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Examining Discourses on Integration of Philosophy and Religion (Analysis from Al-Ghazali to Al-Attas)

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Abstract

The discourse on the integration of philosophy and religion is important because they are an essential aspect of society. This paper first tries to understand philosophy and religion, their terminologies and definitions, and theories in relating philosophy and religion. The main section of this article examines Muslim thinkers' views on philosophy and religion and frames them in Barbour's theory of integration. While it emphasizes Al-Ghazāli's view on Reason and Revelation and Ibn Sīnā's view on Reason and Revelation, it also discusses the thoughts of Al-Farabi, Ibn Taymiyyah, Sir Muhammad Iqbal, and Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas. There are similarities and differences in Muslim scholars' views on the integration of philosophy and religion. Regardless of their differences, we found that all of them are still in Barbour's definition of Integration, not Dialogue, independence, or even Conflict.

Keywords: *Integration of Philosophy and Religion, Al-Ghazali, Al-Attas, Ibn Sīnā, Al-Farabi.*

Abstrak

Wacana integrasi filsafat dan agama menjadi penting karena keduanya merupakan aspek esensial dalam masyarakat. Penelitian ini pertama-tama mencoba memahami filsafat dan agama, terminologi dan definisinya, serta teori-teori dalam menghubungkan filsafat

dan agama. Bagian utama artikel ini mengkaji pandangan para pemikir Muslim tentang filsafat dan agama dan membingkainya dalam teori integrasi Barbour. Selain menekankan pandangan Al-Ghazāli tentang Akal dan Wahyu dan pandangan Ibn Sinā tentang Akal dan Wahyu, juga membahas pemikiran Al-Farabi, Ibn Taymiyyah, Muhammad Iqbal, serta Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas. Ada persamaan dan perbedaan pandangan ulama tentang integrasi filsafat dan agama. Terlepas dari perbedaan mereka, kami menemukan bahwa semuanya masih dalam definisi Barbour tentang integrasi, bukan dialog, kemandirian, atau bahkan konflik.

Kata Kunci*: Integrasi Filsafat dan Agama, Ghazali, Al-Attas, Ibn Sīnā, Al-Farabi*

Introduction

Our quest to understand the integration of philosophy and religion is, in fact, a quest to find the knowledge and truth in Islam. The quest is worth fighting as both knowledge and truth are forms of *hidāyah*, guidance, from Allah SWT. *Hidāyah* is something very precious that all Muslims ask it from God at least 17 times a day. In that quest to find knowledge and truth, people resort to philosophy and religion as two main sources of truth and knowledge.[1] The previous sentence has to be understood in the sense that 'philosophy' is a representation of 'reason' and sometimes 'science',[2] while 'religion' is a representation of 'revelation'. In our next discussion, the word "reason and revelation" can be used interchangeably with "philosophy and religion" or "science & religion".

The discourse on the Integration of philosophy and religion is important because they are an essential aspect of society.[3] Although

[1] Abd. Wahid, "Korelasi Agama, Filsafat Dan Ilmu," *Jurnal Substantia* 14, no. 2 (2012): 224.

[2] Siti Rodhiyah Dwi Istinah, "Paradigma Ilmu dan Agama dalam Upaya Mencari Kebenaran (Hakiki) dalam Penciptaan Alam Semesta," *Prosiding Seminar Nasional*, 2015, 176.

[3] Mcghee Orme-Johnson, "Finding Connections Between Religion and Science," 2008, 2, https://digitalcommons.wpi.edu/mqp-all/492brought to you by COREView metadata, citation and similar papers at core.ac.ukprovided by DigitalCommons WPI%0A.

the topic has been started centuries back, the topic gains its higher urgency in the last twenty years; this is because of a constant but continuous movement of secularization of science.[4] The integration comes in many theories, with Ian Barbour's typology being the most widely used in the field.[5] In this article, we shall discuss knowledge and truth, discuss theory on integration, and examine Muslim scholars' views on integration.

Understanding Philosophy and Religion

1. Terminologies and Definitions of Philosophy and Religion

Before discussing further the integration of philosophy and religion, it may be at best to examine several terminologies which are central to our discussion. It is the term used by Muslim scholars to express religion, philosophy, and terminologies used when their relations are discussed. We shall see the differences and similarities they have in their definition and terminologies. So we can draw a clear line heading for the next discussion.

Muslim authorities belonging to different schools of thought have sought over the ages to define the meaning of hikmah as well as falsafah, a term which entered Arabic through the Greek translations of the second/eighth and third/ninth centuries.[6] Each school of thought sought to define what is meant by hikmah or falsafah according to its own perspective and this question has remained an important concern of various schools of Islamic thought especially as far as the schools of Islamic philosophy are concerned.[7] From this point, we are about to examine how this

[4] Dragos Constatin Sanda, Luana Alexandra Smarandoiu, dan Costea Munteanu, "The Dialogue between Science and Religion: A Taxonomic Contribution," *Religions* 8, no. 3 (2017): 35, https://doi.org/10.3390/rel8030035.

[5] Sanda, Smarandoiu, dan Munteanu, 4.

[6] Seyyed Hossein Nasr, "The Meaning and The Concept of Philosophy in Islam," *History of Islamic Philosophy, Routledge History of World Philosophies* 1 (1996): 21.

[7] Nasr, "The Meaning and The Concept of Philosophy in Islam."

terminology used by our Muslim scholar whom we discussed in this article can be varied.

Al-Ghazali, besides using the word falsafah to express philosophy, sometimes, in its relation to religion, uses *rational sciences* (*'ulum al-aqliyyah*) or non-religious sciences (*'ulum ghayr shar'iyyah*) to oppose revelation which is expressed as religious sciences (*al-shar'*).[8] On the other place, Al-Ghazali uses *reason* and *rational proof*,[9] to express philosophy.

