

THE NOTION OF PHILOSOPHY IN ISLAM: AN ANALYSIS

Pengertian Falsafah dalam Islam: Satu Analisis

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Abstract

The philosophical study of scholarship from Islamic perspective must understand the concept of the essence of human beings as the best creation of Allah with a set of potentials. Therefore, there needs to be an integrated of philosophy with the values of Islamic teachings. In contemporary time, the Western intellectual tradition perceives erroneously that Islamic Philosophy is a borrowed ideas and perceptions, which have been transmitted from Greek philosophy. However, the Islamic philosophical study by the Islamic intellectuals shows that it is deeply rooted in the Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him). Islamic philosophy has been developed gradually by the potential Muslim scholars with its concepts, ideas, principles, and many of the questions derived from the original sources of Islam. In this context, the study aims to explore the role of the Qur'an and Sunnah in the formulation, elucidation, and integration of the major philosophical traditions and thoughts cultivated by noted Islamic philosophers from al-Kindi onwards. Applying qualitative thematic analysis, we argue that, with a deep knowledge of the Qur'an and Sunnah, these Muslim philosophers over the centuries established a strong connection between philosophy and the revealed sources of Islam. Therefore, a philosophical hermeneutics of the Sacred Text is an authentic source of Islamic philosophy. The study also examines the influence of Islamic philosophy on Western philosophy and the influence of Western philosophy on Islamic philosophy. Lastly, the paper postulates that an integrated approach, bridging revelation and philosophic gap, may potentially have a significant impact on community development in society by safeguarding people's faiths (Aqidah) and encouraging the growth of sustainable knowledge, which is a gift that elevates humanity towards achieving divine guidance from Allah for the entire human race.

Keywords: *Islamic philosophy, notion, al-Qur'an, al-Sunnah, and Muslim philosophers.*

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Some western philosophers hypothetically and critically perceive that the Islamic philosophy is not original in nature rather it is a copy concept from western classical philosophy. In this respect, Dever, J. (2016). opines that the evolution of Islamic philosophy from its origins in the Greek tradition to the present day. The similar tone is found in Fakhry, M. (2004). who comments that the development of Islamic philosophy, originally inherited from Greek philosophers, then translated into Latin, and influential for the experts think Europe so he was given the title of Aristoteles as an interpreter of philosophy.

Considering the above argument, the study aims to examine the fact that Islamic philosophy is beyond such negativity and criticism. Many references show that Islamic philosophy is an inspiration of the Qur'an and Sunnah, and it is developed gradually by the Muslim scholars.

According to some prominent Muslim scholars the cultivation and development of Islamic philosophy have been succeeded in reviving an ancient heritage that has long been lost. The tradition of the study of this philosophy in the West is nearly one thousand years old and can be divided into three phases, namely, the medieval period of translation, analysis, and study of Arabic texts; the second wave of translation and study in the Renaissance following the medieval effort, and finally a new attempt to study Islamic philosophy, which began in earnest in the nineteenth century, and which continues to this day (Khan & Tantray, 2021). Apart from the above argument for revising this ancient wisdom, Muslim philosophers also claimed that the Qur'an and Hadith are the source and inspiration of Islamic philosophy. In the holy scripture, some terms indicate the activity of thinking (*tafakkur*) to obtain the truth. In addition to the word *hikmah*, there is also the word "*al-ḥaqiqah*" which shows a very close significance between philosophy and religious revelation. This word means truth and reality, which are closely related to God because one of the good names of God (*al-asma al-ḥusna*) is *al-Ḥaqq*. Many verses invite readers to think and think about reality and call these thinkers with the term "*ulu al-bab*". The source from the Qur'an that most clearly implies philosophy is the story of *Luqman al-Ḥakim*, statements show similar things, such as: "*And Allah will teach him the book and hikmah*" (Q, 3:48).⁴

Problem Statement: The ongoing discourse regarding the origins and authenticity of Islamic philosophy has generated debates, with some scholars arguing that it lacks originality and reflects an adaptation of Western classical philosophy. In support of this, Nasr, S. H. (2006). states that there is a perception in the Western intellectual tradition that Islamic philosophy is merely a collection of borrowed ideology from Greek philosophy. Similarly, Fakhry (2004) comments on the development of Islamic philosophy, suggesting that it originated from Greek philosophers and was subsequently translated into Latin, influencing European thinkers, and earning the title of Aristotelian philosophy interpreter. In contrast, proponents of Islamic philosophy assert its originality, maintaining that it is a genuine tradition deeply rooted in the Qur'an and Sunnah, reinvigorating a heritage that has eroded over time. This research aims to delve into the core of this debate and ascertain whether Islamic philosophy indeed constitutes an original and self-sustaining tradition. To bolster the claim of originality and independence in Islamic philosophy, this study will scrutinize Qur'anic references to wisdom (*hikmah*) and its bestowment by Allah. In the Qur'an says, "*And Allah will teach him the book and hikmah*" (Q, 3:48). Through this exploration, this research endeavours to illuminate the genuine origins of Islamic philosophy, thereby contributing to a comprehensive understanding of its historical evolution and its relationship with Islamic scripture.

