

**The Role of CIPSI in Epistemic Decolonization:  
Integrating Islamic Philosophy and Local Wisdom into  
Educational Reform in Indonesia**

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**Abstract**

This paper explores the role of the Center for Islamic Philosophical Studies and Information (CIPSI) in decolonizing education in Indonesia, focusing on its efforts to challenge colonial influences by integrating Islamic philosophy and local educational systems into the curriculum. CIPSI contributes to a culturally relevant educational model by translating key Islamic texts, conducting research in Islamic philosophy, science, and mysticism, and advocating for the inclusion of local wisdom. This study highlights CIPSI's role in bridging Islamic and Western knowledge systems, emphasizing the importance of indigenizing curricula. The paper also examines the challenges CIPSI faces and how non-state actors can collaborate with state institutions to reform the education system, contributing to the development of an educational framework that reflects Indonesia's cultural and intellectual heritage.

**Keywords:** Decolonization of education, Islamic philosophy, Islamic science, Islamic mysticism, *pondok pesantren*



## Introduction

Indonesia, as a post-colonial nation, still grapples with the lingering effects of colonialism, particularly in its educational system (Heyward & Sopantini, 2013). Despite significant advancements, Indonesia's education system remains heavily influenced by Western paradigms, which were established during the colonial era (Umar, 2023). These influences are reflected in the curriculum, teaching methodologies, and the overall approach to knowledge production (Umar, 2023). The dominance of Eurocentric models of education continues to marginalize indigenous knowledge systems, particularly Islamic philosophical traditions, which are rich in epistemological, scientific, and ethical insights (Kartanegara, 2005a).

In this study, indigenous knowledge (IK) is not restricted to ethnic-specific knowledge systems, such as Javanese or Sundanese philosophies. Following Jessen et al.'s (2021) framework, IK is understood as a broad, non-modern and non-Western body of knowledge that includes but is not limited to local (ethnic) traditions. It encompasses place-based knowledge passed down through generations within specific cultural contexts, often integrating spiritual, ecological, and philosophical insights. This broader view of IK aligns with classical Islamic philosophy—spanning metaphysics, epistemology, cosmology, and ethics—as part of alternative knowledge systems that challenge Western paradigms. Thus, Islamic philosophical-mystical-scientific traditions can be viewed as integral to the broader concept of IK, offering distinct frameworks of understanding, especially in contrast to the empirical-based approaches of Western science.

Nevertheless, this study also acknowledges the ethnic dimension of indigenous knowledge within the Indonesian context. the Center for Islamic Philosophical Studies and Information's (CIPSI) educational experiment draws partial inspiration from the traditional *pondok pesantren* (*madrassa* or Islamic boarding school) system in Java, which itself represents a localized hybrid of Islamic and Javanese educational

traditions. While preserving the structural features of *pesantren*—such as mentorship-based learning and decentralized curricula—CIPSI expands the content beyond purely religious instruction to include Islamic philosophy, philosophical Sufism, and Islamic sciences. Thus, CIPSI exemplifies an adaptive model that synthesizes broader Islamic intellectual heritage with locally rooted educational forms, demonstrating both the universality and contextuality of indigenous knowledge systems. The need to decolonize education has become a pressing issue globally, and Indonesia is no exception (Sunnemark & Thorn, 2021; Siregar, 2022). Decolonization, in this context, refers to the process of dismantling colonial educational structures and reorienting them to reflect the values, knowledge, and cultural contexts of the indigenous population (Lopez & Singh, 2024). In Indonesia, this decolonization process must involve integrating local wisdom (referring specifically to incorporating local educational traditions, particularly the *pesantren* system) and Islamic epistemology into the educational framework, making it more relevant and responsive to the cultural and intellectual heritage of the country (Faruque, 2024). However, this transformation cannot be achieved by the government alone; it requires the active involvement of non-state actors, who can play a pivotal role in reforming the education system (Suwignyo, 2021; Utami, Sapto, Leksana, Ayundasari & Ramadhan, 2022; Umar, 2023).

The decolonization of education in Indonesia remains a pressing issue, as illustrated by Suwignyo (2021), who notes that the rapid educational expansion in the 1950s still relied heavily on colonial-era structures due to infrastructural and financial limitations. This challenge is echoed in CIPSI's mission to integrate Islamic epistemology and local knowledge into the curriculum. Similarly, Utami et al. (2022) highlight a gradual shift in Indonesia's history curriculum from a Eurocentric focus toward localized narratives, emphasizing the role of indigenous schools in resisting colonial perspectives—a transformation aligned with CIPSI's work in reframing education. Umar (2023) extends this critique by arguing that Western dominance persists in global academic disciplines, and mere globalization

is inadequate for true decolonization. In response, CIPSI's initiatives—such as translating Islamic texts and promoting Islamic philosophy and science—seek to challenge Eurocentric academic structures and foster a more culturally grounded and inclusive education system. Lumbard (2025) critiques the Eurocentric dominance in Islamic studies, arguing it marginalizes Islamic epistemologies and limits their contributions to modern education. He emphasizes the value of Islamic metaphysics and theology in offering alternative educational frameworks. Aligning with this, CIPSI promotes a holistic, decolonized model of education in Indonesia by translating key Islamic texts, establishing the *Pesantren Filsafat*, and integrating local wisdom—particularly from the *pesantren* tradition—into curricula. This paper analyzes CIPSI's role as a non-state actor in challenging colonial legacies and advancing culturally relevant, inclusive education.

In line with its curriculum reform efforts, CIPSI has developed at least two significant works. The first is titled *Para Pemikir dalam Tradisi Ilmiah Islam* (Thinkers in the Scientific Tradition of Islam), which includes a database of 757 names of classical Muslim intellectuals (philosophers, scientists, theologians, and Sufis), alongside 250 biographical entries. This “database” is highly relevant for curriculum reform, particularly in formal educational systems such as at State Islamic Universities (UIN or Universitas Islam Negeri), where curricula often focus predominantly on “major scholars” like Ibn Sīnā, Fārābī, and Ibn Rushd, while neglecting “minor scholars” who played a significant role in the development of the indigenous intellectual tradition. By highlighting these lesser-known figures, this work seeks to enrich the educational experience and broaden the understanding of the contributions within the Islamic intellectual tradition.

The second key work is *Pengantar Studi Islam* (Introduction to Islamic Studies) textbook, developed by CIPSI founder Mulyadhi Kartanegara (b. 1959) in collaboration with several UIN faculty members. This textbook was designed to replace the old curriculum at UIN, which primarily



emphasized religious studies and overlooked rational sciences (including philosophy, philosophical Sufism, and Islamic science). *Pengantar Studi Islam* addresses this gap by including traditional religious studies topics such as Islamic history, Qur'an, and Hadith, while also introducing chapters on philosophy, science, mathematics, psychology, ethics, economics, politics, and philosophical Sufism. This textbook aims to “revive” the narrative of Islamic indigenous knowledge, which has been largely forgotten in Indonesian and global discourse, especially due to the dichotomy of modernization that confines religion to religious studies alone. Although it has not yet been officially adopted by UIN Jakarta, the textbook has received praise from various figures, including Quraish Shihab, for its comprehensive approach to Islamic studies (Kartanegara, 2019).

