

Review of: "From Avicenna to Salam: The Excommunication of Muslim Scholars in the Islamic World"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

This critical review examines the historical relationship between religion and science in the Islamic world, arguing that excommunication of scholars and suppression of certain philosophical and theological perspectives hindered scientific progress. Here are the key points:

- Provides a historical overview of the Islamic Golden Age, highlighting scientific achievements and contributions of various scholars.
- Identifies excommunication as a factor influencing scientific progress, offering specific examples like Al-Razi and Avicenna.
- Raises important questions about the relationship between religious dogma and scientific inquiry, particularly regarding topics like the origin of the universe and evolution.
- Argues that suppression of diverse viewpoints and critical thinking hinders scientific progress.

Needs to be done:

- The argument could be strengthened by acknowledging and addressing counter-arguments, such as the role of political instability and economic factors in the decline of scientific development.
- The review oversimplifies the complex relationship between religion and science, potentially attributing all blame for scientific stagnation to excommunication without considering other contributing factors.
- The review focuses primarily on negative examples, neglecting significant contributions made by Muslim scientists after the Golden Age.
- Lack of citations for some claims weakens the persuasiveness of the argument.

Overall:

The review raises important questions about the historical relationship between religion and science in the Islamic world. However, it would benefit from a more nuanced analysis that acknowledges the complexity of the issue and considers various contributing factors. Additionally, strengthening the argument with citations and addressing counter-arguments would improve its overall persuasiveness.

Additional notes:

- The review might benefit from specifying the definition of "superficial religious leaders" used in the text.

- It would be helpful to clarify the meaning of "big questions" that were forbidden in the context of the review.
- The review could explore the role of institutions and educational systems in fostering or hindering scientific development.