not unique. Together with Mohammed Arkoun and Hassan Hanafi, as well as his disciple Nasr Hamid Abu Zayd, they represent the mainstream intellectual zeitgeist of the time. According to Kersten, they form a quartet of heritage thinkers who offer a novel way of reading Islamic traditions by elaborating on social and humanities theories (Kersten, 2019, p. 20). Through periodical lenses, this trend represents the third wave of Islamic modernization.

Triggered by the shock of modernity, A. Z. Obiedat observes that the Islamic society experiences different phases of modernization. It began with the onset of the nineteenth century, marked by non-theoretical social reforms that rebelled against feudalism, introduced modern science, and developed material infrastructure during the period from 1800 to 1945 (Obiedat, 2022, p. 115). In Indonesia, this spirit is manifested in the construction of modern pesantren, which influences important variables of Islamic modernity development in the country's later phase (Zarkasyi, 2020). The second phase was concerned with the translation of Western philosophy to the Arab-Islamic world during 1945-1970s. The third was the adaptation of Western thought within the Arab-Islamic doctrines and social realities. The last, which only began in the 1990s, marked an initial passivity in philosophical engagement that developed into a more creative emergence of philosophical ideas in the later stage (Obiedat, 2022, pp. 115-125). However, while Obiedat regards the latest phase as regressive, many ideas sprout out reflecting a more democratic approach towards the politics of knowledge. Unlike the previous phase, which was dominated by Western philosophical adoption and adaptation, the latest phase rejects the very core of its epistemology. It offers a constructive alternative as a whole (Hallaq, 2019, p. xiii). Among the latest trends, Taha Abdurrahman, who advocates for ethics-based modernity, is the most celebrated contributor.

The latest claim for cultural uniqueness, while maintaining the quest for universal principles,

represents the core tenet of the theory of multiple modernities. In Dietrich Jung's "A Theory of Islamic Modernities," the rejection of secularization — a foundational concept in classical theories of modernity — is argued to be a unique feature of Islamic modernity (Jung, 2024). This approach rejects the notion that the European context of institutional and social arbitrariness, which gave rise to modernity, should be applicable in the global world (Eisenstadt, 2000, p. 1).

Theoretically, the encounter between Islam and modernity is viewed through two different perspectives. One aims to constitute the global expansion of modernity, regards Islam and Muslim society as oriental others, a backwardness, and seeks to establish compatibility with modern values. On the other hand, the relation is evaluated with scepticism toward modernity itself. In the latter, there is a postcolonial despair that rejects any presumably hegemonic colonial enterprise. Wael Hallaq's works, which resonate with forms of impossibility within modern modes of life, could be situated within this kind of intellectual pessimism. Also, in the latter, there is an approach of multiple modernities theorists, which seeks to understand the reality of modernity in the broadest sense, not just in the official narrative, but also in taking into account the unpredictable repercussions, alterations, and adaptations in different societies (Jung, 2023, p. vi). This latest theoretical framework is what the authors prefer, regarding Islamic modernity as an encounter between the general modern program and Islamic cultural adaptation.

While theoretically, the discourse on Islamic modernity has evolved into a more culturally sensitive one, the term "Islamic modernity" in published research has taken on a different meaning. There are various interpretations and applications of "Islamic modernity" in published research articles. Those uses and interpretations are subjected to scrutiny in this article because there is a knowledge gap in understanding how writers use and interpret the term "Islamic modernity." Thus, this article aims to review the latest developments in articles on Islamic modernity through bibliometric analysis. Initially, a description of the literature review is provided. This description will include information about annual publications, affiliations, journal sources, funding, bibliometric analysis, geographical scope, authors, and citations. In some sections, several articles will be summarized to the light on important discourse. Eventually, a cross-sectional overview is conducted through Fairclough's critical discourse analysis about the politics of knowledge in the production and dissemination of Islamic modernity discourse.

2. METHODS

This research used bibliometric analysis to the light on articles related to Islamic modernity. It utilized the VOSviewer app as a tool for mapping network visualization, which is useful for observing the interconnection of keywords. This enables overlay visualization to identify the periodic development of keywords and density visualization to understand the frequency of keyword appearance. Additionally, VOSviewer aids in the bibliometric analysis of the results.

Data are extracted from the Scopus database (www.scopus.com) on Saturday, March 8, 2025, at 5.28 pm GMT+7. The keyword "Islamic Modernity" yielded 219 articles. To demonstrate up-to-date discourse, articles are limited to the period from 2020 to 2025. Another set of criteria is explained below: Firstly, subject areas are limited to Social Sciences and Humanities, because the object of research is the discourse, which requires what Dilthey called "verstehen" or understanding. The discourse on "Islamic Modernity" is well articulated in this area. Secondly, language is limited to the English article because of constraints in time and translation. Thirdly, document type is limited to articles; thus, book chapters and monographs are excluded.

