

REDEFINING RATIONAL AND REVELATION INTO THE ISLAMIC SYSTEMOLOGY CONCEPT

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Abstract: The way of thinking held by most Muslims has currently shifted from Allah-centered to logical and empiricism. Also, the separation line of Islam from these practices can be seen clearly as the majority of Muslims hold secular thoughts. Hence, the paper aims to redefine the ‘*aqli*’ (rational) and ‘*naqli*’ (revelation) ways of thinking into the Islamic systemology concept. This is a concept that places Allah as an agent of everything and as the head of the system. Additionally, the process of the evolution of Greek philosophy and how it became a phenomenon in the Muslim world is extensively discussed. The application of rational reasoning, which was championed by Aristotle, is slowly degrading Muslims’ faith, as they have begun to verify everything based on logical answers. This article also strengthens the position of Abū Hāmid al-Ghazālī and supports the scholar’s arguments on the rejection of Western philosophy by outlining the importance of *yaqīn* or strong inner faith in acting and making better judgments. The Islamic systemology concepts are very important to make Muslims aware of the balance between ‘*aqli*’ and ‘*naqli*’, as both are interconnected and complementary. Ignoring ‘*naqli*’ means Muslims put more emphasis on the world or *dunyā* and less belief in Allah, and as such, they jeopardize the equilibrium of thinking.

Keywords: Islamic thoughts; ‘*aqli*’, ‘*naqli*’, Philosophy.

Introduction

Over the past decade, the thoughts or way of thinking of Muslims has become more and more influenced by the philosophies and thoughts from the Western, especially the Greek philosophy and thoughts. It can be seen that the separation between Islam and life is becoming clearer, as the majority of Muslims adopted secular ways of thinking. Islam is now viewed as a mere religion, covering only

aspects of *ibādah* (worship). For those who think that Islam is a complete religion, they found themselves in a dilemma and ambiguity on the meaning of “wholeness “of Islam. The wholeness of Islam meaning covering all aspects of an individual’s life. This is because Islam itself covers all aspects of human life, such as *ibādah* (worship), *shari’ah*, *mu’amalah*, *fiqh*, monotheism, morality, and creed. The wholeness of Islam can be seen through the interaction between Islam and its followers. Islam dominated in all aspects of its followers live, embedded so strong and did not hinder any movement towards modernization nor try to control the behavior of its followers. Although these aspects have been outlined in Islam, the biggest issue faced by Muslims is on understanding and practicing these aspects of life. This is because our way of life has been corrupted by the philosophy of life that has been promoted by the West. This paper is not going to condemn Western philosophy but emphasis the needs of Muslims making a separation line way of thoughts in Muslim world. Western philosophies seem to have passed through all aspects of our lives, replacing those elements already underlined. Considering this phenomenon, it can be said that the Muslim world is actually having a crisis of identity and only moving along with the current situation of modernity of thoughts. Western philosophies are so thick that their ways of thinking are widely used by Muslims in all *dunya* (world) aspects such as economic, social, human capital, educational institutions, financial institutions and etc.

The failure of Muslims to defend themselves against Western way of thinkings is not a new issue, as this issue was first identified by Islamic theologians and scholars during his time, Imam Hambali and his supporters, dubbed traditional (theological) ideas against the Mu’tazilite group who supported a rational (Greek-based) way of thinkings in the Islamic context.¹ Greek philosophies continually evolve with the birth of Islamic thinkers who supported Greek philosophical concepts (Aristotle, Plato, and Plotinus) in Muslim world that have a great contribution towards Islam’s advancement.