This paper highlights how CIPSI, through its innovative approaches, bridges the gap between Islamic and Modern Western knowledge systems, advocating for the indigenization of curriculum and the inclusion of local wisdom, as reflected in its adoption of the *pesantren* system in building its alternative educational project (Center for Islamic Philosophical Studies and Information, n.d.). It also examines the challenges and opportunities that CIPSI faces in its efforts to reform education, and how collaboration between non-state actors like CIPSI and state institutions can lead to more effective and sustainable educational reforms (al-Faruqi, 1989). This paper is structured around two main sections. The first part introduces the concept of decolonizing education and outlining the roles of both state and non-state actors in this process. The second examines CIPSI's role as a non-state actor in decolonizing education, discussing its methodologies and approaches, and analyzing the impact of its work in challenging colonial educational structures. This section also explores the importance of translating Islamic scholarly works and conducting research as essential tools for decolonization, while addressing the challenges CIPSI faces in implementing its mission and the strategies it employs to overcome these obstacles.

The research primarily involves document analysis, literature reviews, and case studies. The aim is to explore how CIPSI contributes to the decolonization of education in Indonesia through its translation efforts, research initiatives, and curriculum development. The main data sources include CIPSI's publications, reports, and educational materials, such as translated texts, research papers on Islamic philosophy and science, and curriculum resources developed by CIPSI, particularly by its founder, Mulyadhi Kartanegara.

### **Decolonization of Education: A Conceptual Overview**

Decolonization, as it applies to education, refers to the process of challenging and dismantling the colonial legacies embedded in the educational systems of post-colonial nations (Venkatesan, 2024). It seeks to eliminate the hegemonic dominance of Western knowledge systems and epistemologies that were introduced during the colonial era, and to make space for indigenous, local, and non-Western knowledge (Cicek, Masta, Goldfinch & Kloot, 2023). The concept of decolonizing education has gained considerable traction in post-colonial countries, as education remains one of the most potent mechanisms through which colonial ideologies are perpetuated (Tuck, 2016).

In the context of Indonesia, the decolonization of education involves more than just altering the curriculum (Jansen & Walters, 2022). It requires rethinking how knowledge is produced, who produces it, and the values it reflects (Chuhila, 2024). Education in Indonesia, like in many other former colonies, has been shaped by Western ideals, often at the expense of the country's own cultural and intellectual traditions (Aranditio, 2023; Nadzifah, 2024). As such, decolonizing education in Indonesia necessitates a process of rediscovery, where local (referring specifically to incorporating local educational traditions, particularly the *pesantren* system, into the framework of Islamic knowledge) and Islamic epistemologies are integrated into the mainstream education system (Center for Islamic Philosophical Studies and Information, n.d.).

The term “decolonization of education” was first formally introduced by post-colonial scholars who recognized the importance of reclaiming educational sovereignty and reshaping the intellectual landscape in ways that reflect indigenous knowledge systems (Lopez, 2020). This idea is rooted in the broader intellectual movement that critiques colonial epistemology and advocates for the inclusion of marginalized voices in knowledge production (Lopez, 2020). In many ways, this process goes hand in hand with the political and social struggles for autonomy and self-determination, making education an essential battleground for cultural and ideological decolonization (Lopez, 2020).

### ***The Role of State and Non-State Actors in Decolonizing Education***

Decolonizing education cannot be achieved solely through state initiatives or top-down policies (Hutchinson, Ochoa, Paulson & Tikly, 2023). While the government plays a critical role in implementing educational reforms and establishing policies that promote cultural relevance, non-state actors have a complementary role in driving change (Poudel; Jackson & Choi, 2022). Non-state actors, such as academic institutions, research organizations, local communities, and civil society groups, are often more agile and can engage directly with marginalized communities and educational institutions to challenge the status quo (Sunnemark, 2023).

CIPSI exemplifies the role of non-state actors in decolonizing education. By focusing on the translation of key Islamic philosophical works, conducting research on Islamic epistemology, and promoting curricula that reflect local wisdom and Islamic traditions, CIPSI actively engages in the process of decolonization (Center for Islamic Philosophical Studies and Information, n.d.). This is done by confronting the hegemony of Western knowledge and providing alternatives that are deeply rooted in Indonesia’s own intellectual traditions (Kartanegara, 2002; Kartanegara, 2014).

One of the key functions of non-state actors in the decolonization process is offering innovative and context-specific approaches to education (Seeberg & Qiang). CIPSI, for instance, has taken steps to promote the integration of Islamic sciences, philosophy, and ethics into educational curricula, offering a vision of education that is more inclusive and culturally relevant (Center for Islamic Philosophical Studies and Information, n.d.). Non-state actors also have the capacity to work outside the constraints of state bureaucracy, enabling them to experiment with new pedagogical models, research methodologies, and teaching materials that reflect indigenous epistemologies (Kessi, Marks & Ramugondo, 2021).

Furthermore, non-state actors are crucial in advocating for the rights of marginalized groups and communities that have been historically excluded from mainstream education (Smith, 2012). By prioritizing indigenous knowledge systems and non-Western forms of inquiry, CIPSI works to amplify voices that have been silenced by colonial and post-colonial educational frameworks (Center for Islamic Philosophical Studies and Information, n.d.).

### ***The Concept of Indigenization in Education***

Indigenization refers to the process of adapting and integrating local knowledge, culture, and traditions into the educational system (Santoso, 1997). This process is essential to the decolonization of education, as it ensures that education is relevant to the cultural context of the learners (Santoso, 1997). Indigenizing education involves not only adjusting curricula but also rethinking teaching methods, assessment strategies, and the types of knowledge that are prioritized in the educational system (Santoso, 1997).

In Indonesia, indigenization can be seen as a necessary step in reconnecting education with the cultural and intellectual heritage of the country (Martanto, 2012). Historically, Indonesian education has been shaped by Western ideas of knowledge, often ignoring the rich traditions

of philosophy, science, and ethics that have existed in Islamic and indigenous communities (Martanto, 2012). CIPSI's efforts to translate works by classical Islamic scholars, such as *Rasā'il Ikhwān al-Ṣafā'* and *al-Shifā'* by Ibn Sīnā, represent a form of indigenization, as they restore Islamic philosophical traditions to the educational discourse (Ikhwān al-Ṣafā', 2007a; Ikhwān al-Ṣafā', 2007b).

Indigenizing education is a multifaceted process that involves several key elements. Curriculum reform is an essential aspect, requiring updates to ensure the curriculum reflects the values, knowledge, and intellectual traditions relevant to the local context (Priyahita, 2013; Prianto & Abdillah, 2020). This includes incorporating traditional philosophies, religious teachings, and local history into educational content (Kuntowijoyo, 2007; Kartanegara, 2014). Pedagogical change is another critical component, emphasizing a shift from Western-dominated teaching methods to more culturally responsive approaches (Martanto, 2012). These methods prioritize critical thinking, dialogue, and indigenous ways of knowing, fostering a deeper connection between learners and their cultural heritage (Martanto, 2012).