Al-Farabi, while accepting Nasr's definition, added the distinction between philosophy based on certainty (*al-yaqiniyyah*) hence demonstration and philosophy based on opinion (*al-maznunah*),[10] hence dialectic and sophistry, and insisted that philosophy was the mother of the sciences and dealt with everything that exists.[11]

Ibn Sina accepts these definitions while making his own certain precisions. He says in *'Uyun al-Hikmah* that *Al-hikmah* [which he uses to express philosophy] is away to bring the human soul into perfection—within human reach—through conceptualization [*tasawwur*] and judgment [*tasdiq*].[12] Further in his later stage of life he distinguishes between Peripatetic philosophy and what he named "Oriental philosophy" (*al-hikmat al-mashriqiyyah*). The latter is not

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[8] Hamid Fahmy Zarkasyi, "Al-Ghazali's Concept of Causality with Reference to His Interpretations of Reality and Knowledge" (International Islamic University Malaysia, 2007), 197.

[9] Imam Al-Ghazali, *Tahafut Al-Falasifah*, ed. oleh Sulaiman Dunya, 4 ed. (Mesir: Daar Ma'arif, 1966), 214–15.

[10] J. N. Mattock, "Muhsin Mahdi (ed.): Alfarabi's Book of letters (Kitāb al-ḥurūf): commentary on Aristotle's Metaphysics. (Recherches publiées sous la direction de l'Institut de Lettres Orientales de Beyrouth. Sér. 1: Pensée Arabe et Musulmane, Tom. XLVI.) XV, 253 pp. Beir," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 34, no. 1 (24 Februari 1971): 153–57, https://doi.org/10.1017/S0041977X00142193. See also at Nasr, "The Meaning and The Concept of Philosophy in Islam," 22.

[11] Abu Nashr Al-Farabi, *Kitab Al-Jam'i Bayna Al-Hakimain*, 2 ed. (Beirut-Lebanon: Daar Al-Masyriq, 1982), 36–37. See also at Nasr, "The Meaning and The Concept of Philosophy in Islam," 22.

[12] Nasr, "The Meaning and The Concept of Philosophy in Islam," 22.

based simply on ratiocination but also contains realized knowledge; which leads us to the *hikmat al-ishraq* of Suhrawardi.[13]

As for **Ibn Taymiyyah,** he employs different terms. He uses the term 'philosophy' (falsafah) or 'philosopher' (faylasuf) to refer to those who were qualified by 'peripatetic' (mashsha'i), the followers of the Neo-platonic and Aristotelian tradition among the Muslims, principally al-Farabi and Ibn Sina, but occasionally also Ibn Rushd and Nasir al-Din al-Tusi.[14]

Ibn Taymiyah uses the term *'aql* for logic as a part of philosophy which he criticizes in his book D*ar' ta'arud al-'aql wa al-Naql*, we can infer that his criticism of philosopher's ideas suggests that he has an idea on which he bases his argumentation and criticism. This assumption might be further justified as he admits the term 'philosophy' without evaluating the origin of the word; suggesting that Ibn Taymiyah sees philosophy as a general term.[15]

As for **Iqbal**, he uses the word "philosophy and religion", and "thought and intuition". He explains that intuition reason are not contradictory as the are rooted in the same origin and "complement each other".[16]

In expressing the relation between philosophy and religion, **Al-Attas** sometimes employ the word *rationalism, science,* and *modern philosophy* for philosophy, and *authority, intuition,* and *revelation* for religion.*17* Al-Attas asserts that modern philosophy has been the

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[13] Nasr, 22.

[14] Thomas F. Michel, *A Muslim Theologian's Response to Christianity: Ibn Taymiyya's Al-Jawab Al-Sahih* (New York: Caravan Books, 1985), 15. See also at Hamid Fahmy Zarkasyi, "Ibn Taymiyyah's Critique of Aristotelian Metaphysics," *AFKAR: Jurnal Akidah & Pemikiran Islam* 10, no. 1 (2010): 23, https://ejournal.um.edu.my/index.php/afkar/article/view/5805.

[15] Zarkasyi, "Ibn Taymiyyah's Critique of Aristotelian Metaphysics," 89.

[16] Muhammad Iqbal, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* (London: Oxford University Press, 1934), 3.

[17] Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas, *Prolegomena to the Metaphysics of Islām; An Exposition of the Fundamental Element of The Worldview of Islām* (Kuala Lumpur: ISTAC, 1995), 114–15.

interpreter of science and, further, organized the results of the natural and social sciences into what we understand today as a worldview. This interpretation inevitably set the course that science is to take in its study of nature.[18] Unfortunately, contemporary science has, according to Al-Attas, evolved and developed a philosophy that since its onset affirmed the coming into being of creatures out of each other. This philosophy inherently denies the existence of God.[19]

As for **Ibn Rushd,** he uses the word Hikmah or wisdom referring to philosophy. According to Ibn Rushd, 'philosophy' is nothing more than a way to understand existing beings and knowing them as the sign of the Artisan—the Creator, as the creatures are the masterpiece of the Creator. Thus, the better our understanding on the creatures, the better our understanding on the Creator.[20]

2. Theory in Relating Philosophy and Religion

One interesting theory we can benefit for our discussion is of Ian G. Barbour. He is a Professor of Science, Technology, and Society at Carleton College, Northfield, Minnesota. He wrote books on the discourse of Science and Religion relations. Barbour, in analyzing "ways of relating science and religion,"[21] classifies four possible relations between science and religion into four broad classifications; *Conflict, Independence, Dialogue, and Integration*.

Some thinkers argued that science and religion are in Conflict. This is because "Scientific materialism is at the opposite end of theological spectrum from biblical literalism."[22] in addition, "Both believe that there are serious conflicts between contemporary

[18] Al-Attas, 113.

[19] Al-Attas, 115.

[20] Abu al-Walid Ibn Rusyd, *Fashl Maqal Fima Bayna Al-Hikmah wa Al-Syariah min Al-Ittashal*, ed. oleh Dr. Muhammad Imarah, 3 ed. (Mesir: Daar Al-Ma'arif, 1198), 44.

[21] Ian G. Barbour, *Religion in an Age of Science* (San Fransisco: Harper San Fransisco, 1990), 8.

[22] Barbour, 9.

science and classical religious belief."[23]

Another way to describe the relationship between science and religion is to perceive that both are *Independent*. It means that "each has its own distinctive domain and its characteristic methods that can be justified on its own terms."[24] The supporter of this view believes that the two jurisdictions must stay away from each other's sphere; to avoid conflict and to recognize, and respect unique strengths and character. This is because they have 'contrasting methods' and 'differing languages'.