The realm of philosophy is associated with wisdom, intellectual culture, and a search for knowledge. Philosophy acts as a principle in guiding humans in making a choice, taking an action with logical

¹ Safrudin Ediwibowo, “The Debates of the Createdness of The Qur’an and Its Impact to the Methodology of Qur’anic Interpretation”, *Journal of Islamic Studies*, Vol. 19, No. 2 (2015), 353–388.

reasoning to justify our process of action and to reduce risk of error. This is because human being needs metaphysical and moral ideas because they are not born with instincts that determine for them what they should think and want, and are not born with the capacities to make up their own minds and to question any belief they have or meet. Philosophy originated from the Greek and spread into Muslim world during the Caliphate of the Abbasids.² Philosophy or *falsafah* flourished and well-accepted during the Abbasid era due to result of transplant from Greece to Muslim lands, which saw Muslim scholars uphold the idea of Hellenistic intellectuals of Aristotle, Plato, Plotinus and others into Islamic context and worldview.³ Several Muslims became prominent and contributed towards the establishment of Islamic Philosophy such as Al-Fārābī, Ibn Sīnā, and al-Jāhīz. The foundation of philosophy within Islam context was later strengthening by Ibn Rushd (Averroes), who famously known as supporter and defender of Aristotelian logic.⁴ However, some of early Muslim theologians rebut the position of Greek philosophy within Islamic context, especially Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī, where his philosophy gained a supreme position and legitimacy in Muslim world. He rejected the ontological causality and put Allah as the only agent in the world.⁵ The Muslim scholars were not in favor of imported Greek philosophy ideas, notably Aristotelian logic since they regarded it to be an anti-religious knowledge.⁶ The logical reasoning and syllogism brought by Greek philosophers are very powerful and seem to permeate in every aspect of our life because it is easy to understand with logical excuses, strong argument, and also a solid proof. This type of thinking acculturated and became very dominant within human society, thus damaging the thinking ways of Muslims.

² Richard Walzer, “The Rise of Islamic Philosophy”, *Oriens*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (1950), 1

³ Raj Bhala, *Understanding Islamic Law* (New Providence: LexisNexis, 2011).

⁴ Oliver Leaman, “Ibn Rushd on Happiness and Philosophy”, *Studia Islamica*, No. 52 (1980), 167.

⁵ Anthony Robert Booth, *Anti-Evidentialism and al-Ghazālī’s Attack on Falsafa’*, in *Analytic Islamic Philosophy* (London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2017), 117–141; Ilai Alon, “Al-Ghazālī on Causality”, *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, Vol. 100, No. 4 (1980), 397–405.

⁶ Ali Paya, “Muslim Philosophies: A Critical Overview”, *Synthesis Philosophica*, Vol. 62, No. 2 (2016), 279–294.

In Islam, the epicenter of living forms concentrated only on Allah. It is the center of everything, the starter, and the ending. Al-Ghazālī stated that Allah is a cause that the world exists, and Allah is an omnipotent being.⁷ There is no causes and effects an argument championed by David Hume, as all of the events that occur in this world, whether sensed or not, are caused by one being, Allah. Human being created by Allah, He appointed prophets and also descended divine revelation upon humankind, such as Zabur, Torah, Injil, and al-Qur’ān. Those revelation acts as guidance, consisted of rules and regulations, knowledge, morality and ethicality, human responsibility, and taught us what ought to be followed and what ought to be left. In other words, human being is already part of system with Allah as the center and the highest hierarchy in the system. The idea of this paper is to redefine ‘*aqlī* (reasoning) and *naqlī* (revelation) into concept of Islamic Systemology, and an approach refers to a holistic view or worldview that reflected the realization of everything in this concrete world is a system which functioning because of Allah. The paper also aims to highlights the exclusiveness of Islam’s thoughts to draft a separation line between philosophy and thoughts in Islamic context.