Another vital aspect is the integration of local knowledge into the curriculum (Jurdi, 2017). This includes incorporating insights from local practices in agriculture, ecology, medicine, and the arts alongside Western knowledge systems (Hindmarch & Hillier, 2022; Shiva, 1997; Alatas & Sinha, 2017). CIPSI has significantly contributed to this process in Indonesia by promoting the inclusion of Islamic philosophical traditions and local knowledge systems within mainstream education (Center for Islamic Philosophical Studies and Information, n.d.). Their efforts address both the content of education and its methodology, advocating for teaching and learning approaches that are deeply rooted in Indonesia's cultural and intellectual heritage (Center for Islamic Philosophical Studies and Information, n.d.).

### ***Islamic Epistemology and Education***

Islamic epistemology—the study of knowledge in the Islamic tradition—provides an alternative framework to the modern Western model of knowledge production (Kartanegara, 2003). Unlike modern Western epistemology, which is often concerned with empirical observation and rationalism, Islamic epistemology emphasizes the interconnectedness of spiritual and material knowledge, the centrality of revelation, and the importance of moral and ethical considerations in the acquisition of knowledge (Kartanegara, 2014; Kartanegara, 2009). This holistic approach to knowledge is deeply rooted in Islamic philosophy, sciences, and mysticism (Sufism), making it an important resource for decolonizing education (Kartanegara, 2007a; Kartanegara, 2007b).

Islamic epistemology offers a comprehensive view of knowledge that is not limited to the physical sciences but includes metaphysics, mathematics, ethics, and theology (Kartanegara, 2005a; Kartanegara, 2014). It underscores the importance of the pursuit of knowledge for the betterment of humanity and emphasizes the relationship between knowledge and wisdom (Kartanegara, 2017). In a post-colonial context like Indonesia, integrating Islamic epistemology into education can help restore balance and promote a more inclusive and ethically grounded understanding of the world (Kartanegara, 2005a; Kartanegara, 2021b).

CIPSI plays a pivotal role in promoting Islamic epistemology as an alternative framework for education. Through its research and curriculum development, CIPSI advocates for the inclusion of Islamic philosophy, ethics, mysticism (Sufism), and science in educational settings, highlighting their relevance in addressing contemporary issues (Kartanegara, 2007a; Kartanegara, 2007b; Kartanegara, 2017). By doing so, CIPSI contributes to the creation of an educational system that recognizes the value of diverse forms of knowledge and respects the intellectual traditions of Indonesia and the broader Islamic world.

### ***The Global Relevance of Islamic Philosophy in Modern Education***

The integration of Islamic philosophy into modern education is not just important for post-colonial nations but has global relevance (Kartanegara, 2007a; Kartanegara, 2021b). Islamic civilization has historically contributed to key developments in fields such as mathematics, astronomy, medicine, and ethics (Kartanegara, 2000; Kartanegara, 2009). In the modern context, Islamic philosophy provides valuable perspectives on issues such as the relationship between science and religion, the ethical dimensions of technological advancements, and the search for meaning in a rapidly changing world (Kartanegara, 2002; Kartanegara, 2017).

By promoting the study of Islamic philosophy and integrating it into the educational system, CIPSI not only addresses local needs but also contributes to global conversations on education, science, and ethics (Kartanegara, 2002). The works of classical Islamic philosophers, such as Ibn Sīnā, Ibn Rushd, Suhrawardī, Mullā Ṣadrā, Ibn Ṭufayl, Ibn Khaldūn, Ibn al-Haytham, ‘Umar Khayyām, al-Rūmī, al-Ghazālī, offer timeless insights that can enrich contemporary debates on the nature of knowledge, the purpose of education, and the role of ethics in modern society (Kartanegara, 2000; Kartanegara, 2003; Kartanegara, 2006c).

In conclusion, the decolonization of education is a complex and multifaceted process that requires the active involvement of both state and non-state actors (McCormick, 2017). CIPSI, as a non-state actor, plays a critical role in this process by promoting the integration of Islamic philosophical traditions and local wisdom (refers specifically to incorporating local educational traditions, particularly the *pesantren* system) into the educational system (Center for Islamic Philosophical Studies and Information, n.d.). Through efforts such as translating classical Islamic works, conducting research, advocating for curriculum reforms, and establishing alternative mode of education based on *pesantren* models, CIPSI is working to create an education system that is more inclusive, culturally relevant, and responsive to the needs of the

Indonesian people (Center for Islamic Philosophical Studies and Information, n.d.). The theories and concepts of decolonizing education, including the indigenization of curriculum and the integration of Islamic epistemology, provide a foundation for understanding how CIPSI contributes to transforming the educational landscape in Indonesia and beyond.

In this study, the integration of Islamic philosophy and “indigenous knowledge” is primarily manifested through the adoption of a “local” educational system (Javanese Islam) in the form of the *pesantren* model, which is used to disseminate “indigenous knowledge,” particularly rational sciences (encompassing philosophy, philosophical Sufism, and Islamic science) to the Indonesian public. It is important to note that this integration represents a shift from CIPSI’s original plan, which envisioned an alternative educational system akin to a highly formalized philosophy school, similar to the Catholic private university in Jakarta: Driyarkara School of Philosophy. Although CIPSI has not abandoned this original vision, it recognized that a more feasible model to implement was the *pesantren*, which is informal and provides greater freedom in curriculum development, functioning within a decentralized framework. This decentralized model, akin to the traditional *pesantren salaf* (mostly affiliated to Nahdlatul Ulama) model, positions the *pesantren* as a center for curriculum development, which allows it to operate with less dependence on external assessments and evaluations. In the context of decolonization, this decentralization logic is crucial for reducing the dependency of the national education system on global “standards” that often carry Western biases, such as Scopus ranking systems. These external standards typically limit the opportunities for developing alternative curricula, making it more difficult to foster locally relevant educational practices that align with indigenous knowledge and values.



## **CIPSI as a Non-State Actor in Decolonizing Education**

In the context of post-colonial education, non-state actors play a crucial role in the transformation of education systems that were historically shaped by colonial powers (Burman, 2016a). While state actors, such as the government and public institutions, have formal authority and resources to implement educational reforms, non-state actors have the flexibility and innovation to challenge the status quo, offer alternative perspectives, and engage with local communities in ways that state actors often cannot (Burman, 2016b). Non-state actors include a wide range of organizations—academic institutions, civil society groups, think tanks, and grassroots organizations—that work outside the formal educational establishment but still contribute significantly to shaping educational practices and policies (Martin, Pete, & Pirbhai-Illich, 2024).

In Indonesia, a country with a long history of colonial influence in its education system, CIPSI serves as a pivotal non-state actor in the decolonization of education. CIPSI challenges the colonial legacies embedded in the educational framework by promoting an education system that integrates Islamic philosophical traditions, local wisdom (referring specifically to incorporating local educational traditions, particularly the *pesantren* system), and indigenous knowledge (particularly encompassing rational Islamic sciences that have been “marginalized” amidst the dominance of religious sciences) (Center for Islamic Philosophical Studies and Information, n.d.). Through its various initiatives, such as the translation of classical Islamic works, research in Islamic philosophy and science, and curriculum development, CIPSI provides an alternative to the Western-dominated knowledge that has shaped Indonesia’s educational system for centuries (Kartanegara, 2006b).