The next kind of interaction is named *Dialogue*. Barbour defines this thesis as an "indirect interaction between science and religion involving boundary questions and methods of the two fields". This thesis sees methodological parallels in science and religion. According to this view, "Science," Barbour writes "it appeared, is not as objective, nor religion as subjective, as had been claimed. There may be differences of emphasis between the fields, but the distinction is not as absolute as had been asserted."[25] Further, he explains that even the scientific data are not free from theory; they are theory-laden. In addition, theories arise from "creative imagination" where models and analogies has a substantial role there.[26]

The final group of thinkers believes that some extent of *Integration* is possible between religion and science. This group has three branches; Natural Theology, Theology of Nature, and Systematic Synthesis.

In 'Natural Theology', the reason is the leader in the integration; arguments of metaphysics are based on reason instead revelation and religious experience. Natural Theology has the ability to prove the existence of God by logical thinking, but this kind of

[23] Barbour, *Religion in an Age of Science.*

[24] Barbour, 18.

[25] Barbour, 30.

[26] Barbour, *Religion in an Age of Science.*

reasoning is remote from any religious experience.

Contrary to natural theology, in 'Theology of Nature', the integration starts from revelation rather than science. But it also acknowledges that "some traditional doctrines need to be reformulated in the light of current science. Here science and religion are considered to be relatively independent sources of ideas but with some areas of overlap in their concerns"[27]

The last branch is "systematic synthesis". Barbour explains; A more systematic integration can occur if both science and religion contribute to a coherent world view elaborated in a comprehensive metaphysics."[28] In this thesis, both reason and revelation stand on the same level. This last branch might sound, at a glance, to be everyone's dream. But it is not always the case, thinkers from the first and the second branch might not like the idea of having religion on the same level as reason and vice versa.

For the rest of this article, we will see Muslim thinkers' views on the integration of philosophy and religion. At the end of the article, we will try to use Barbour's theory to help us recognize their theories of integration.

Muslim Thinkers' Views on Philosophy and Religion

There is a challenge in excepting falsafah and stating that it is *absolutely* in harmony with religion. That statement will render everything said by philosophers to be true. On the contrary, stating that philosophy is *absolutely* in contradiction with religion deprives us of the benefit of the scientific method and rational thinking brought by philosophy.

One of the possible solutions to that dilemma is being in between. Tavani puts it as "moderate compatibility" of faith and reason.[29] Accepting what is compatible from philosophy and

[27] Barbour, 36.

[28] Barbour, 39.

[29] Herman T. Tavani, "The Classic Debate on the Relationship between Faith

refuting what is against religion. However, being moderate is not always that easy. Depending on one's worldview, one might be biased toward religion and others toward philosophy. In addition, being 'moderate' is not always a compelling solution. Fearing that the other side will be too strong, some choose to reject another side entirely.

West is an example. Fearing that religion will gain power over rational science, they reject the idea of finding a balance between religion and science. Zarkasyi[30] states that the basis of Western civilization is rationalism, secularism, empiricism (positivism), dualism or dichotomy, and humanism. It means, that the development of Western Civilization is based on ratio and philosophical speculation, and not on any religion. Its approach to intellectuality and morality is always open and temporary. Thus, Zarkasyi states, that for the West, reality and truth are always limited to social reality, culture, empirical evidence, and rationality.

However, the West is not without an attempt to integrate philosophy and religion. An interesting example of the relation between logic and religion can be found in the 17th Century. Pascal devised a logic 'game' named Pascal's Wager.[31] The argument for that wager is simple, yet strong. Pascal proposed that, considering the benefit and harm of believing in the existence of God, it is better to believe that God exists.

Pascal's argument is interesting. However, it is not without critique. The biggest critique is that it is not appropriate to believe in something based on a valuation of advantage or disadvantage.[32] However, supporters believe that logic shows that reason can be

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and Reason: Some Contemporary Challenges from the Perspectives of Relativism and Postmodernism," *Insight: Rivier Academic Journal* 4, no. 1 (2008): 10.

[30] Hamid Fahmy Zarkasyi, *Liberalisasi Pemikiran Islam (Gerakan bersama Missionaris, Orientalis dan Kolonialis)* (Ponorogo: CIOS, 2008), 11.

[31] Tavani, "The Classic Debate on the Relationship between Faith and Reason: Some Contemporary Challenges from the Perspectives of Relativism and Postmodernism," 5, 9.

[32] Tavani, 6.

used to strengthen religion.

And now, we are coming to our very question, how about Islam? Do Muslims think the idea of integrating philosophy into religion is an idea worth trying? Or they simply reject the philosophy to prevent religion from being silently corrupted by philosophy. In the following section, we will discuss various views on philosophy and religion. Ghazali and Avicenna will have a special portion here. Other thinkers will follow their discussion to comprehend our discussion. The scholars mentioned in the following section are also a representation of theologians (Al-Ghazali and Ibn Taymiyyah), philosophers (Al-Farabi and Ibn Sina), and modern thinkers (Iqbal and Al-Attas).

1. Ghazāli's view on Reason and Revelation

Ghazali, despite his famous *Tahāfut Falāsifah*, is not purely against the philosophy. His masterpiece, Ihyā, can be regarded as his effort in finding a "synthesis" between religion, Aristotelian philosophy, and sufi's value.[33] His famous *Tahāfut Falāsifah*, is also not an attempt to attack all philosophers in this world. The focus of the book is in criticizing the works of al-Fārābī and Ibn Sīnā. And among those Muslim philosophers, Ghazali's biggest attention is Ibn Sīnā. This is evident in some cases. When Al-Ghazali criticizes the emanation concept, he is criticizing Avicenna's triadic emanation, not the dyadic scheme proposed by al-Fārābī. When criticizing the philosopher's concept of God's knowledge, Ghazali is criticizing Ibn Sīnā's theory. By the same token, the philosophic theory of an immaterial soul—and later to denial of bodily resurrection—is definitely Avicenna's theory, not al-Fārābī's.[34]

Furthermore, if we trace back, we find that Ghazali himself is a philosopher. Although at some stage of his life, he devoted more time as a sufi, Ghazali is still recognized as "one of the most prominent and influential philosophers, theologians, jurists, and

[33] Imam Al-Ghazali, *Tahafut Al-Falasifah*, xix.