Greek Philosophy and Islam

The Muslim expansion brought the civilization contact with the Hellenistic world when Syria and Egypt were conquered. In Egypt, Alexandria was the center of “Christian-Greek” philosophy and was the home of many advocates of Aristotle’s philosophy.⁸ During the reign of al-Ma’mun (813-833), saw Greek science and philosophy, and several works of Aristotle and Ptolemy were translated into Muslim world. Furthermore, Greek teachers were also welcome to the court of al-Ma’mun as the Caliph himself took an interest in Greek intellectual.⁹ The new integration of Hellenistic thoughts and Islamic way of life taken place through the emergence of scholastic theology (*kalām*), Islamic Aristotelianism, and Neo-Platonism in the Islamic

⁷ Mohammad Alwahaib, “Al-Ghazālī and Descartes From Doubt to Certainty: A Phenomenological Approach”, *Discusiones Filosóficas*, Vol. 18, No. 31 (2017), 15-40.

⁸ Syed Sulaiman Nadvi, “Muslims and Greek Schools of Philosophy”, *Islamic Studies: Islamic Research Institute, International Islamic University*, Islamabad (2012).

⁹ Akhtar Husain Siddiqi, “Muslim Geographic Thought and the Influence of Greek Philosophy”, *Geo Journal*, Vol. 37, No. 1 (1995), 9-15.

world.¹⁰ The transmission of Greek philosophy and sciences into the Islamic world through the translation movement in the 8th century and 9th century has played a major role in accelerating the Hellenizing process into the Islamic world. This whole process of assimilation leads to the emergence of rationalistic movement in the Islamic world, supported by Caliph who fascinated by the practical use of Greek philosophy and sciences, had issued the explicit policy of the state to promote the significance of the adoption of the foreign intellectual.¹¹

The obsession of al-Ma'mun, being influenced by Greek philosophy, composed a number of treatises on theological questions in a speculative spirit, and also applied Greek thought to Muslim dogmas¹². As a result, it attracted people's interest to learn Greek philosophy and paved the way for Muslims to be provided with new culture,¹³ outlined those interest as; (a) rational form of thought and systematization', (b) logical procedure, (c) methods of generalization and abstraction' and, (d) principle of classification. As a result, Islamic scholars started to use rationalization in religion and abandoned the revelation. The transplant of foreign culture into Islamic thinking causes a dispute between those who believe Islamic thoughts as self-sufficient and having nothing to learn from the outside. The climax of the dispute can be seen on the persecution of Islamic scholars who holds on the self-sufficient of Islamic thinking, often called as traditionalist against Mu'tazilite group (rationalist school of Islamic philosophy) on the ground of al-Qur'an being created or uncreated.¹⁴ Additionally, another abstract of problem emerged between theological thinking and genuine philosophy in question of the free will and predestination (*qadar*), which naturally, in the context of religious culture, was related to the issues of Divine Justice and

¹⁰ Nurcholish Madjid, "Ibn Taymiyya on *Kalam* and *Falsafa*: A Problem of Reason and Revelation in Islam" (Faculty of the Division of the Humanities--University of Chicago, 1984).

¹¹ Mufti Ali, "Muslim Opposition to Logic and Theology in the Light of the Works of Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti (d. 911/1505)" (Department of Religious Studies--Faculty of Humanities, 2008).

¹² Majid Fakhry, *A History of Islamic Philosophy, 2nd Edition* (London: Columbia University Press, 1983).

¹³ Gustave E. Von Grunebaum, "Islam and Hellenism", in Dunning S. Wilson (ed.), *Islam and Medieval Hellenism: Social and Cultural Perspectives* (London: Variorum Reprints, 1976).

¹⁴ Ediwibowo, "The Debates of the Createdness", 353-388.

Divine power.¹⁵ Again, two rival thoughts of Islamic philosophy, namely the Ash‘arite (traditionalist and rationalist) and the Mu‘tazilites clashing between each other to make their own stand. The Ash‘arite positioned themselves on the omnipotence of Allah. He is the one who directly intervenes in all aspects of the whole realm. Whilst, the Mu‘tazilites argued for man’s free will.¹⁶ They believed that Allah had endowed human beings with the power of intellect. Thus, they were free to choose their path and station in life.