This section will explore the role of CIPSI in decolonizing education in Indonesia, focusing on how it operates as a non-state actor and contributes to the broader educational transformation. We will discuss the ways in which CIPSI challenges colonial epistemologies, promotes

indigenization of the curriculum, and collaborates with various stakeholders, including academic institutions and local communities, to bring about a more inclusive and culturally relevant education system.

### ***CIPSI and Its Mission in Decolonizing Education***

CIPSI was established with the mission of revitalizing Islamic philosophy and its application to contemporary issues in Indonesia and beyond (Center for Islamic Philosophical Studies and Information, n.d.). As a non-state actor, CIPSI is not bound by the bureaucratic constraints and political agendas of government institutions, which allows it to pursue educational reforms that are rooted in local knowledge and global Islamic intellectual traditions (Center for Islamic Philosophical Studies and Information, n.d.). CIPSI views decolonization as a comprehensive process that involves not only revising the curriculum but also rethinking the epistemological foundations of education itself (Center for Islamic Philosophical Studies and Information, n.d.).

One of CIPSI's key contributions to the decolonization of education is its focus on translating classical Islamic works into modern languages (Center for Islamic Philosophical Studies and Information, n.d.; Kartanegara, 2002; Kartanegara, 2007b). Regarding how translation can challenge the Western monopoly on knowledge production, it's important to understand that, as Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak argues, translation is not a mere mechanical process; it is inherently political. In her influential essay *The Politics of Translation* (Spivak, 1992), she explores how translation can be used as a tool of colonial power to subjugate the colonized subject, by imposing Western frameworks on non-Western knowledge systems. Spivak critiques Western translation strategies that prioritize accessibility and realism, arguing for a more literal approach that disrupts these effects and avoids the neocolonial representation of non-Western cultures.

In this context, translation has the potential to be both a tool of domination and a tool of resistance. This dual role is highlighted in the study by Ramon Guillermo, *Translation and Revolution: A Study of Jose Rizal's Guillermo Tell*, where he discusses how Rizal's translation of Friedrich Schiller's *Wilhelm Tell* into Tagalog became a catalyst for anti-colonial sentiment in the Philippines. Guillermo demonstrates that through translation, Rizal was able to awaken revolutionary consciousness among Filipinos, using the act of translation as a vehicle for resistance against colonial oppression.

Similarly, in the case of CIPSI, the act of translating Islamic classical works into modern languages plays a crucial role in challenging the Western monopoly on knowledge. Many Indonesian intellectuals, especially those educated in modern Western systems, have become disconnected from their own “indigenous scientific knowledge”—such as Arabic, Persian, Turkish, Urdu, as well as older Malay or Jawi languages. The translation of these classical works, therefore, serves as an essential bridge to reconnect Indonesians with their rich intellectual heritage, which has been marginalized and overshadowed by Western scientific models.

By translating seminal texts from the Islamic philosophical tradition, such as the major works of Ibn Sīnā (*al-Shifā' / The Book of Healing*) and *Ikhwān al-Ṣafā' (Rasā'il)*, CIPSI has made these invaluable intellectual resources accessible to a new generation of students, scholars, and the general public (Center for Islamic Philosophical Studies and Information, n.d.). *Rasā'il* has been successfully translated and edited, and was published in December 2007, thanks to a collaboration between CIPSI and the Ministry of Religious Affairs, although not all of the *Rasā'il* was translated. There are ongoing efforts to publish the complete *Rasā'il* in 2025, but this has not yet materialized due to the need for additional editing, particularly the inclusion of charts on astronomy and mathematics.

The *al-Shifā'* manuscript is also still in a rough draft form. However, in 2025, efforts are underway to publish part of *al-Shifā'*, starting with the

zoology section. This initiative is driven by the growing global discourse on the climate crisis, and CIPSI aims to contribute by highlighting that the Islamic intellectual tradition has long shown a deep concern for animals and the environment. For this purpose, CIPSI has partnered with national publisher Turos Pustaka to edit and publish the zoology section of *al-Shifā`*.

These texts, which provide profound insights into areas such as metaphysics (ontology, theology, cosmology, anthropology, eschatology), mathematics (astronomy, geometry, music, science of *ḥisāb*, arithmetic), physics (general physics, astrophysics, meteorology, mineralogy, botany, zoology, anatomy, and psychology), and ethics (individual ethics, economics, and political science), offer an alternative epistemological framework to the Western-centric models of knowledge that currently dominate Indonesia's educational system (Ikhwān al-Ṣafā`, 2007a; Ikhwān al-Ṣafā`, 2007b).

In this sense, CIPSI is challenging the Western monopoly on knowledge production. It brings Islamic epistemology—an approach to knowledge that emphasizes the integration of spiritual and material realities—into the educational discourse. By doing so, it fosters a more holistic approach to learning, one that does not separate knowledge from ethics, spirituality, and social responsibility (Kartanegara, 2002).

### ***Translation as a Tool for Decolonization***

Translation is one of the most powerful tools for decolonizing education because it allows for the transfer of knowledge across linguistic and cultural boundaries (Kartanegara, 2002; Kartanegara, 2006b). As Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak asserts, translation is not merely a mechanical process but also a political act that shapes how knowledge is produced and shared. In her essay *The Politics of Translation*, Spivak argues that translation “is not neutral; it is about the control over what knowledge is allowed to circulate” (Spivak, 1992). Through translation, CIPSI challenges the

colonial legacies embedded in educational systems, offering an alternative epistemology rooted in Islamic intellectual traditions. By translating classical Islamic works into Indonesian, CIPSI provides access to a body of knowledge that has long been marginalized by Western-centric educational frameworks. This process of translation, therefore, acts as a form of intellectual resistance, reasserting the value of non-Western knowledge systems and providing an alternative to the Eurocentric models that dominate Indonesian education. This has helped to introduce alternative ways of thinking about knowledge, ethics, and the relationship between science and religion that are rooted in Islamic intellectual traditions (Kartanegara, 2005a).

Moreover, as Ramon Guillermo highlights in his study of José Rizal's translation of *Wilhelm Tell*, translation can act as a catalyst for political and intellectual awakening. Guillermo notes that "Rizal's translation of Schiller's play helped to spark an anti-colonial spirit among Filipinos, making the translation a tool of resistance" (Guillermo, 2006). Similarly, CIPSI's translation of seminal Islamic texts is a means of reawakening the intellectual heritage of Indonesia, a country that has become increasingly disconnected from its own "indigenous scientific knowledge." Until now, CIPSI has translated *Rasā'il Ikhwān al-Ṣafā'* and *al-Shifā'* by Ibn Sīnā—works that cover a wide range of topics, including metaphysics (ontology, theology, cosmology, anthropology, eschatology), mathematics (astronomy, geometry, music, science of *ḥisāb*, arithmetic), physics (general physics, astrophysics, meteorology, mineralogy, botany, zoology, anatomy, and psychology), and ethics (individual ethics, economics, and political science). These texts, when translated and incorporated into educational curricula, provide students with an alternative worldview, one that is deeply connected to both Islamic teachings and indigenous knowledge (Kartanegara, 2005a; Kartanegara, 2014). Through its translation efforts, CIPSI has made it possible for Indonesian students and scholars to engage with a body of knowledge that has long been excluded from mainstream education (Center for Islamic Philosophical Studies and Information, n.d.).