[34] Imam Al-Ghazali, xx.

mystics of Sunni Islam."[35] Furthermore, Abu Rayhan Biruni said that the word sufi itself is rooted in the Greek word *sophia,* meaning wisdom.[36] This means, in both stages, either as philosopher or sufi, Ghazali is practicing some extent of a philosophic way of thinking.

Griffle[37] believes that "Al-Ghazâlî understood the importance of *falsafa* and developed a complex response that rejected and condemned some of its teachings, while it also allowed him to accept and apply others." Further, Sabra[38] states that what we witnessed then, is that "philosophy—and the Greek sciences—were 'naturalized' into the discourse of kalâm and Muslim theology.'

To put it clearly, Ibn Rushd believes that philosophy is scientific, and there is nothing whatsoever in religion that is against science. However, this is precisely the point that Ghazali criticizes. According to Marmoura,[39] in his introduction to Tahāfut Falāsifa, that Ghazali's aims at to criticizing the 'pseudo-intellectuals' of his time. And that comes from a partial understanding of Greek Philosophers.

Indeed, *Tahāfut Falāsifa* has made a wrong assumption that Ghazali rejected Aristotelianism and its teachings.[40] However, its real intention is a refutation of *a group* among the Muslim philosophers who claim that *burhān* (demonstrative proof) has a higher rank compared to theological knowledge derived from revelation and its rational interpretation, and the claim leads them

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[35] Frank Griffel, "Al-Ghazali," in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Winter 2016 Edition)* (Center for the Study of Language and Information (CSLI), Stanford University, 2016), 1, https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2016/entries/al-ghazali/#Aca.

[36] Shahida Bilqies, "Understanding the Concept of Islamic Sufism," *Journal of Education & Social Policy* 1, no. 1 (2014): 56.

[37] Griffel, "Al-Ghazali," 1.

[38] A. I. Sabra, "The Appropriation and Subsequent Naturalization of Greek Science in Medieval Islam: A Preliminary Statement," *History of Science* 25, no. 3 (21 September 1987): 223–243, https://doi.org/10.1177/007327538702500301.

[39] Michael E. Marmura, "Al-Ghazali's Chapter on Divine Power in The Iqtisad," *Arabic Science and Philosophy* 4 (1994): xxi.

[40] Griffel, "Al-Ghazali," 4.

to neglect Islam and to disregard its *shariah*.[41]

Thus, it is better understood that *Tahāfut Falāsifa* is criticizing some incoherence that is made by a group of philosophers, not stating that all philosophers are incoherent.

To make Ghazali's standpoint even clearer, in his *al-Munqidh min al-Dhalāl*, he states, "Know that the philosophers, notwithstanding the multiplicity of their groups and the diversity of their doctrines, can be divided into three main divisions: Materialists, Naturalists, and Theists."[42] The materialists, a group of the most ancient philosophers, are of who do not believe in God. The naturalists are philosophers who devote their time to learning about nature, but then their conclusion is that the soul dies, never to return. The last group, which is theist philosophers, is the group where Socrates and his disciple Plato, and Plato's disciple, Aristotle belong."

Ghazali then states that the teachings of Aristotle, which is transmitted to the Muslim community by the virtue of Ibn Sīnā and Al-Fārābī can be classified into three categories; some are regarded as unbelief, some as innovation, and the rest need not to be rejected.[43] This shows that Ghazali's main intention can be said as naturalization and purification of the philosophy rather than a rejection of it.

Ghazali also divides philosophy into six divisions; mathematical, logical, physical, metaphysical, political, and moral. Among those divisions, Ghazali's Tahāfut al-Falāsifa only refutes the idea of metaphysical philosophy. Although Ghazali realizes that the other division can still bring evil deeds, he considers that "It is in the metaphysical sciences that most of the philosophers' errors are found."[44] This is due to their inability to give "apodeictic

[41] Griffel, "Al-Ghazali."

[42] Abu Hamid Al-Ghazali, *Al-Munqidh min al-D alāl*, ed. oleh Dr Jamil Shaliba (Beirut-Lebanon: Daar Al-Andalus, 2003), 7.

[43] Al-Ghazali, *Al-Munqidh min al-D alāl.*

[44] Al-Ghazali, 10.

demonstration" to satisfy their own logic. The twenty points discussed in Tahāfut al-Falāsifa, all of them related to metaphysical philosophy. Seventeen of them are regarded as heresy and the rest as unbelievers.

In Tahafut Falasifa, Al-Ghazali didn't reject the philosopher's method of using logic and reason to find the truth. Rather, he questions whether their conclusion of truth is purely a result of reason and logic or is influenced by something else. We can infer that through words and sentences Al-Ghazali choices in that book. In the twentieth discussion of Tahafut Falasifa, "On refuting their denial of bodily resurrection [and] the accompanying bodily pleasures and pains in paradise hell," Al-Ghazali, after elaborating some philosophers' teaching on the resurrection, says; "We have previously denied only their claim that they know this by reason alone."[45] In the other paragraph, he says, "...rational proofs have shown the impossibility of [attributing] place, direction, visage, physical hand, physical eye, the possibility of transfer, and rest to God, praise be to Him. Metaphorical interpretation [here] is obligatory through rational proofs."[46] He also says; "If it is said, 'Rational proof has shown the impossibility of the resurrection of bodies, just as it has shown the impossibility of applying those [anthromorphic] attributes to God, exalted be He,' we would demand of them to bring forth [this proof]."[47] Those statements make it clear that Al-Ghazali approves, and even requests for logical proofs, and condemns the pseudo-logical truth.

That pseudo-logical truth will arise when the logical way of thinking is used to justify one's false belief or imagery. Then, one's worldview is essential to determine the starting point of one's logical reasoning process. Zarkasyi, when discussing "Al-Ghazali's project to integrate religious and non-religious knowledge" states,

[45] Imam Al-Ghazali, *Tahafut Al-Falasifah*, 214.