This research combines quantitative and qualitative approaches, employing a sequential

explanatory design. In the first phase, quantitative data collection and analysis are conducted, followed by qualitative data analysis (Sugiyono, 2021, p. 537). Below is the flowchart of research design elaborated from Creswell (Creswell, 2009):

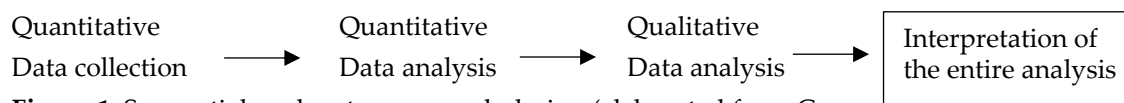


Figure 1. Sequential explanatory research design (elaborated from Creswell, 2009, p. 209)

Based on the VOSviewer-acquired data (quantitative data collection), this study analyzes annual publications, affiliations, journal sources, funding, and bibliometric data. Subsequently, it provides an overview of regions, authors, and citations, as quantitative data analysis in the first phase, as indicated in the chart above. Later, a qualitative analysis is conducted through Norman Fairclough's critical discourse analysis, which involves micro, meso, and macro analysis.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Annual Publication

From the Scopus Database, between 2020 and March 8, 2025, we found 219 articles related to Islamic Modernity. Within these five years, there has been an overall increase in the yearly total of articles.

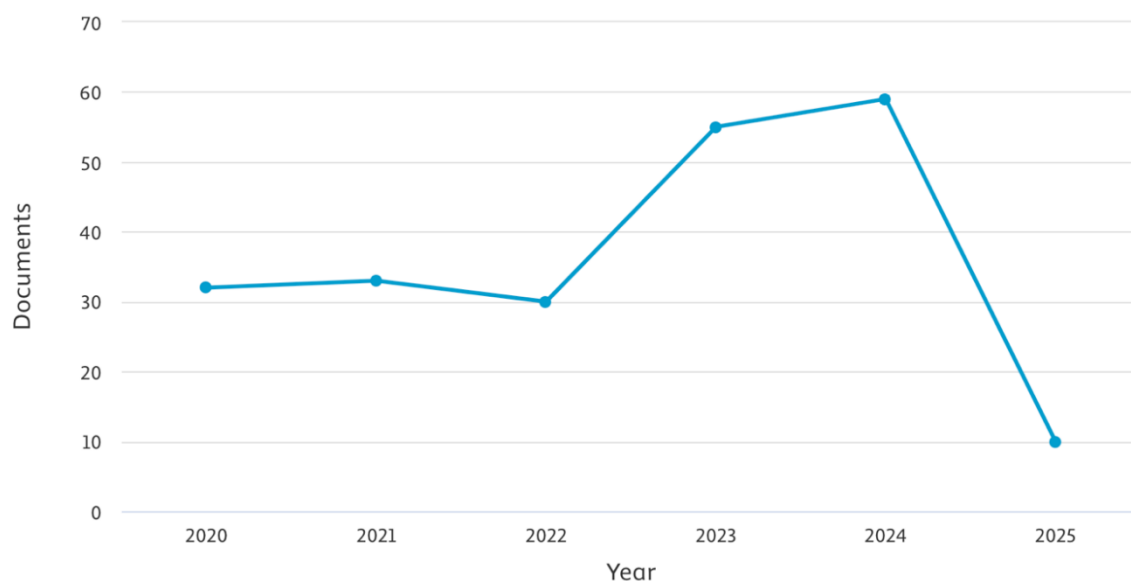


Figure 2. The trendline of publication numbers per year from 2020 to 2025.

To be exact, the table below explicates the number of publications per year.

Table 1. Number of Publications per Year.

Year	Number of Publications
2020	32
2021	33
2022	30
2023	55
2024	59
2025	10
Total	219

From the data above, we can infer a trend of annual increases in publications. In the microscopic view, 2022, with 30 articles, became an anomaly due to a small decrease. The year 2024 was the most productive year for Islamic modernity publications with 59 articles. While the year 2025 has the fewest articles, it does not cover the whole year.

3.2. Most Relevant Affiliations

Here is the table of the most relevant affiliations of Islamic modernity research during the span of 2020-2025. Table 2. 10 Most Relevant Author Affiliations.

No	Affiliation	Number of Publications
1.	Qatar University	5
2.	International Islamic University of Malaysia	4
3.	Syddansk Universitet	3
4.	Monash University	3
5.	Universiteit Leiden	3
6.	Islamic College	2
7.	Ferdowsi University of Mashhad	2
8.	University of South Africa	2
9.	Bar-Ilan University	2
10.	University of Ibadan	2

The table above only displays the affiliations of the 10 most relevant authors and does not encompass the total number of affiliations. In this section, Asian universities dominate the article publication, except Syddansk Universitet, Monash University in Australia, Universiteit Leiden in the Netherlands, London Islamic College, and two African universities: the University of South Africa and the University of Ibadan. Some of the significant affiliations from Western institutions are universities known for their attention to the study of Islam and muslim societies. Leiden University has long been recognized as a beacon for the study of Islam and Muslim societies. At the same time, Monash University represents a growing academic interest among Australian universities in the study of Muslim and Islamic societies, which has emerged over the last two decades (Rane, 2021). It is essential to note that Syddansk University's prominence is largely attributed to the scholarly contributions of Dietrich Jung.