Moreover, translation, is not merely a process of converting text from one language to another (Kartanegara, 2005b). It involves interpreting ideas, concepts, and philosophical systems that may be unfamiliar or even alien to the target audience (Kartanegara, 2005b). Translating classical Islamic works into modern languages demands meticulous attention to the cultural, historical, and intellectual contexts in which these works were originally produced (Kartanegara, 2005b). CIPSI's translation efforts are thus an intellectual engagement with the past, aimed at making ancient knowledge relevant to contemporary educational settings. For instance, Mulyadhi Kartanegara, the founder of CIPSI, once remarked that many translations tend to be overly literal, which can hinder Indonesian readers from fully grasping the intended message. As an example, Kartanegara highlighted the numerous translations of Rumi's works into Indonesian, noting that many fail to capture Rumi's philosophical depth, instead focusing primarily on their aesthetic dimensions. While this emphasis on aesthetics is not entirely incorrect, as Rumi's works do possess extraordinary beauty, it often comes at the expense of conveying the profound philosophical insights embedded within them.

### ***CIPSI's Contribution to Curriculum Reform***

Beyond translation, CIPSI has played an important role in curriculum reform by advocating for the integration of Islamic philosophy and local educational system into the formal education system (Kartanegara, 2023). In Indonesia, the national curriculum has long been dominated by Western knowledge systems, and many educational institutions place little emphasis on local wisdom and Islamic intellectual traditions (Kartanegara, 2005a). This has led to an education system that is disconnected from the cultural and intellectual heritage of the country (Kartanegara, 2005a).

However, contrary to the claim that CIPSI has not developed a distinct curriculum, the organization has indeed contributed to curriculum reform through a variety of efforts. These reforms can be observed through at

least five key steps. First, CIPSI, especially through its founder, has contributed to the ontological and epistemological justification for developing a holistic (non-Western-centric) understanding of knowledge. This contribution was made during a workshop on the position of religious sciences in the national education system, held by the Ministry of Religious Affairs and the Directorate General of Higher Education (DIKTI) in the Indonesian Parliament's Commission X on education. In this workshop, the status of religious sciences was a critical issue in the revision of the national education law. There was a serious debate on whether religious sciences should be classified under the humanities or the sciences (Kartanegara, 2019). This debate was crucial, as a lack of clarity on the status of religious sciences would undermine the Ministry of Religious Affairs' role in managing religious education (Kartanegara, 2019).

Kartanegara argued that if we adopt the Western perspective, which is based on materialist ontology and epistemology, the only recognized sciences would be those that focus on empirical objects (Kartanegara, 2019). However, in the Islamic intellectual tradition, the scope of knowledge extends beyond empirical subjects to include the non-empirical, thus recognizing religious sciences, philosophy, ethics, and even mathematics as legitimate fields of study (Kartanegara, 2019). Kartanegara's contribution in defining religious sciences within a holistic framework reflects CIPSI's role in ensuring that the national education curriculum is not built on a Western-centric ontology and epistemology. This underscores CIPSI's advocacy for a more inclusive and culturally relevant approach to knowledge integration within the education system.

Second, CIPSI, through its founder, published *Integrasi Ilmu: Sebuah Rekonstruksi Holistik* (Integration of Knowledge: A Holistic Reconstruction). This book serves as a framework for curriculum reform, offering a new perspective on how to integrate various fields of knowledge. According to Kartanegara, there has long been a sharp dichotomy between modern education, which teaches general sciences, and traditional education (such as *pesantren*), which focuses on religious

sciences. In the context of the dominant discourse on education, the status of traditional education and the sciences taught within it are often viewed as inferior. This has triggered a strong backlash, with traditional *pesantren* education “hardening” itself and viewing modern education as un-Islamic.

Kartanegara saw that this dichotomy needed to be peeled back by providing a basis for integrating both types of knowledge, with Islamic scientific tradition (which he views as indigenous knowledge) serving as the foundation, rather than the Western-centric scientific tradition that dominates modern education. The integration he advocates for is not merely about “attaching” general science and religious studies within the same academic institution, as is commonly seen in the UIN model across Indonesia. Instead, the integration must be more substantive—transforming a “monodisciplinary” curriculum into an “integral” one. This approach draws inspiration from the schemes developed by Islamic thinkers, which Kartanegara has contextualized in a way that emphasizes the holistic integration of knowledge.

Third, through the book *Reaktualisasi Tradisi Ilmiah Islam* (Re-actualization of the Islamic Scientific Tradition), CIPSI emphasizes that curriculum reform that integrates not only general sciences (which follow the logic of modern Western scientific traditions) but also religious sciences, along with efforts to reconstruct them, does not start from scratch. Kartanegara demonstrates that such an experiment has existed in history, where general sciences influenced by the logic of Greek scientific traditions were integrated with religious sciences, which had already been developed earlier within the Islamic scientific tradition. This integration eventually led to a curriculum that incorporates both religious and rational sciences, where rational sciences are “contextualized” and “decolonized” in such a way that it results in a curriculum that is coherent and free from contradictions between the specific fields of knowledge within it.

Fourth, CIPSI, through Kartanegara and several colleagues from UIN Jakarta, developed *Pengantar Studi Islam* (Introduction to Islamic



Studies), which aims to reform previous textbooks that portrayed Islam in a non-holistic manner. This book, written with the spirit of “indigenous knowledge” rooted in the Islamic scientific tradition, demonstrates that Islam, as a civilization, has not only produced religious sciences but also a variety of other rational sciences. These include fields such as mathematics, physics, biology, medicine, astronomy, ethics, psychology, politics, economics, zoology, botany, mineralogy, and philosophy.

In other words, the curriculum reform efforts undertaken by CIPSI have extended to the creation of a textbook that, ideally, is not only intended for one faculty but can be used across all faculties at UIN. This textbook even potentially has applications in both religious universities like UIN and general universities, enabling scholars to rediscover “indigenous knowledge”—specifically that which is rooted in the Islamic scientific tradition—that has long been marginalized amid the supremacy of “dominant knowledge,” namely modern Western scientific traditions.

Fifth, the *Pesantren Filsafat* serves as a kind of laboratory to assess the public’s reception of the alternative curriculum developed by CIPSI, which is ultimately also intended for formal educational systems such as UIN. For context, CIPSI’s *Pesantren Filsafat* has three levels: beginner, intermediate, and expert. At the beginner level, Kartanegara’s books are specifically used as the main teaching materials. This choice is intentional, as the books selected focus on “indigenous knowledge” that has been forgotten, particularly the rational sciences in the fields of philosophy, philosophical Sufism, and Islamic science. These themes are taught early on to reintroduce “indigenous knowledge,” which has long been marginalized, to a broader public.