[46] Imam Al-Ghazali, 215.

[47] Imam Al-Ghazali, *Tahafut Al-Falasifah*.

that it is "justifiable to infer that al-Ghazali's theistic worldview is the basis of his epistemology".[48]

By inferring the above-mentioned readings on Ghazali's thought, we can confidently construct Al-Ghazali's concept of Integration of Philosophy and Religion. His concept would say; In integrating philosophy and religion, one has to pay attention to three important points; *First*, the doctrine of philosophy is classified into two; the rejected and the accepted. A teaching will be rejected once it's rooted in an incoherent way of thinking. *Second*, both revelation and reason are a source of knowledge. The revelation is the source of knowledge and truth, especially when it comes to metaphysical knowledge; however, sometimes revelation requires us to interpret them using logical proof. The reason is also the source of knowledge and truth, especially in matters related to non-metaphysical knowledge; however, it is a must for the intellect who uses reason to have a theistic worldview. *Third*, when there is an apparent conflict between revelation and reason, a logical evaluation has to be done to examine the worldview of the intellect.

Finally, Ghazali is *not*, by any means, a skeptic. Ghazali's attitude toward philosophy and religion in his writings shows his respect for both sides and his pure, very honest, intention to reconcile philosophy and religion. To bring out the purest gems of philosophy and polish them by removing any unwanted dirt on them. Should anyone rumor that Ghazali is to blame for the decline of philosophy (and science) in Islam world, this is definitely a false accusation. In fact, Ghazali might be even regarded as the most prominent philosopher in the Muslim world.

2. Ibn Sīnā's View on Reason and Revelation

We had an interesting discussion when we explore Ghazali's philosophical thought. But to understand Ghazali better, which in turn helps us to understand the status of integration of Philosophy

[48] Zarkasyi, "Al-Ghazali's Concept of Causality with Reference to His Interpretations of Reality and Knowledge," 205.

and Religion among Muslim thinkers, we now have no better option to discuss but discuss Ibn Sīnā.

Ibn Sīnā is widely known as "The Preeminent Master" (al-shaykh al-ra'īs). That is not surprising, considering his expertise in philosophy, in addition to his mastery of various fields. Ibn Sīnā has been a bright learner since he was a kid. In his autobiography, he explained how the teacher that his father called home was astonished by his understanding of philosophy and suggested to the father that Ibn Sīnā should not be allowed to do anything else but learning.[49]

At sixteen, he has finished learning *Isagoge* (of Porphyry) and *Almagest* (of Ptolemy) and books on medicine. When he mastered Logic, natural science, and mathematics, he then proceeded to metaphysics by reading Aristotle's Metaphysica. He read it over forty times, in his effort to understand that text, until he had the text by heart. Amidst his desperation, he found a book for sale at booksellers. The book was *On the Objects of the Metaphysica* by Al-Fārābī. Ibn Sīnā described that reading the book made him clearly understand the metaphysics.[50]

In his eighteen, he has become a physician royal of Sultan of Bukhara. This allowed him to get access to an immense collection of books owned by the Sultan. He read so much that he "had exhausted all these sciences".[51] Al-Juzjānī, who simply calls Ibn Sīnā as "master", explains that Ibn Sīnā excel in all faculties he learned.

Like Ghazali can easily be misunderstood as someone who completely rejects philosophy, Ibn Sīnā can also be misunderstood as someone who completely rejects religion. The simple reading of the two figures will put one on one side, and another one on another side. Ibn Sīnā, according to Afnan,[52] Ibn Sīnā is not a type

[49] Arthur J. Arberry, *Avicenna on Theology* (United States: Hyperion Press Inc., 1951), 10.

[50] Arberry, 12.

[51] Arberry, 13.

[52] M. Afnan Soheil, *Avicenna, His Life and Works* (London: Goerge Allen &

of a person who is easily convinced to some dogmatic ideas, but Ibn Sīnā is wise enough to know that he cannot unveil all the truth by one's mind power only. Further, Afnan states that Ibn Sīnā Has a very high ambition to bring religion and philosophy into harmony.

Gutas,[53] even states that Avicenna has successfully "combined" philosophy and religion. One of the practical examples of Ibn Sīnā's "combination" is his utilization of logic to prove that God is one in al-Risālāt al-`Arshīya.[54] In addition, he also uses philosophy to prove that God is without cause.

In *Tahāfut*, one of Ghazali's critiques of Ibn Sīnā is that regarding the God's knowledge to particulars. It is said that the Ibn Sīnā believe that God knows particular things in a universal way. However, this critique may not be precise as, in his book, Ibn Sīnā states that "he has knowledge of *all objects of knowledge"* and "nothing in heaven or earth is remote from His knowledge."[55] Then where does the idea of "God knowing particular in a universal way" comes from. It might be wrongly inferred from some of his paragraphs. However, those paragraphs clearly states "Knowledge is itself Omnipotence". It means that Ibn Sīnā believes that God's knowledge is unlimited. And when Ibn Sīnā says that "this Knowledge is single knowledge", he is declaring there is no difference, and there is no need to differentiate, between Knowledge on particular or universal, as they are one.

Now we will focus on Avicenna's view on the integration of philosophy and religion. One of Avicenna's characters in his integration of revelation and reason is that often he is using both of them anytime it's possible to use them; without even giving a signal to the reader that he is going to shift from one of them to

Unwind Ltd, 1956), 168.

[53] Dimitri Gutas, "Ibn Sina [Avicenna]," in *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Department of Philosophy, Stanford University, 2016), 1, https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2016/entries/ibn-sina/.

[54] Arberry, *Avicenna on Theology*, 25.

[55] Arberry, 34.

another. It is just like someone using a spoon and fork to eat. When he thinks it is better to use a spoon, he will use a spoon; soon after that, he might think it is better to use a fork, then he will use it effortlessly. In his explanation of predestination, he occasionally uses "the ancient philosophers" and Plato's opinion to support his explanation. He mentions a verse from Al-Quran in a paragraph, and in the next paragraph, he quotes Plato's doctrine.