In the case of Asian affiliations, the two most productive affiliations produce similar topics, though with slightly different nuances. While both mainly discuss the negotiation of tradition and modernity, IIUM of Malaysia's affiliated institutions address a wider range of topics, from Ibn Sina's contribution to modernity (Adnan, 2024; Ain Norman & Eisa Ruhullah, 2024), to analyzing techno-jahiliyyahism (Adnan, 2024). On the other hand, all Qatar University-related articles explore how traditional identity interacts with modernity. Examples are Bedrane Benlahcene's works, Turkey's Transition into Modernity and the Response of the 'Ulama (Benlahcene, 2023) and The Critical Engagement with Modern Knowledge in the Writings of Malek Bennabi (Benlahcene, 2024). It is also prevalent in the work of Mohammed Eid and Mohammed Talaat on the competing discourses of race, culture, and language during the emergence of Pan-Islamism/Pan-Arabism in Egypt (Mohamed & Mohamed, 2024).

3.3. Sources

The sources of Islamic modernity publications are mentioned in the table below. For practical purposes, the list does not exhaust all article sources; only journals with two or more articles are presented.

Table 3. The Sources of Islamic Modernity Articles During 2020-2025.

Source	Number of Publications
Religions	22
British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies, International Journal of Islamic Architecture, Journal of Islamic and Muslim Studies	5
Al Shajarah, American Journal of Islam and Society, International Journal of Islam in Asia, Journal of Islamic Thought and Civilization, Welt Des Islams	4
International Journal of Communication, Journal of The Royal Asiatic Society	3
Australian Journal of Islamic Studies, Central Eurasia Studies, Hts Teologiese Studies Theological Studies, Ilahiyat Studies, Indonesia and The Malay World, International Journal of Religion and Spirituality in Society, Journal of Al Tamaddun, Journal of Islamic Architecture, Journal of North African Studies, Journal of Quranic Studies, Jurnal Ilmiah Peuradeun, Middle East Critique, Teosofi Jurnal Tasawuf dan Pemikiran Islam, Theory and Practice in Language Studies	2

Western sources are dominating the publications. MDPI-based journal, Religions, comfortably surpasses other sources with 22 articles. Among US-European journals, the Malaysian Al-Shajarah and the Pakistani Journal of Islamic Thought and Civilization contribute a significant number of publications, with four articles each. The prominence of MDPI Religions is likely due to its frequent and massive publishing. It publishes twelve issues per volume, with each issue typically featuring over a hundred articles. In comparison, other leading journals, such as the British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies, the International Journal of Islamic Architecture, and the Journal of Islamic and Muslim Studies, publish two issues per volume, averaging slightly more than ten articles per issue.

3.4. Fundings

Regarding funding, the following data are available for research funding of published articles.

Table 4. The Fundings of Islamic Modernity Articles Publication During 2020-2025.

Sponsor	Number of Publications
European Commission/ European Research Council/ Horizon 2020 Framework Programme	4
American Academy of Religion, American Institute for Sri Lankan Studies, American University in Cairo, Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, Australian Research Council, British Academy, City University of New York, Deanship of Scientific Research King Saud University, Department of Education and	1

Training, Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft, Directorate-General XII Science Research and Development, Engineering Research Center, ISEAS Yusof Ishak Institute, International Institute of Islamic Thought, Katholischer Akademischer Ausländer-Dienst, Kementrian Agama Republik Indonesia, King Faisal University, King Saud University, Max-Planck-Gesellschaft, Ministry of Health Singapore, Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia, Monash University, National Endowment for the Humanities, Northwestern University, Palestinian American Research Center, Qatar Foundation, Qatar National Research Fund, Qatar University, Rhodes College, Russian Science Foundation, Sejong University, Social Science Research Council, Universiteit Leiden, Universiti Malaya, University of Birmingham, University of Michigan, University of Minnesota, Wenner-Gren Foundation	
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It is interesting to note that European Commission-related funding supports are paying attention to the rise of a post-Eurocentric perspective of knowledge. The European Commission funds four articles. First, the article by Oliver Scharbrodt, "Contesting Ritual Practices in Twelver Shi'ism: Modernism, Sectarianism, and the Politics of Self-Fragellation (Tatbir)," discusses the practice of blood-letting self-fragellation during the modern discourse and the rise of the Iranian Islamic Revolution, which occurred in the meantime. Scharbrodt understood that the fatwa ban by Imam Khomeini was a political maneuver to gain popular influence in the wider Shiite and Islamic community and a way to consolidate power within Iran (Scharbrodt, 2023, p. 1080)

Second, Mohammed Mesbahi's *Dynamic Quietism and the Consolidation of Hawza Ilmiya of Qum during the Late Pahlavi Era*, evaluates the dynamic quietism as a political strategy to survive the authoritarianism of Reza Shah's government during the effort to modernize the Iranian society (Mesbahi, 2023).

The third article, by Rahime Süleymanoğlu-Kürüm and Elif Gençkal-Eroler, discussed the discourse of alternative modernity in Turkish media. The idea to challenge the hegemony of Western modernity is driven by the Islamic party AKP, which is accompanied by the new epistemic hegemony in the form of Islamic civilization apologetic justification (Süleymanoğlu-Kürüm & Gençkal-Eroler, 2023).