It should be noted that while the *Pesantren Filsafat* is part of an experimental curriculum reform, it also goes beyond this. For example, at the beginner level, there are special classes on Islamic theology, specifically presenting Kartanegara’s theological thoughts, or classes discussing his intellectual autobiography. These offerings highlight the distinctive nature of the *pesantren*, providing a significant space to build a

“decentralized” intellectual tradition, giving Kartanegara the freedom to establish his own “school of thought” within the *pesantren*. This model is similar to how the thought of figures like Hasyim Asy’ari or the *Trimurti Gontor* became the “trademarks” of those *pesantren*.

CIPSI works to address this gap by developing curriculum materials that integrate Islamic sciences, philosophy, and philosophical mysticism (Center for Islamic Philosophical Studies and Information, n.d.; Kartanegara, 2005a). These materials are designed to provide students with a more comprehensive understanding of the world—one that includes both Western and Islamic perspectives on knowledge, ethics, and the natural world (Kartanegara, 2011). The curriculum reform advocated by CIPSI aims to foster critical thinking, moral reasoning, and intellectual independence, all while grounding students in their cultural and spiritual heritage (Kartanegara, 2007b).

By advocating for the inclusion of Islamic philosophy in educational curricula, CIPSI promotes the development of an educational model that is more inclusive, democratic, and responsive to the needs of local communities (Center for Islamic Philosophical Studies and Information, n.d.; Kartanegara, 2005a). This approach aligns closely with the broader goals of decolonization, which aim to empower marginalized groups and foster a more diverse and equitable education system (Lopez, 2020). One of CIPSI’s recent experimental initiatives is the establishment of a *pesantren filsafat* that fully utilizes a curriculum developed by CIPSI. This curriculum emphasizes the dissemination of Islamic philosophy, Islamic science, and Islamic mysticism—areas often underexplored within the traditional *pesantren* system in Indonesia and absent from the national curriculum. By introducing these disciplines into the *pesantren* context, CIPSI not only diversifies the intellectual landscape of Islamic education but also contributes to bridging the gap between classical Islamic thought and contemporary educational needs.

### ***Collaborations and Partnerships: Expanding the Reach of CIPSI's Work***

While CIPSI is an independent non-state actor, it recognizes the importance of collaboration with other educational institutions, government agencies, and civil society organizations in advancing its mission (Center for Islamic Philosophical Studies and Information, n.d.). One of the key strategies employed by CIPSI is to form partnerships with universities, academic networks, and local communities to disseminate its research and educational materials (Center for Islamic Philosophical Studies and Information, n.d.).

For example, CIPSI has collaborated with the Ministry of Religious Affairs, UIN Syarif Hidayatullah, and the International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT) Southeast Asia in organizing conferences on Islamic epistemology and philosophy, as well as publishing the *Rasā'il Ikhwān al-Ṣafā'*. These publications and conferences provide platforms for scholars, educators, and students to engage with new ideas and discuss strategies for reforming the educational system in Indonesia and the broader Muslim world. CIPSI's ability to collaborate with various stakeholders enhances its capacity to reach a wider audience and build momentum for meaningful educational reform.

This collaborative approach is evident in the positive feedback and support received from CIPSI's partners. As noted in CIPSI's official publication *Agenda Membangun Peradaban* (Agenda for Building Civilization) (n.d.), numerous testimonies from esteemed scholars and institutions highlight the impact and value of CIPSI's work. For instance, Osman Bakar, a prominent Malaysian Muslim scholar, emphasizes the unique contribution of CIPSI: "*CIPSI is the only center in the world that has done such essential research on the classical works and translations of the great scientific masterpieces...*" This statement reflects the significant role CIPSI plays in preserving and translating key Islamic texts, offering invaluable intellectual resources to both the Indonesian public and the global academic community.

Haidar Bagir, another influential Muslim figure in Indonesia, underscores the importance of supporting CIPSI: *“It is Haram (forbidden) to not support CIPSI.”* His comment speaks to the ethical and academic responsibility to support the institution’s crucial work in preserving and disseminating Islamic intellectual traditions. Similarly, Habib Chirzin, a Muhammadiyah intellectual, highlights the fundamental role that CIPSI plays in advancing Islamic philosophy: *“CIPSI is undertaking a fundamental activity in the field of knowledge. It is building a treasure trove of Islamic philosophy that is of great value not only to Indonesia but also to the world. This is a noble and rare effort that requires perseverance and sincerity. CIPSI deserves collective support.”* This testimony emphasizes that CIPSI’s work not only benefits Indonesia but has global implications for the revitalization of Islamic philosophy.

Omar Kasule, Asia Pacific Regional Director of the International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT) and Deputy Dean of the Faculty of Medicine at UIA Malaysia, further expressed his commitment to CIPSI’s mission: *“It is my priority to visit CIPSI during my upcoming travel and I will spend a whole day to document what it has done and discuss the areas we can cooperate.”* This statement reflects the continued support and willingness to collaborate with CIPSI on further initiatives, reinforcing the value of its educational projects.

These testimonials from CIPSI’s partners and supporters demonstrate the impact and importance of its role in the decolonization of education and the promotion of Islamic epistemology. They provide a clear indication of the broad academic recognition and institutional support for CIPSI’s work and underscore the potential for further collaboration to enhance the institution’s mission and contribute to the reform of Indonesia’s educational system.

### ***The Challenges Faced by CIPSI as a Non-State Actor***

Despite its successes, CIPSI faces several challenges in its efforts to decolonize education. One of the primary obstacles is the resistance to change within the educational establishment, encompassing both institutions that adopt Western-style curricula and traditional *pesantren* systems, which tend to emphasize medieval speculative theology (Ash‘arī *kalām*), Islamic jurisprudence (Shāfi‘ī *fiqh*), and mysticism (*taṣawwuf* based on al-Ghazālī’s teachings) over philosophy. Many educational institutions, particularly in higher education, remain deeply entrenched in Western-dominated frameworks of knowledge and are often reluctant to embrace alternative epistemologies (Kartanegara, 2005a). This resistance poses a significant barrier to the broader adoption of CIPSI’s ideas and materials.

Another challenge is the limited financial resources available to CIPSI. As a non-profit organization, CIPSI depends on donations, grants, and partnerships to fund its projects (Center for Islamic Philosophical Studies and Information, n.d.). The lack of sufficient funding limits its ability to expand its work. To address this issue, CIPSI has taken several steps, some of which have not been entirely successful but remain under evaluation. One example is CIPSI’s effort to diversify its donor base, so that when one donor discontinues funding, CIPSI can still survive financially. An example of this was their attempt to secure funding from the Templeton Foundation, though this effort ultimately failed.

Another approach CIPSI has pursued is generating its own funds through various scholarly activities. For instance, the *Pesantren Filsafat* charges a registration fee, which varies depending on how many classes a student takes, to help fund the operational costs of the program. Similarly, when CIPSI publishes books, such as *You Are My Inspiration*, the profits from sales are directed to support the institution’s financial sustainability. Another initiative currently under discussion is to source donations from the general public by offering thematic classes. This plan is still being discussed and has not come to fruition.