Then the critical point here is to know when it is possible, and when it is not. The guideline to that possibility is by understanding the target audience. Avicenna is in agreement with Ibn Rushd in his opinion that philosophy is not to be taught to the majority.[56]

Another characteristic of Avicenna's integration of reason and revelation, besides using a philosophical method to give proof to metaphysical matters, Avicenna also uses it to explain the rationale of the worship.[57]

That way of explaining the philosophy of worship conducted by Avicenna is not a heresy. It is recognized in maqasid sharia as *ta'līl*; an act of searching and explaining the objective of an act. In addition, the term *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* itself, according to Raisouni,[58] can be expressed with many terms; in which one of those terms is falsafatu syariah; the philosophy of legislation. Ta'lil has many evidence from the quran itself. Formal prayer, for instance, is explained as a means to remember Allah; and fasting as a means to reach the level of taqwa. By the above explanation, it is clear that Avicenna doesn't see revelation and reason as two contradicting things.

Further, he emphasizes that the rational soul is very essential to attain and express truth. The rational soul function is

[56] Arberry, 45.

[57] Arberry, 46.

[58] Ahmad Raisyuni, *Madkhal Ila Maqasid Syariah* (Mesir: Daar Al-Kalimah, 2010), http://dspace.bru.ac.th/xmlui/handle/123456789/3583.

> "to wait for the revelation of truths, and to reflect with perfect intuition and unclouded it upon the perception of subtle ideas, reading with the eye of inner vision the tablet of Divine Mystery and opposing with strenuous devices the causes of vain fancy.[59]

However, Avicenna admits that there are limitations to reason, especially when it comes to knowledge of the afterlife.[60] However, In explaining things which source of knowledge is a revelation, reason comes to support it. Avicenna writes, "The true religion brought into this world by our Prophet Muhammad has described in detail the state of happiness or misery awaiting us hereafter so far as the body is concerned. Some further support for the idea of a hereafter is attainable through reason and logical demonstration."[61]

To sum up, based on ample occurrence of Avicenna's integration of philosophy and religion, we can safely infer that his theory of integration of philosophy and religion would say; *First*, anytime it is possible to benefit any philosophical doctrine, it is preferred to use it; *Second*, there is a reason behind all revelation. Then, it is very logical to use reason to explain revelation. Understanding the reason behind revelation will strengthen one's faith. Then, using reasoning is a necessity in strengthening one's belief in revelation; *Third,* reason cannot always become the source of knowledge and truth. In matters concerning metaphysical knowledge, revelation is the main source; the reason is there to support that knowledge and truth.

Bottom line, it is evident that Ibn Sīnā has a strong will to combine religion and philosophy. Although some of his concepts might be misinterpreted and some others are criticized, the idea he put in his writings still clearly shows that Ibn Sīnā has put some bricks in the effort to build an integration of philosophy and religion.

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[59] Raisyuni.

[60] Raisyuni, 64.

[61] Raisyuni, *Madkhal Ila Maqasid Syariah.*

3. Other thinkers' views on Reason and Revelation

Now, to have a more comprehensive view of Muslim Philosophers' views on philosophy and religion, we are moving to discuss other thinkers' opinions on the relation between philosophy and religion. In this section, we will discuss Al-Fārābī, Ibn Taymiyyah, Iqbal, and Al-Attas.

a. Abu Naṣr Al-Farābī

The founder of Islamic Neoplatonism, Abu Naṣr Al-Fārābī begins his *Book of Letters* (*Kitāb al-Hurūf*) by giving an explanation of the position of philosophy and religion. Fakhry explains that al-Fārābī observes that "genuine or demonstrative (*burhāniyah*) philosophy was preceded in time by dialectical, sophistical and other modes of false logical discourse."[62] To al-Fārābī, the rise of religion chronologically comes after the rise of philosophy.[63] Religion's approach to telling the truth is different from philosophy. Religion uses dialectical and rhetorical arguments, rather than demonstrative arguments. While al-Fārābī, in his tabulation, considers the latter is superior to the formers.[64] This nuance of philosophy's superiority over religion is a brave statement considering al-Fārābī is not living without confrontation to his idea.

Al-Fārābī goes beyond placing philosophers as an elite class. He even states that the philosopher is the highest rank in the elite class, followed by dialecticians (jadāliyyūn), the sophists, the lawgivers, the theologians, and finally the jurists.[65]

Having said that philosophy is superior to religion, al-Fārābī does not think they are in contradiction. Al-Fārābī sees that, should

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[62] Majid Fakhry, *Al-Farābī, Founder of Islamic Neoplatonism, His Life, Works and Influence* (Oxford: One world Publications, 2002), 12.

[63] Mattock, "Muhsin Mahdi (ed.): Alfarabi's Book of letters (Kitāb al-ḥurūf): commentary on Aristotle's Metaphysics. (Recherches publiées sous la direction de l'Institut de Lettres Orientales de Beyrouth. Sér. 1: Pensée Arabe et Musulmane, Tom. XLVI.) XV, 253 pp. Beir," 48.

[64] Fakhry, *Al-Farābī, Founder of Islamic Neoplatonism, His Life, Works and Influence*, 12.

[65] Fakhry, 13.

religious scholars find that philosophy conflicts with religion, this is because they do not realize that religion is only a representation (*mithālāt*) of rational concepts drawn by the philosophers.[66]

In the section "al-ṣilah bayna al-millah wa al-falsafah" in al-Hurūf, al-Fārābī states that if a *millah*, 'religion', follows a false philosophy, and then a true philosophy with demonstrative argument comes to them, the philosophy will reject the 'religion'.[67] On the contrary, philosophy will help religion to reach its utmost potential once it follows a true philosophy.[68] Considering that confidence Al-Fārābī has in philosophy, it is not surprising that some of his ideas are being criticized by al-Ghazali in *Tahāfut al-Tahāfut*.