The fourth article was discussing the changing attitude of the Soviet government toward Islamic traditional medicine. While initially the tabibs were portrayed as harmful and backwards, they were able to cure what modern Soviet medicine was incapable of (Latypov, 2023). Thus, the continuation of traditional Tibb in the late Soviet period manifests as a challenge to the modernization project, as the Soviet healthcare system fails to function. If this has something to say, it challenges the textbook application of modernization, which often neglects culturally sensitive approaches.

Apart from the European Commission, Qatar-linked institutions provide two publications. Three

institutions appear in the data; however, upon verification, it was found that the Qatar National Research Fund is part of the Qatar Foundation, and both institutions support the same publication, "The Racio-national Imaginary and Discursive Formation of Arabo-Islamic Identity in al-Manar and al-Risalah: A Topic Modelling Study" (Mohamed & Mohamed, 2024). From the two articles, one article aims to portray the discursive effort to make a cultural reappropriation between traditions and modernity in Egypt (Mohamed & Mohamed, 2024), while the other moves around a critical evaluation of Western modernity's idea of time in comparison with the Islamic concept of time (Ahmad, 2022). To some extent, the latter represents a post-Eurocentric paradigm of modernity.

It is challenging to gain a general insight into articles from other funders, as each has supported only a single publication. However, one clear thing is that most of them are Western-based institutions or linked with Western institutions, such as the American University in Cairo, which is US-accredited. Outside Western-based or associated institutions and Qatari-linked ones, only eight institutions provide funding for published articles. They are the ISEAS Yusof Ishak Institute, Kementerian Agama Republik Indonesia, King Faisal University, King Saud University, Ministry of Health Singapore, Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia, Sejong University, and Universiti Malaya.

3.5. *Bibliometric Analysis of Islamic Modernity*

From the Scopus database, we retrieved 219 articles related to Islamic modernity and exported their CSV file to be uploaded and analyzed using VOSviewer. Based on the data, there are 16 clusters and 133 items from VOSviewer:

1. Red color: 16 items - crisis of modernity, Islamic reform, Islamic revivalism, Islamization of modernity, kyai, modernists, modernity, pesantren, rationality, religious orthodoxy, revivalism, Salafism, traditional Islam, traditionalists, ulama.
2. Green color 15 items: assisted reproductive technology, bioethics, gamete donation, globalization, Islamic communication, Islamic world, Middle East, modernization, neo-modernity, North Africa, postmodernity, reproductive tourism, sociology of culture, Western Asia, world order.
3. Blue color 14 items: al-qaradawi, al-qawaid al-fiqhiya, early modern, family, fiqh al-waqi, genealogies, identity, Islamic law, ijtihad, maqasid as-saria, Ottoman Empire, periodization, religious heritage, taisir.
4. Olive color 13 items: culture, economics, entrepreneurs, ethics, Europe, fashion, France, Islamic solidarity, islamophobia, leisure, networks, politics, social mobility.
5. Purple color 12 items: collective memory, Egypt, Gamal Abdel Nasser, history, Iraq, Islamic modernism, Islamic state group, media strategy, Muhammad Abduh, postcolonialism, Syria, terrorism.
6. Light blue color 10 items: creative writing, domestic workers, Islamic masculinity, magnificent century, Malay custom, Malaysia, moral project, spiritual habitus, watching competencies.
7. Orange color 9 items: accommodation, Caucasus and Central Asia, Gellner, norms and values, reformism, religion, science and religion, secular liberalism, secularization.
8. Brown color 9 items: banking sector, decolonial, dehumanization, financial institutions, Islam, Lebanon, modernity/(de)coloniality, religious discrimination, social inequalities.
9. Pink color 7 items: interpretations possible de la modernite, modernite, modernite multiples, multiple modernities, openness of modernity, Turquie, Turquie.
10. Coral color 6 items: catholic modernity, Charles Taylor, Dahr, Dahriya, Time, Transcendence.

11. Light green color 5 items: America, intellectuals, muslims, Ramis, reformists.
12. Grey color 4 items: colonialism, epistemicide, Islamic intellectualism, orientalism.
13. Light olive color 4 items: Indonesian muslim, Muhammadiyah education, phenomenological approach, progressive Islam.
14. Light purple color 3 items: civilizing process, public sphere, tradition.
15. Sky blue color 3 items: gender, international development, women's education.
16. Light orange color: 3 items: law, Qur'an, sharia.

To provide an overview of item clustering, the authors will highlight the most and the least prevalent clusters. From bibliometric data, the most concentrated cluster is the red cluster, discussing the tension between tradition (kyai, pesantren, religious orthodoxy, traditionalist, traditional Islam, ulama) and modernity (modernity, modernists, rationality, crisis of modernity) and engaging a certain kind of reform (Islamic reform, Islamic revivalism, islamization of modernity). The second largest cluster is the green cluster, where the general discussion revolves around the utilization of modernity and its apparatus, especially technology, in the biological and social fields (assisted reproductive technology, bioethics, gamete donation, globalization, Islamic communication, reproductive tourism, sociology of culture). The third largest cluster, the blue cluster, where adaptation to modernity is often discussed through jurisprudential reinterpretation of Islamic teachings (al-Qaradawi, al-Qawaid al-Fiqhiya, family, fiqh al-waqi, identity, Islamic law, ijtihad, maqasid as-sari'a).