Finally, CIPSI faces challenges related to public perceptions. Many people in Indonesia, particularly in urban areas, are still unfamiliar with the intellectual traditions of Islamic philosophy and may view them as outdated or irrelevant to contemporary education (Kartanegara, 2006a). Overcoming these perceptions requires not only educational outreach but also a shift in cultural attitudes toward knowledge and learning (Kartanegara, 2021a).

### ***Translation and Scientific Research as Tools for Decolonization***

Translation plays a pivotal role in the decolonization of education by enabling the flow of knowledge between different cultures and intellectual traditions (Lörscher, 2020). For post-colonial societies like Indonesia, the process of translation is not simply about converting text from one language to another; it is an act of intellectual reclamation (Ergun, 2013; Bachmann-Medick, 2014). Translation opens the door to non-Western epistemologies, allowing indigenous knowledge systems to be integrated into the educational landscape, thus challenging the dominance of Western thought (Center for Islamic Philosophical Studies and Information, n.d.). In the context of CIPSI, translation is not merely a linguistic task but a political and intellectual act aimed at re-establishing the validity and relevance of Islamic philosophical traditions in the modern educational system (Kartanegara, 2002).

CIPSI has made translation a central part of its mission, particularly in translating key texts from Islamic philosophy and science into Bahasa Indonesia. This effort is crucial because much of the classical Islamic intellectual tradition, which includes works on metaphysics, physics, mathematics, ethics, and logic, remains largely inaccessible to contemporary Indonesian scholars and students (Center for Islamic Philosophical Studies and Information, n.d.). By translating these works, CIPSI provides access to an alternative body of knowledge that can challenge the Eurocentric educational framework that dominates

Indonesian schools and universities (Center for Islamic Philosophical Studies and Information, n.d.).

The translation of classical works is crucial for two primary reasons. First, it facilitates intellectual decolonization. Much of the knowledge taught in Indonesian schools is grounded in Western philosophies and sciences, which were developed within a different cultural and intellectual context (Kartanegara, 2014). These Western ideas were imposed during the colonial period and have continued to influence Indonesia's educational system (Kartanegara, 2005a). Through the translation of key Islamic texts, CIPSI integrates alternative epistemologies into academic discourse, fostering a more inclusive and culturally relevant education system (Center for Islamic Philosophical Studies and Information, n.d.).

Second, it contributes to the restoration of indigenous knowledge. Classical Islamic works embody a vast and rich intellectual tradition that has made significant contributions to fields such as medicine, mathematics, and natural sciences (Tim Divisi Data dan Informasi CIPSI, 2008). CIPSI's translation projects aim to make this knowledge accessible to a new generation of Indonesian scholars, empowering them to reclaim and engage with their intellectual heritage (Center for Islamic Philosophical Studies and Information, n.d.). For example, the translation of *Rasā'il Ikhwān al-Ṣafā'* reintroduces Islamic contributions to science, philosophy, ethics, and mathematics into discussions on knowledge production. In addition to *Rasā'il Ikhwān al-Ṣafā'*, CIPSI has also translated *al-Shifā'* by Ibn Sīnā and has made efforts to publish the zoology section, in collaboration with publisher Turos Pustaka. Furthermore, CIPSI has translated *Ḥikmat al-ishrāq* by Suhrawardī, focusing on the section related to logic. There are also plans to translate *al-'Asfār al-arba'a* by Mullā Ṣadrā and *al-Futūḥāt al-Makkīyah* by Ibn 'Arabī, though these plans have not yet come to fruition.

In addition to its translation efforts, CIPSI has created a comprehensive database *Para Pemikir dalam Tradisi Ilmiah Islam* (The Thinkers in the Islamic Scientific Tradition), which includes the names, biographies, and

works of 757 classical Muslim scholars, including philosophers, scientists, theologians, mystics, and jurists. This work aims to catalogue and preserve the intellectual contributions of these scholars for future generations.

CIPSI has also ventured into the creation of audiovisual materials, recognizing the need to introduce Islamic scientific traditions to younger generations in an engaging yet accessible manner. These audiovisual projects include documentaries that reflect on philosophical, scientific, and mystical perspectives on natural phenomena such as water, mountains, and air, under the overarching theme *Jalan Menuju Tuhan* (The Path to God). Future themes for audiovisual projects include Islamic institutions like academies, madrasahs, libraries, observatories, and more, as well as intellectual biographies of prominent Islamic figures, including philosophers, scientists, theologians, mystics, and jurists.

This effort enables students to recognize the historical and contemporary relevance of these ideas, fostering a deeper connection to their intellectual roots while promoting a more diverse academic landscape.

By undertaking these translations and other intellectual projects, CIPSI challenges the prevailing narrative that positions Western knowledge as universal and superior, offering instead a more diverse and inclusive vision of education (Kartanegara, 2014). This intellectual decolonization allows for a richer, more multidimensional understanding of the world that incorporates multiple perspectives, including those of Islamic thinkers (Kartanegara, 2014).

Islamic epistemology, with its emphasis on the unity of knowledge, ethics, and spirituality, offers an alternative framework to the materialistic and secular epistemology that dominates Western thought (Kartanegara, 2014). One of the key aspects of Islamic epistemology is the understanding that knowledge is not merely an abstract pursuit but is inherently tied to moral and spiritual growth (Kartanegara, 2005a). This epistemological framework has profound implications for how education



is structured, as it calls for an integrated approach to knowledge that includes both rational inquiry and ethical reflection (Kartanegara, 2005a).

Through its translation projects, CIPSI has made a significant contribution to the integration of Islamic epistemology into the educational system. By translating works such as those of Ibn Sīnā and Ikhwān al-Ṣafā', CIPSI provides students and scholars with access to a philosophical tradition that emphasizes the interconnectedness of knowledge and ethics (Center for Islamic Philosophical Studies and Information, n.d.). These works challenge the traditional Western separation of knowledge into distinct categories, such as the natural sciences and the humanities, and instead advocate for a more holistic approach that sees all knowledge as part of a greater, unified system (Kartanegara, 2005a).

The translation of these works also brings the ethical dimensions of knowledge to the forefront (Center for Islamic Philosophical Studies and Information, n.d.). In the Islamic tradition, the acquisition of knowledge is seen as a moral duty that must be undertaken with the aim of improving society and benefiting humanity (Kartanegara, 2002). This ethical framework is sorely needed in contemporary education systems, which often prioritize technical knowledge and skill acquisition at the expense of moral and ethical development (Kartanegara, 2002). By making these Islamic texts accessible, CIPSI introduces students to an epistemological approach that considers knowledge not just as a tool for personal advancement but as a means of contributing to the greater good (Kartanegara, 2002).

### ***Research as a Mechanism for Educational Reform***

In addition to translation, CIPSI also engages in research as a key tool for decolonizing education. Research is a powerful mechanism for challenging the dominant paradigms of knowledge that have been imposed through colonial education systems (Wane & Chacha, 2024). By conducting research in areas such as Islamic philosophy, Islamic science,

and Islamic mysticism (sufism), CIPSI helps to establish the intellectual legitimacy of these fields and integrate them into the broader educational discourse (Center for Islamic Philosophical Studies and Information, n.d.).