To summarize, Al-Fārābī's main theory on the integration of reason and revelation would say; *first*, Philosophy is superior to religion. However, there are true philosophy and false philosophy and religion needs to be careful in choosing them; *second*, philosophy and religion cannot conflict. This is because religious teaching is a mere reflection of rational concept; and *third*, both philosophy and religion are needed to explain the truth, but targeting a different class of people.

b. Ibn Taymiyyah

Known as one the most influential Islamic thinkers in his era, Ibn Taymiyyah (1263-1328) clearly oppose the idea that logic is a reliable means to attain religious truth.[69] Pavlin states that, to Ibn Taymiyyah, philosophers "were deluded" by "reliance on limited human intellect". Observation with a similar tone is also found in Zarkasyi's writing on Ibn Taymiyyah. Zarkasyi writes

[66] Fakhry, 14.

[67] Fakhry, 49.

[68] Fakhry, 48.

[69] James Pavlin, "Ibn Taymiyya, Taqi al–Din (1263–1328)," in *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (London: Routledge, 1998), 1, https://doi.org/10.4324/9780415249126-H039-1.

Ibn Taymiyyah refutes the claim that judgment cannot be obtained by other than syllogistic methods, for the belief that the instinctive method (al-turuq al-fitriyyah) is another possible method of acquiring knowledge and is simpler than syllogisms.[70]

Although Ibn Taymiyyah frequently criticizes philosophy, Zarkasyi states that it doesn't necessarily mean that Ibn Taymiyyah completely rejects philosophy.[71] Ibn Taymiyyah sees the problem of philosophy is in its historical root. Muslim philosophers, to Ibn Taymiyyah, follow the steps of the Mu'tazilites and Jahmites who use "a new method of theological discussion derived from the Hellenistic legacy."[72] This means Ibn Taymiyyah might be suspicious that there is still a trace of Hellenistic belief in their science. To put it in the other words, the Taymiyyah has strong apprehension that the Hellenistic worldview will render the so-called rational thinking become irrational.

That historical fact makes Ibn Taymiyyah believes that philosophy will never be completely compliant with religion as "there were foreign elements that can hardly be compatible with Islamic thought, for they are not in line with the knowledge handed down by the prophet."[73] However, again, it does not mean that he completely rejects it too. As he believes that some philosophers are capable to use philosophy in a good manner (al-falāsifa al-hunafā), true believers philosophers, in contrast to al-falāsifa al-mushrikīn, infidel philosophers.[74] This reminds us to Ghazali's stance on philosophy. Both Ghazali and Ibn Taymiyyah consider there are some fallacies in philosophers' way of thinking. But there are some truths there as well.

In his Dar' Ta`ārud al-`Aql wa-l-Naql (The Refutation of the Contradiction of Reason and Revelation), Ibn Taymiyyah started

[70] Zarkasyi, "Ibn Taymiyyah's Critique of Aristotelian Metaphysics," 44.

[71] Zarkasyi, 88–89.

[72] Zarkasyi, 89.

[73] Zarkasyi, 90.

[74] Zarkasyi, "Ibn Taymiyyah's Critique of Aristotelian Metaphysics."

his discussions by mentioning, with a dissatisfaction tone, an old saying stating that: if there are two contradicting facts from *naql* and *`aql*, both have to be combined. But combining them is impossible as each of them is a negation to the other. Thus, both have to be rejected.[75] Thus, for Ibn Taymiyyah, there has to be a way to use both *naql* and *`aql*.

One example he brings is the use of ta`wīl in understanding Al-Quran. In surah Ali Imran verse 7, Allah said:

> It is He who has sent down to you, [O Muhammad], the Book; in it are verses [that are] precise - they are the foundation of the Book - and others unspecific. As for those in whose hearts is deviation [from truth], they will follow that of it which is unspecific, seeking discord and seeking an interpretation [suitable to them]. And no one knows its [true] interpretation except Allah. But those firm in knowledge say, "We believe in it. All [of it] is from our Lord." And no one will be reminded except those of understanding.

Ibn Sīnā disagrees if the reading of the above verses has to stop at "...and no one knows its [true] interpretation except Allah." as it renders Gabriel, Prophet Muhammad, and his companions ignorant to the meaning of the verses they read.[76] To Ibn Taymiyyah, the verse's reading should be "...and no one knows its [true] interpretation except Allah and those firm in knowledge." Ibn Taymiyyah then stresses that the evidence is of two types; *sharī'ah* (religion) and *`aqliyyah* (reason).[77]

From his statements, it is clear that, as far as the integration of philosophy and religion is concerned, Ibn Taymiyyah is standing in the position where philosophy can be used to help us understand the truth. However, it is not the sole source of the truth. In addition, Ibn Taymiyyah suggests that we should not see philosophy and religion as two contradicting things, rather they can be used together for human prosperity.

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[75] Ibn Taymiyah, *Dar'u Ta'arud al-'Aql wa al-Naql*, ed. oleh Muhammad Rasyad Salim, 2 ed. (Madinah: Jami'ah al-Imam Muhammad bin Su'ud al-Islamiyah, 1991), 4.

[76] Taymiyah, 15.

[77] Taymiyah, 19.

c. Sir Muhammad Iqbal

In his writing, Iqbal warns of two inherent characteristics of philosophy which may not entirely be compatible with religion. *First*, its spirit of free inquiry, of questioning all authority;[78] and *second*, its inability to explain the dogmatic side of religion in a demonstrative way.[79] Having said that, Iqbal believes that there is room to understand religion from the perspective of rational thinking. However, it does not necessarily mean that philosophy is superior to religion.[80]

Iqbal is aware that his statement might be miscomprehended as a discouragement to logic and thinking. Thus, he directly follows that word by stating that both Philosophy and Religion "are in need of each other for mutual rejuvenation. Both seek visions of the same Reality which reveals itself to them in accordance with their function in life. In fact, intuition, as Bergson rightly says, is only a higher kind of intellect."

From his writing, it is clear that Iqbal believes that philosophy has strength. However, it will not surpass the power of religion. This might be what he wants to say from the first verse of his renowned poem, *Payam-e-Mashriq*,

> The world is under His proud power's sway
> Whom all things were created to obey.
> The sun itself is nothing but a mark
> Of long prostration on the brow of day[81]

The sun might be a representation of logical and empirical science, including philosophy. It is a mark that helps Muslims when to pray. However, it is God who controls the sun.