The second smallest cluster is characterized by the sky-blue color, which highlights the keywords of gender and women's education. The smallest cluster is the light orange cluster in which law, Qur'an, and Sharia are discussed. From clusters above, it is clear that the most discussed ideas in Islamic modernity articles mostly revolve around the negotiation between tradition with modernity. The three major modes of this conversation are: first, as in the first cluster, through proposing an ideal way of Islamic reform; second, as in the second cluster, through technological integration with biological and social life; third, through jurisprudential reinterpretation. The second mode represents what Samuel Eisenstadt called the classical modernity way of modernization. According to him, classical modernity aims to promote Western modernity and its institutional forms, including technological integration, as the single modus of modernization (Eisenstadt, 2000). The first and third modes represent a more organic approach to engineering, where the idea of modernity is engaged with traditional values and teachings.

Over time, there's an interesting shift in the discourse. Initially, the keywords reveal political motives to civilize others, as evident in terms such as "civilizing process" and "sociology of culture." Lately, the discourse has accommodated itself to more organic reforms and a critical stance towards colonialism, as evidenced by the increasing frequency of keywords such as colonialism, Islamic modernity, and Islamic modernism.

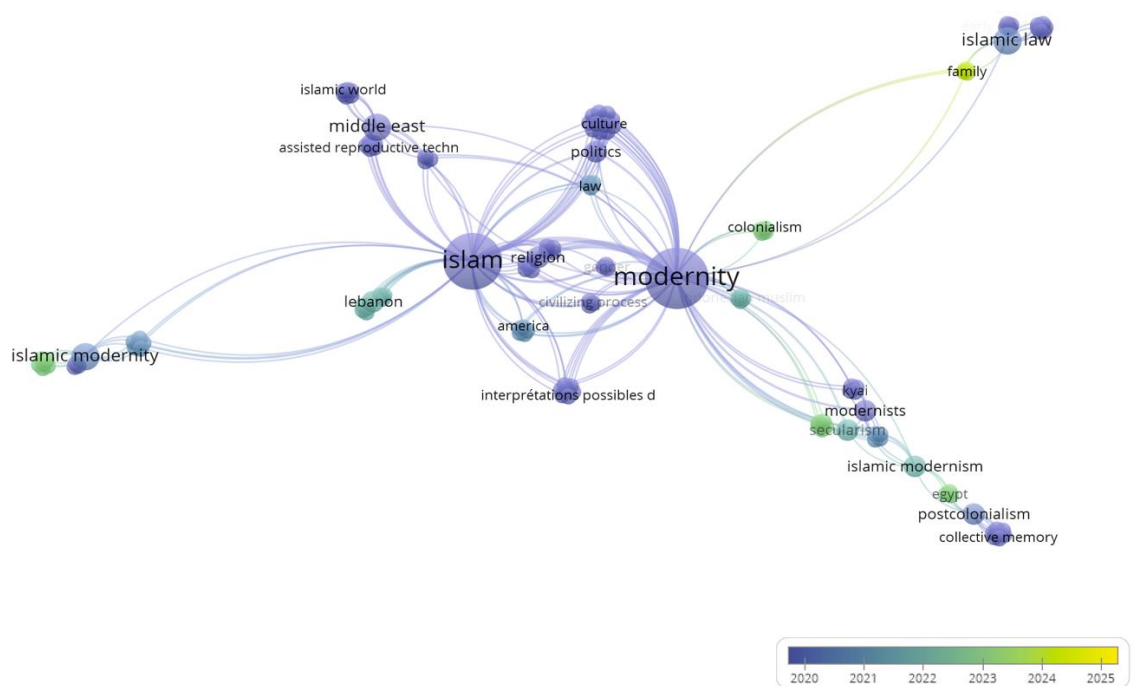


Figure 2. Overlay Visualization of Islamic Modernity Discourse in Scopus Database.

From the figure above, it can also be concluded that the major research trend, visualized as the large purple circle “Islam” and “modernity”, was often connected through the lens of politics and culture. Research on Islamic modernity, Islamic modernism, and postcolonialism remains open to further elaboration.

3.6. Geographical Analysis

On a continental basis, Asia produced the largest number of articles. Not only does it represent the colossal existence of Islam in this continent, but also, as Meyer evaluates, its diverse cultural representations, colonial and globalization experience, present the complex disposition between tradition and modernity (Meyer, 2024a), the issue that gains epistemic importance in the age of decolonization and appreciation of indigenous knowledge.

Continent	Number of Publications
Asia	98
Europe	58
America	46
Africa	14
Australia & Oceania	11

Europe comes next as the most productive continent, even with a slightly larger number than half of Asian publications. However, Europe's involvement in research related to Islamic modernity is also reflected in the substantial funding allocated. It provides the most support for published articles, with the European Commission's Horizon 2020 Framework Programmes leading the way.