CIPSI's research, pioneered by Kartanegara, focuses on topics often marginalized in mainstream academic institutions, such as the relationship between faith and reason, the integration of ethics into scientific practice, and the contributions of Islamic scholars to various scientific fields (Tim Divisi Data dan Informasi CIPSI, 2008; Kartanegara, 2011). Through this research, CIPSI reclaims Islamic intellectual tradition as a legitimate and valuable source of knowledge, emphasizing its relevance to contemporary issues in science, technology, and society (Kartanegara, 2002). This research agenda helps dismantle the artificial barriers between different branches of knowledge, fostering a more integrated and interdisciplinary approach to education (Kartanegara, 2017).

One of the key research projects undertaken by CIPSI is its work on Islamic cosmology, as exemplified in Kartanegara's work *Lentera Kehidupan* (The Lantern of Life). Islamic cosmology, which examines the relationship between the physical universe and the metaphysical, is a field that has been largely overlooked in modern educational curricula (Kartanegara, 2017). Through its research on Islamic cosmological theories, CIPSI reintroduces a perspective that views the universe as inherently interconnected with spiritual and ethical realms (Kartanegara, 2017; Kartanegara, 2016). This research provides students with a more holistic understanding of the universe and encourages them to critically reflect on the ethical implications of scientific discoveries (Kartanegara, 2017).

In addition, CIPSI's research contributes to the development of a curriculum that is not only informed by Western scientific paradigms but is also enriched by Islamic thought (Center for Islamic Philosophical Studies and Information, n.d.). By integrating Islamic philosophy and science into the curriculum, CIPSI offers students a more diverse and nuanced understanding of the world (Center for Islamic Philosophical

Studies and Information, n.d.). This educational approach encourages students to engage with various intellectual traditions, broadening their perspectives and fostering critical thinking skills (Center for Islamic Philosophical Studies and Information, n.d.). An example of this curriculum in practice can be seen in CIPSI's *pesantren filsafat*, where discussions on Islamic science are linked to contemporary discoveries, such as advancements in quantum physics. This innovative approach bridges classical Islamic knowledge with modern scientific developments, demonstrating the relevance of Islamic thought in addressing contemporary issues.

### ***The Impact of CIPSI's Translation and Research on Indonesian Education***

CIPSI's translation and research efforts have had a significant impact on Indonesian education, particularly in the realm of higher education. Indonesian universities have long been dominated by Western-centric curricula, which often overlook or marginalize local and Islamic knowledge systems (Kartanegara, 2005a). CIPSI's work has provided an alternative source of knowledge that challenges this dominance, encouraging academic institutions to reconsider the value of Islamic philosophical traditions in shaping the educational experience (Kartanegara, 2006b).

One of the key pieces of evidence is CIPSI's contribution to establishing the idea of integrated (non-Western-centric) knowledge in the national education system. This effort was particularly evident through the work of Kartanegara, who played a pivotal role in affirming the academic status of religious sciences and the Ministry of Religious Affairs itself. As noted by Nur Syam, Kartanegara's contributions were instrumental in maintaining the intellectual dignity of religious sciences within the broader Indonesian education system, helping to integrate them more meaningfully alongside general sciences (Kartanegara, 2019).

Furthermore, CIPSI's work in creating foundational texts like *Integrasi Ilmu, Reaktualisasi Tradisi Ilmiah Islam*, and *Pengantar Studi Islam*, as well as its establishment of *Pesantren Filsafat*, provide significant empirical contributions to the development of an alternative curriculum. This curriculum integrates both Islamic intellectual traditions and general sciences in a way that does not marginalize indigenous knowledge such as Islamic scientific traditions. The *Pesantren Filsafat* program, in particular, serves as an experimental platform to test and refine this integrated approach to education.

In other words, CIPSI's initiative has equipped Indonesian educators with the tools to integrate these fields into their teaching (Kartanegara, 2006a; Kartanegara, 2006c, Kartanegara, 2009). By incorporating the works of classical Islamic scholars into the curriculum, CIPSI has played a pivotal role in revitalizing Islamic philosophy as a legitimate academic discipline (Kartanegara, 2021a). This revival has inspired other academic institutions to include Islamic thought in their curricula, further advancing the decolonization of education. Through these efforts, CIPSI continues to pave the way for a more inclusive and diversified academic landscape, contributing to the intellectual and cultural enrichment of Indonesia's education system.

While the organization has made significant progress, there is still much work to be done. Increased funding and support from both domestic and international sources will be crucial to broadening CIPSI's impact and ensuring that its efforts continue to benefit Indonesian education. Despite these challenges, CIPSI has significant opportunities for further expansion. As the global conversation about decolonization of education continues to gain momentum, there is growing interest in the integration of Islamic thought into modern educational systems (Kuntowijoyo, 2008; Bagir, Wahyudi & Anshori, 2005). This provides CIPSI with an opportunity to collaborate with like-minded institutions, both in Indonesia and abroad, to promote a more inclusive and diverse educational framework.

## Conclusion

The decolonization of education is a dynamic and ongoing process that requires persistence, collaboration, and innovation (Sardar, 2022). CIPSI's contributions illustrate how non-state actors can play a pivotal role in this effort, offering alternative educational models that challenge colonial legacies and promote intellectual diversity. When it is said that "non-state actors can play a pivotal role in this effort," this does not mean that these efforts have already resulted in an alternative scientific tradition that has become "dominant." As emphasized in the phrase "The decolonization of education is a dynamic and ongoing process," it is clear that building an alternative scientific tradition (as a form of epistemic decolonization) is not an "instant" effort that can yield immediate results. However, CIPSI has at least demonstrated sincere efforts to consciously and systematically undertake this decolonization project since its inception in 2006 until 2010 and again starting from 2019 to the present. Although these efforts have been continuously modified in line with challenges and opportunities, CIPSI has worked tirelessly on this project.

It is also important to highlight the relationship between Kartanegara and CIPSI. As with any *pesantren*, the figure of the *kyai* (teacher) is central to the institution. This explains, for example, why CIPSI faced a period of dormancy due to financial problems and Kartanegara's departure to Brunei. However, as is the case with a *pesantren*, the founder's ideas must be institutionalized so that, even in their absence or passing, their intellectual legacy continues to be carried out. CIPSI continues to pursue this, particularly after its period of inactivity, by publishing Kartanegara's longer autobiography titled *Mengarungi Lautan Ilmu* (Sailing the Ocean of Knowledge) (6 volumes), as well as the forthcoming book *You Are My Inspiration* (to be published by the national publisher Nuralwala). Another of CIPSI's functions is building an intellectual network among Kartanegara's students and colleagues, enabling CIPSI to obtain the social capital (borrowing Bourdieu's concept) needed to ensure its survival in the future.

Furthermore, because of the relationship between Kartanegara and CIPSI, much like a *kyai* with his *pesantren*, even though CIPSI's works are few and far between, such as the publication of the *Rasāil* and *Mengarungi Lautan Ilmu*, all of the founder's works can be regarded as CIPSI's works. This is because CIPSI essentially includes intellectuals who can be considered as Kartanegara's colleagues or students, all of whom live by and implement Kartanegara's vision of building a third renaissance in the Nusantara region by reviving its "indigenous" scientific tradition.

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