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[78] Iqbal, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, 3.

[79] Iqbal, 5.

[80] Iqbal, 3.

[81] M. HADI HUSSAIN, "Message from the East IQBAL'S 'PAYAM-I-MASHRIQ,'" allamaiqbal.com, 1977, http://www.allamaiqbal.com/works/poetry/persian/payam/translation/index.htm.

As a summary of Iqbal's theory on the integration of philosophy and religion, we can state that, to Iqbal, religion is the center of the source of knowledge and philosophy is there to help explain the religion. They are not opposed to each other as they are rooted in the same source and complement each other. Since it is rooted in the same source, it is by nature integrated.

d. Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas

To represent the Islamic thinker in our era, we now move to discuss al-Attas' opinion on philosophy and religion. Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, in his book Prolegomena to the Metaphysics of Islam, states that "recognition of the truth is, in this case, arrived at simply because it is clear in itself as apprehended by that intuitive faculty we call the heart, that is by means of guidance (hudā) and not only by rational propositions and logical demonstrations."[82] Further, he also stated that the perspective of Islam on philosophy is different from that of Greek.[83] And although modern philosophy has contributed to helping us understand God's creation, al-Attas warns us of a subtle but strong influence of a non-Islamic worldview.

Al-Attas acknowledge that there are similarities between "our position" and modern philosophy, among them are "the sources and methods of knowledge, the unity of the rational and empirical ways of knowing; the combination of realism, idealism, and pragmatism as the cognitive foundation of the philosophy of science; the philosophy and science of the process."[84] However, he believes that the similarities are only in their external forms, not in their core, fundamental aspects. There are very fundamental differences that arise from our very belief and worldview about knowledge and truth.

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[82] Al-Attas, *Prolegomena to the Metaphysics of Islām; An Exposition of the Fundamental Element of The Worldview of Islām*, 112.

[83] Al-Attas, 113.

[84] Al-Attas, 118.

For Muslims, according to al-Attas, the Revelation and our affirmation of it is "*the* source of knowledge of ultimate reality and truth." Thus, revelation is our key to understanding both Creator and His creation. And the revelation also gives us basis for a metaphysical framework.[85]

To al-Attas, the sound reason is one of the channels through where God can inform the knowledge to the human being. Al-Attas mentions other channels to acquire knowledge include intuition, sound senses, a true report based on authority. Thus, relying solely on reason will lead us astray, but stopping someone from using his sound reason will prevent him from receiving knowledge from God.

But what is the sound reason that al-Attas mean? He explains that it means reason which is not only limited to empirical, sensational, and logical reason. It is closer to a spiritual intellect that connects reason with intuition. It means, for al-Attas, religion's "sound reason" has a different meaning from philosophy's "sound reason". It might be inferred that the difference might be derived from the Arabic word of reason, *`aql*, which certainly has a different definition from Greek's reason. In short, al-Attas' main criticism of modern philosophy is targeted at its claim that "science is the sole authentic knowledge".[86] But for him, philosophy, conducted with an Islamic worldview, can be a powerful tool to receive knowledge from God.

In short, Al-Attas' main theory of integration of philosophy and religion revolves around three key concepts; *first*, both reason and revelation are the sources of knowledge. However, revelation is the source of knowledge of ultimate reality and truth; *second*, truth is at once objective and subjective. True religion doesn't acknowledge the objective-subjective dichotomy of Greek philosophical

[85] Al-Attas, *Prolegomena to the Metaphysics of Islām; An Exposition of the Fundamental Element of The Worldview of Islām.*

[86] Al-Attas.

tradition; and, *third*, worldview determines the direction of reason. Thus, integration of reason and revelation can only be done by someone who has a true religious worldview.

Conclusion

The bottom line of our discussion in this article, there are similarities and differences in Muslim scholars' views on the integration of philosophy and religion. Regardless of their differences, we found that all of them are still in Barbour's definition of *Integration,* not *Dialogue*, *Independence*, or even *Conflict*. Based on similarities and differences we found in Muslim thinkers' theory, we can, in a very broad and highly generalized classification; classify the Muslim scholars into three groups. Our classification, as we will see, shares some features found in Barbour's classification we discuss earlier in this article. However, we recognize some incompatibility in using Barbour's classification as it is. Barbour's Christianity religious paradigm cannot entirely match the Islamic religious paradigm which is evident in our Muslim Thinkers. Thus, we make some modifications in the classification which give a better reflection of Muslim thinkers' theories. The main visible modification is in the naming, as Barbour's naming on integration approaches contains some specific ideas which are not always matched with what we found in Muslim thinkers.

First group is of Al-Ghazali, Ibn Taymiyyah, Sir Muhammad Iqbal, and Naquib al-Attas. We named this group "revelation-laden integration". To Barbour's, this group would be, to some extent, parallel to his Theology of Nature. This group belongs to Muslim scholars who believe that reason and revelation are both needed to understand knowledge and to attain the truth, and that revelation is superior to reason. There are two branches in this group. The first branch is of Al-Ghazali, Ibn Taymiyyah, and Naquib al-Attas. They share the same reverbing idea of the influence of worldview in utilizing reason. Their apprehension of a false worldview warns

them not to rely heavily on reason. The second branch in this group is Sir Muhammad Iqbal. To Iqbal, the inherent character of philosophy itself hinders philosophy from being the first source of knowledge.

The second group is of Al-Farabi. We named this group "Reason laden integration". This group is, to some extent, parallel to Barbour's Natural Theology. Supporters of this view hold that reason is superior to religion, however, both are needed to reach and explain the truth.

The third group is of Ibn Sina. We name this group "Equal Ground Integration" which is very closely parallel with Barbour's Systematic Synthesis. This group's idea to put reason and revelation on the same level seems to make everyone happy, but an old saying says that "try to please everyone, and you will please no one, not even yourself". Revelation Laden Integration group will say that this group relies too much on reason while reason-laden integration will say just the opposite way.

Finally, while the mentioned prominent scholars differ in some details regarding philosophy and religion, all seem to have an agreement on a theme; properly utilized, philosophy could be a potential tool to understand and perform religion better.[]

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