In Asia, the discourse of "Islamic modernity" remains dominated by its political aspects. Thus, the issue of Islamism, nationalism, and democracy remains significant. However, the discussion about new topics such as identity, educational reform, and Islamic boarding schools begins to emerge in the later phase. In America, there are dominant spheres within the discourse. Modernity, Islam, Islamism,

and Islamic reform become closely intertwined. A more diverse range of discussion can be found in European circles with no centralized and dominant discourse. It also generates new ideas, such as multiple modernities, Islamic reform, and the intertwining discourse of Sufism, Islamic modernity, and tradition.

On the national level, the US leads the chart with 43 articles. However, it is interesting to note that Indonesia, which ranks second with 25 articles, presents a unique discourse. Within the conversation of "Islamic Modernity" in Indonesian-related articles from 2020 to 2025, there's a shift in discourse from formal issues, such as usury, *halal*, and *mu'amalah*, in the early years, towards more structural problems, including social reform and the state's role, in the later years. In between, the discussion about identity also emerges as the medium between those two trends. One important change also occurred in the ideological spectrum, shifting from discussions about Salafism to talks about Sufism.

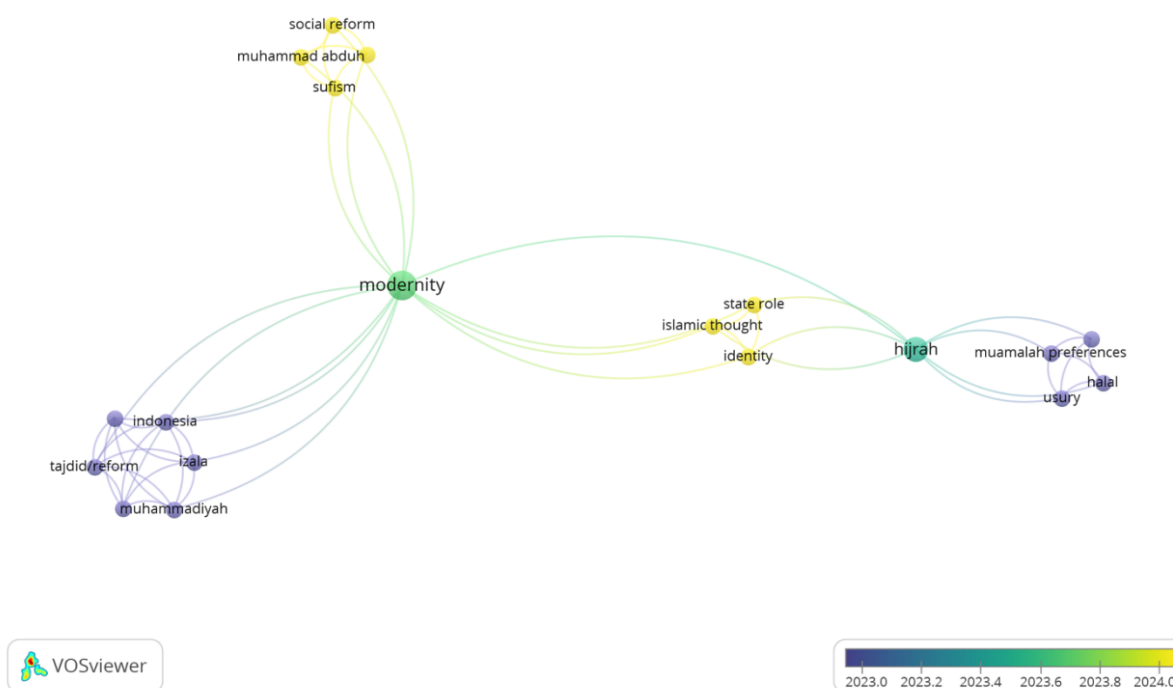


Figure 3. Overlay Visualization of Indonesian-related Articles in Scopus Database.

3.7. Authors and Citations

Dietrich Jung writes the most extensive number of articles, with three. In these three articles, departing from his expertise in political studies, Jung primarily addresses the encounter between Islam and modernity. During the period from 2020 to 2025, his initial article discussed the subjective formation of modern Muslims within the Islamist political movement, using Hizbut Tahrir as an example (Jung & Sinclair, 2020). From this starting point, he further elaborates on the more general attributes of the Islamic modernist movement, in which he regards the imagination of the Islamic past as a common anchor for different Islamist groups (Jung, 2021). Subsequently, in his most recent article, Jung tries to construct a theory of Islamic modernism. Jung argues that the rise of Islamic modernity is a cultural

reactionary attitude towards a certain project of textbook application of modernization (Jung, 2024). Arguing for the general nature of classical modernization theory's global modernization, Jung endorses a pluralistic approach to its manifestation. To him, as his findings on Islamic modernity suggest, there are different possibilities of secular-religious disposition in modern society, including mass accommodation and social participation in modernity, as well as the structure-action dialectic of modernity realization.

Three authors wrote two articles. First, Bedrane Benlahcene's 2023 article analyzes the modernization of Turkey, which was conducted through the European style of state-religion separation, leading to the dominance of a materialistic worldview. Said Nursi's response as a representative of the ulema is considered, highlighting his twofold endeavor in intellectual activism (Benlahcene, 2023). Benlahcene's second article in 2024 examines the contribution of Malik Bennabi to the modernization of Islamic thought through the adaptation of Western knowledge with a critical stance towards its foundational worldview (Benlahcene, 2024). What is similar in both of Benlahcene's works is that he whispers critical sound toward modernity. While the second article explicitly resonates with the acceptance of modern knowledge through critical evaluation (Benlahcene, 2024), in the first article, through the locution of Said Nursi, Benlahcene narrates criticism of the secularist approach to modernization (Benlahcene, 2023).