Research Objectives

- I. To examine the concept, origin, and emergence of Islamic philosophy, which has been deeply rooted in the Quran and Sunnah.
- II. To analyse the influence of Islamic philosophy on Western philosophy as well as the influence of Western philosophy on Islamic philosophy in some philosophical issues.
- III. To provide an integrated approach to bridge the gap between revelation and philosophy, which may potentially have a significant impact on community development by safeguarding people's faith and encouraging the growth of sustainable knowledge.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study is applied a qualitative method and library research to analyse primary and secondary data sourced from al-Qur'an, al-Hadith, articles, journals, and books. This approach

⁴ Al-Qur'an, 3:48.

offers a robust and insightful means of comprehending intricate phenomena by delving into the wealth of existing literature within a specific field. By conducting in-depth content analysis and thematic coding, qualitative researchers aim to uncover concealed patterns, explore subtleties, and construct a comprehensive narrative, thus facilitating a deeper understanding of the subject matter.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Meanings and Concept of Islamic Philosophy

The term "Philosophy" or "*filsafat*" in Bahasa is believed to have originated from the Greek words "*philos*" meaning "love" and "*sophos*" meaning "wisdom." (Ramadhani, 2020).⁵ The Islamic philosophers claimed that philosophy is identified with the term "ḥikmah"⁶ in the Quran so that here we can see a more divine style of the philosophical tradition in Islam. The early Islamic philosopher, al-Kindi (801-873 AD) wrote in his book 'Fi al-Falsafah al-Ula' that philosophy means 'ḥikmah' and "Philosophy is the knowledge of the reality of things within people's possibility because the philosopher's end in theoretical knowledge is to gain truth and in practical knowledge to behave in accordance with the truth" (Sharif, 1963)⁷. Al-Qur'an says, *And Allah will teach him the book and ḥikmah*" (Q, 3:48). The concept of Islamic philosophy lies in the exploration of knowledge, encompassing divine and human wisdom. Rooted in the Quran and Hadith, it seeks to grasp the essence of philosophy (*falsafah*), often linked with hikmah. This philosophy delves into the understanding of the true nature of things, both theoretically and practically, while continuously seeking truth. It places a strong emphasis on purifying and perfecting the human soul, going beyond mere intellectual pursuits to foster holistic wisdom and spiritual growth. Islamic philosophers view philosophy as the quest for wisdom and truth, uniting theoretical knowledge with soul purification (Nasr, 1996).

Emergence of Islamic philosophy

The early Islamic Period, spanning from the 7th to the 9th century CE, laid the foundation for the development of Islamic philosophy by translating Greek philosophical texts into Arabic and fostering the intellectual contributions of *Mu'tazilite* theologians who sought to harmonize reason with revelation. This transformative period set the stage for the Islamic Golden Age, spanning from the 9th to the 13th century CE, characterized by the Translation Movement sponsored by the Abbasid Caliphate. During this era, luminaries like Al-Kindi, played a pivotal role in translating and preserving ancient knowledge. These early philosophers paved the way for later luminaries like Al-Farabi, Avicenna (Ibn Sina), and Al-Ghazali, who made profound contributions to Islamic philosophy, ethics, and theology. Subsequently, the post-Golden Age period witnessed the emergence of Illuminationist Philosophy and the influence of Sufism. In contemporary times, Islamic philosophy has adapted to address modern challenges, with thinkers like Muhammad Iqbal and Seyyed Hossein Nasr striving to reconcile Islamic thought with the complexities of the modern world.

Origin and Source of Islamic Philosophy

According to Nasr, (1996) the term '*falsafah*' which is inherited from ancient sources as a synonymous term of philosophy has been identified with the Qur'anic term hikmah believing the origin of hikmah to be divine. In this connection, the first of the Islamic philosophers, al-

⁵ Ramadani Y. 2020: The Beginning of Islamic Philosophy.

⁶ For the use of hikmah in the Qur'an and Hadith see S. H. Nasr, "The Qur'an and Hadith as Source and Inspiration of Islamic Philosophy".