Clashing between Traditionalist and Rationalist

The inception of Islamic Aristotelianism and Neo-Platonism has met with fierce opposition from a great number of Muslim scholars. However, the development of Greek philosophy within Islamic context should not be undermined or be rejected totally. This is because knowledge is derived from Allah. He is the source of all knowledge, either the knowledge argued about His existence or defended His existence. It depends on the human being on how they manipulate the given knowledge. According to rational tendencies had grown up as early as the time of the Companions.¹⁷ For instance, Ibn ‘Abbās, Ibn Mas‘ūd and Ikrima, applied rational methods in interpreting al-Qur’ān versus through the process of *ijtihad* or a personal rational elaboration of a certain meaning of the al-Qur’ān. The importance of *kalām* (rationalist) can be discerned in the fact that some Quranic verses can be used to encounter various sects and pagans and to refute their religious views, called as an internal factor of polemical. On the other, it is closely related to Greek philosophy in order to construct arguments in defense of their views, by showing apologetically aspect.¹⁸ Ironically, to said *kalām* totally originated from outside (Greek philosophy), a bit dubious because the Orientalist working hard to negate the originality of Islamic teachings, to trace the roots, at any cost of all sciences that originated amongst Muslims

¹⁵ Murtazā Mūtahari, *Divine Justice (Adil e Ilāhī)* (n.p.: Kazi Publication, 2004); Harry Austryn Wolfson, *The Philosophy of the Kalam* (London: Harvard University Press, 1976).

¹⁶ Morteza Motahari, *Ashnaei Ba ‘ulum-e Eslami: An Introduction to the [Classi] Islamic Sciences* (Tehran: Sadra Publication, 1979).

¹⁷ Louis Gardet and Anawati Georges Chehata, *Introduction a La Théologie Musulmane* (Paris: Librairie Philosophique J.Vrin, 1948).

¹⁸ Aḥmad Amīn, *Ḍuḥā al-Islām, 3rd edition* (Kairo: Lajnat al-Ta’lif wa al-Tarjamah wa al-Nashr, 1952).

are coming from outside, particularly the Christian world. Therefore, they are insisted that the roots of *kalām* should be acknowledged outside Islam.¹⁹

Nevertheless, the position of *kalām* received mixed acceptance from various Muslim scholars. For instance, Hanbali School totally against *kalām*, while Mu'tazilite supports the *kalām*, together with the Ash'arite, who adopted traditionalist belief and at the same time use Mu'tazilite methodology to prove their belief. Thus, it can be said they form a synthesis of both schools. Ibn Taymīyah, who was one of the eminent scholars of the Sunni world, gave a verdict declaring *kalām* and logic as unlawful. Another figure among the Ahl al-Ḥadīth, Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūfī through a book called *Ṣawn al-Manṭiq wa al-Kalām* (Protecting Speech and logic from the evil of *Kalām* and the science of logic) also rejected the idea of logical reasoning within Islamic context.²⁰ The clashing between two thoughts take a new paradigm between al-Ghazālī against Ibn Rushd, an Islamic Modern Philosophy. Ibn Rushd or Averroes was known as Aristotelian logic defender who greatly admired Aristotle and considered him a giant who had attained the truth. He believed that philosophy and religion should be harmonious without amalgamating them or eradicating their differences. He maintained that the deepest truths must be approached by means of rational analysis and that philosophy could lead to the final truth. The war between two giant, Ibn Rushd using his *Tabāfut al-Tabāfut* (The Incoherence of the Incoherence) attacked the al-Ghazālī's *Tabāfut al-Falāsifah* (The Incoherence of the Philosophers), a work sought to strengthening of Islamic traditionalist defends against the rationalist philosophy.²¹ Al-Ghazālī critiques on the philosophers on a number of grounds ranging from resurrection, cosmological arguments, existence of God, divine attributes and cause and effect. To the extent, he charges them with heresy and being unbelievers (*kāfir*) by saying that philosophers have gone too far

¹⁹ Murtaẓā Mūtahharī, *Understanding Islamic Sciences: Philosophy, Theology, Mysticism, Morality, Jurisprudence* (n.p.: Saqi Books, 2002).