Second, it is Verena Meyer. Her first article summarizes the Asian privilege in conducting Islamic studies research (Meyer, 2024a). Her second, in 2024, examines the tension that Muhammadiyah, an Indonesian Islamic modernist organization, faces on the dilemma of ambiguous sacrality and modernity. Meyer found that Muhammadiyah, avoiding the loss of its historical memory, rejuvenated the sacrality through a demystified form of simple graves (Meyer, 2024b). In both studies, Meyer seeks to accommodate non-Eurocentric perspectives. Meyer's theoretical stance can be understood from her first article, in which she proposes a thesis as an answer to the demand for a radical rethinking of how Islam has been portrayed in Western traditional scholarship (Meyer, 2024a). Meyer's second study provides a practical verification of her thesis, demonstrating that the expression of Islamic modernity in Muhammadiyah does not exclude the idea of transcendence (Meyer, 2024b).

Auwais Rafudeen, whose first article, written in 2021, explores the interpretation of COVID-19 through modern and Islamic premodern concepts. Rafudeen argues that, after all, the progressive modern concept of time consists of certain elements that resemble those of the premodern archetypal concept (Rafudeen, 2021). Rafudeen's second article, published in 2024, brackets Ahmed El-Syamsi's insistence on the importance of rediscovering traditional texts by Muslim reformers. While appreciating the intellectual progress, Rafudeen questions the extent to which modern sensibilities influence the so-called reformers (Rafudeen, 2024). Rafudeen's works are a clear example of an ontological critique of modernity, as both problematize the concept of modern time.

The most cited article, "Authoritarianism, Democracy, Islamic Movements and Contestations of Islamic Religious Ideas in Indonesia," argues for the compatibility of Islam and modernity, citing evidence from Indonesian political reforms. The movement of Islamic neo-modernist organizations and individuals, particularly Abdurrahman Wahid, played a crucial role in transforming Indonesian politics from authoritarianism to democracy (Barton et al., 2021). Through an analysis of 27 Scopus documents that cite this article, it appears that the discussion of Islamic modernity centers on the issues of democracy and constitutionalism. Barton et al.'s work is essential for understanding the dynamics of Indonesian politics in the field of political studies. However, within the discourse of modernity, it embodies the old epistemic paradigm that views the others through the lens of compatibility versus

incompatibility with modern rationality.

The article by Timo Duile, "Kuntilanak Ghost Narrative and Malay Modernity in Pontianak, Indonesia," comes second in citations. Duile argues that the Kuntilanak horror narrative is a rationalization of human conquer over nature. However, the attitude of Islam as a representation of modernity is ambiguous, as it preserves the narrative as a memory but sidelines it into *the background* (Duile, 2020). The tone of Duile's article on the relationship between traditionalism and modernity is quite nuanced. While Islam is often referred to as a form of modern rationality in its support for human mastery over nature, symbolized by the ghost Kuntilanak, the Islamic-inspired *masyarakat madani* kept the myth alive outside the city, in the *pedalaman*. Thus, Duile represents a form of modernity where *logos* does not exclude *mythos* but maintains both in a co-existential distance.

Next come article from Abdin Chande, "Global Politics of Knowledge Production: The Challenges of Islamization of Knowledge in The Light of Tradition Vs Secular Modernity Debate" takes on what he deems as the failure of Islamization of Knowledge in constructing Islamic philosophical foundation of knowledge production and suggest more nuanced approach to disseminate the idea of Islamic production of knowledge (Chande, 2023). Evaluating the encounter between modernity and "Islam" through an epistemological battle, Chande notices the stagnation of the Islamization of knowledge project. Chande's work does not state an obvious stance on the discourse of modernity. However, in the context of the conflicting modernity and Islamization of knowledge project, he falls into the trap of a binary opposition between modernity and cultural tradition.

3.8. Discussion: Between Epistemological and Political Motives

The generation of Islamic Modernity, which has surged in recent years, resides between two poles of intellectual motivation. On the one hand, there is an epistemologically-centered approach that seeks to construct a multi-perspective-based evidence of a general theory of knowledge. Rather than saying that this strand is apolitical, its sensitivity towards the voice of others, in this context, is the voice of Islam and Muslims, representing the value of knowledge democracy in the more interconnected contemporary world. On the other hand, there is a more political approach that seeks to understand the exoticism of the Islamic context as a means to instrumental motives.

The first strand is represented, for example, by the works of Dietrich Jung, the most prolific writer in the span of 2020-2025. In his works, besides his effort to construct the general theory of Islamic modernity that supports the possibility of alternative modernity, as I have shown above, Jung's aim was epistemological as he perceives Islamic society as another important source of knowledge. Thus, he builds an "Islamically informed based social theory" (Jung, 2023, p. vi). Falls into this strand also the general nature of African-related articles, in which the visualization VOSviewer shows its relative absence of political terms such as Islamism. However, through the concept of modernity, it is more closely connected with Sufi social reforms, Habermasian communication ethics, and disciplinary perspectives.