⁷ Sharif, M. M. (1963). A History of Muslim philosophy.

Kindl denoted his definition of philosophy, and later the concept of Islamic philosophy has been developed by the other philosophers - Al-Farabi, Ibn Sina, Al-Ghazali and Ibn Rushd.

Islamic philosophy has its origins in a rich tapestry of sources that have contributed to its development and evolution over time. The Quran⁸, central to Islamic faith, plays a foundational role in Islamic philosophy (Khan & Tantray, 2021). Addressing metaphysical and ontological questions (Q,112: 1-4), (Al-Faruqi, 1992), ethical and moral principles (Q, 4:36), epistemology(Q,96:1), Cosmology and Creation (Q, 21:30). , the nature of the self and the soul(Q,75:2), Justice and Fairness (Q, 4:135), Islamic philosophers like Al-Kindi, Al-Farabi, and Avicenna further developed and integrated Greek rationalism with Islamic thought, seeking to establish a philosophical basis for theology. While some, like Al-Kindi, emphasized the harmony between philosophy and religion, others, like Al-Farabi and Avicenna, upheld the primacy of philosophical truth and sought to reconcile metaphysical ideas with religious doctrines. The Hadith collections, containing the sayings and teachings of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), have also been essential sources for Islamic philosophy, guiding scholars in their exploration of ethical and moral issues, the importance of knowledge and intellect (H, 224)⁹, wisdom and understanding (H, 135)¹⁰, reason, and consultation (H, 2727)¹¹. Therefore, Islamic philosophy emerged as a synthesis of various philosophical traditions and religious teachings, with the Quran and Hadith serving as foundational sources.

Islamic Philosophy Influences on the Western philosophy

There is a profound influence of Islamic philosophy on Western philosophy (Hilmi, U. 1961). particularly during the Middle Ages. Through the preservation and transmission of Greek philosophical works, commentaries and interpretations by Islamic philosophers, the enduring impact of figures like Avicenna and Averroes (Ramadhani, (2020). The contributions to philosophical methodology, ethical and political thought, scientific inquiry, and interfaith dialogues, Islamic philosophy played a pivotal role in shaping the development of Western philosophy. Its legacy is evident in the methodologies of inquiry, logical analysis, and dialectical reasoning that continue to underpin Western philosophical traditions, making it an indispensable chapter in the shared history of human thought.

Western philosophy Influences on the Islamic Philosophy

In some cases, western philosophy has an influence on the Muslim philosophy. This influence has arisen from various historical, intellectual, and sociopolitical factors, such as colonialism, globalization, and increased interactions between Western and Muslim-majority societies. The encounter between these two intellectual traditions led to the introduction of Western philosophical ideas into Islamic thought, resulting in a vibrant exchange of concepts and methodologies that enriched Islamic philosophical discourse. This ongoing dialogue between Western and Islamic philosophy demonstrates the capacity of philosophical thought to evolve and adapt, transcending cultural and geographical boundaries and contributing to a more interconnected and enriched global philosophical discourse and interconnected understanding of the scientific enterprise (Corbon, 1994).

⁸ Al-Quran, 112:1-4, 96:1, 21:30, 75:2, 4:135.

⁹ Sunnan Ibn Majah, Book 1, Hadith Number 224.

¹⁰ Sahih al-Bukhari, Book 73, Hadith Number 135.

¹¹ Sunan Abu Dawood, Book 18, Hadith 2727.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

In conclusion, the study reveals that Islamic philosophy is deeply rooted in the Qur'an and the Sunnah, not it is merely a borrowed ideology from Greco-Alexandrian philosophy. Islamic philosophy has its own unique concepts, ideas, and principles derived from the sources of Islam itself. It emphasizes that a deep understanding of the Qur'an and Sunnah has allowed Muslim philosophers to establish a strong connection between philosophy and the revealed sources of Islam. Additionally, the paper explores the influence of Islamic philosophy on Western philosophy and vice versa.

Dealing with Islamic philosophy is challenging due to the vast and intricate nature of the subject matter. Islamic philosophy spans centuries and encompasses a wide array of philosophical traditions, making it difficult to provide comprehensive coverage in a single article. Furthermore, there is a limited primary source written by Islamic philosophers compared to other philosophical traditions. Additionally, navigating the intricate relationship between philosophy and religion in Islamic thought can be complex, as writers must take into consideration religious sensitivities and exploring philosophical ideas critically. Knowledge. By safeguarding people's faith and encouraging the pursuit of divine guidance, Islamic philosophy contributes to the elevation of humanity.