The second strand, as evident in most works, involves the effort to reconcile Islam with modern political values, such as democracy. Asian-related articles mostly discuss Islam and modernity around issues of Islamism, democracy, women, secularism and issues related with issues of nationalism. Exceptions could be drawn from Indonesian-related articles, as the second most productive nation beyond the US. Unlike the more general Asian articles' features, Indonesian-related articles tackle more epistemological issues, initially arising from formal fiqh-centered discussions, such as usury and *hijrah*, and then move towards more structural and spiritually subjective issues, including Sufism and identity.

This attitude refers not only to the fact that Indonesia is the biggest Muslim nation but also to the dynamic of Indonesian democracy and intellectual freedom. However, Indonesians still do not take the issue of Islamic modernity seriously as none of them have written more than one article, and only four affiliations have published two articles.

Europe-related articles show a relatively similar pattern to Asian ones, as it is centered around Islam, Islamism, and fundamentalism. However, important developments have occurred in the more recent discussion of issues such as sustainability, Sufism, multiple modernities, and Islamic reform. The attributes of these Europe-related articles reflect the nature of European institutions, as they provide a significant amount of support for research in the field of Islamic modernity. Two points can be inferred from the available European-funded articles. First, in general, it paves the way for discussing alternative modernity outside the geographical and ideological borders of Europe, thereby incorporating certain epistemological motives. However, from the published articles on European funding, it is also clear that the amount of epistemological patronage is evident. All four articles discuss either the failure of alternative modernity as in Soviet communism (Latypov, 2023), the threat of anti-intellectualism of Islamic modernity as in Turkey media discourse (Süleymanoğlu-Kürüm & Gençkal-Eroler, 2023) or the political motives behind any Islamic movement as in *The Politics of Self-Fragellation and Hawza Dynamic Quietism* (Mesbahi, 2023; Scharbrodt, 2023). This kind of epistemic attitude is exactly what epistemic gatekeeping is about. In contrast to the first strand, it is obvious, using Raewin Connell's terms, that the first regards others as a text to learn *from*, while the second regards them as a text to learn *about* (Connell, 2020, p. viii).

In the micro level, the close interrelation between Islam, Islamism, and fundamentalism, as shown in the figure, reflects the epistemic focus on political aspects of Islamic society. The interrelation also shows that much published research assumes that the Islamic political movement is essentially anti-modern because it is fundamentalist. As the above samples indicate, this extends to the politicization of research through the political hermeneutics of the internal dynamics of Islamic society. This strand of research could not elaborate further than to note that any reference to Islamic political traditions is deemed incompatible with modern secular political values. This attitude is actually in line with the classical theory of modernity, as in the myth of the Orient, where knowledge is produced as a means to enable or maintain Western political domination.

At the meso level, the extensive sources and affiliations may not prove the accusation above. Nevertheless, in the bibliographical analysis, European articles, with lesser centrality of discourse, are still less obsessed with new ideas such as "multiple modernity", intertwining between "tradition" and "Islamic modernity", as to "Islamism" and "fundamentalism". A closer examination of the published articles from European institutions that fund research indicates a clearer understanding of the politics of knowledge. To understand why Asian articles often suffer the same fate, one must consider the fact that many of these articles are published in European sources.

An exception occurred in the African-related articles and the Indonesian articles. African articles are more aware of new ideas in the field of Islamic modernity. However, the number of articles is quite low with only 14 articles published. Indonesians are highlighted because, in addition to their high number of publications, with 23 articles, which is the second most productive after the US, many new ideas are also addressed.

Lastly, at the macro level, the discourse of Islamic modernity is still dominated by a certain kind of epistemological attitude, the political, as in Orientalism, that seeks to reinforce the continuation of the classical modernity project. Based on the assumption that Islamic political ideas are not modern,

much research is being conducted under the scrutiny of political analysis of the internal dynamics of Islamic society. However, a minor, yet progressive, epistemological movement also takes place, characterized by a more democratic attitude towards the knowledge of Islamic modernity.

4. CONCLUSION

Although the span of article production is short (2020-early 2025), several important conclusions could still be drawn from the analyses. Interest in Islamic modernity research is high, as evidenced by the number of published articles. This massive interest is also supported by a positive trend, as shown by the overall increase in articles, except 2022. Despite this fact, few authors are committed to the Islamic modernity expertise, as very few authors contribute more than one article on the subject. This suggests that most published articles are written sporadically, rather than as part of a prolonged academic enterprise. Europe makes a significant contribution to the research, ranking as the second most productive continent in publishing relevant articles while providing substantial funding through European institutions and leading journal sources. This phenomenon is understandable because European institutions continue to dominate the global educational establishment. The concern toward political Islam is obvious in most published research, as the keyword Islamism is very prevalent. As this approach reflects the classical modernity paradigm, future research is widely open for adopting the critical theory of modernity to challenge the Eurocentric bias in the production and dissemination of knowledge. Authors also suggest the manual approach to research, as VOSviewer may overlook crucial details, such as findings that keywords may not cover.

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