²⁰ Khaled El-Rouayheb, "Sunni Muslim Scholars on the Status of Logic, 1500-1800", *Islamic Law and Society* (Brill, 2004).

²¹ Imtiyaz Yusuf, "Discussion between al-Ghazālī and Ibn Rushd about the Nature of Resurrection", *Islamic Studies* (Islamic Research Institute, International Islamic University, Islamabad, 1986).

astray in denying the resurrection of bodies and in presenting a God who is given none of the characteristics He has in the al-Qur'ān.²²

Rational ('*Aqli*) and Revelation (*Naqli*)

In Islam, there are two kinds of knowledge, revealed knowledge (*naqli*) which has been revealed through al-Qur'ān verses and given to human beings by Allah and transmitted through the prophetic tradition (*sunnah*). Rational knowledge (*'aqli*) such as mathematics and science which acquire through human effort and comes from mankind with permission of Allah, as Allah is the source of all knowledge. '*Aqli* knowledge is not derived directly from a divine source but is discovered rationally through such tools as logic and scientific method.²³ In Islam, possessing both pieces of knowledge are very significant to ensure Muslim balancing their spiritual life while seeking knowledge. According to²⁴ it is a parent's obligation to ensure their children obtained both types of knowledge. For instance, *Tawhīd* (believing in One God) is to be taught first when it comes to religious knowledge, followed by *Salah* (prayer) and recite the al-Qur'ān. Conversely, the existence of doctor, engineer, lawyer, lecturer and etc. are required for the betterment of society.²⁵ Reasoning (*al-'aql*), is an Allah given ability to us, to acquire knowledge and recognize truth. Rational thought and the resultant disciplines of logic and science are essential for understanding the divine revelations and its relationship to the natural world. In contrast, indulgence in irrationality and unreasonable thinking is a means of disgrace, violence and destruction. Furthermore,²⁶ it stated that reason is the source and fountainhead of knowledge, as well as its foundation. He illustrates that knowledge sprouts from it as the fruit does from a tree, as light comes from the sun, and as vision comes from the eyes.

²² Chryssi Sidiropoulou, "Who Is the God of the Qur'an? A Medieval Islamic Debate and Contemporary Philosophy of Religion", in *Classic Issues in Islamic Philosophy and Theology Today* (Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands, 2010), 91-109.

²³ Mark W. Meehan, *Islam, Modernity, and the Liminal Space Between* (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2014).

²⁴ N. Mohd Hamid and A.Q.D Khaulah, *Tarbiyat al-Atfāl fi al-Bayt wa al-Rawḍah* (Jeddah: Maktabat al-Sawadi li al-Tawzi', 1994).

²⁵ Mohamed Akhiruddin Ibrahim et al., "The Intergration Concept of *Naqli* and '*Aqli* Knowledge: Study on Students' Perception", *IJASOS: International E-journal of Advances in Social Sciences* (August 31, 2017), 583-591.

²⁶ Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī. *Mukhtaṣar Iḥyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn*, Edited by Marwan Khalaf, 2nd Edition. (n.p.: Spohr Publishers, 2014).

Perhaps, the easy way to explain the relation of these two kinds of knowledge can be illustrated through *farḍ kifāyah* (commitment to Islam) and *farḍ ‘ayn* (closing to Allah). *Farḍ ‘Ayn* is a compulsory religious activity such as *‘ibādah*, *tawḥīd*, *fiqh*, whilst *farḍ kifāyah* referring to science, mathematics, engineering and etc. According to al-Ghazālī, basic fundamental of Islam can be derived from *farḍ ‘ayn*, a compulsory religious knowledge and activities that must be performed by all Muslims.²⁷ *Farḍ kifāyah*, often regarded as an obligation that must be done by part of Muslims if the obligation has been carried out by part of them. The others are not compulsory to carry it out. However, if none of Muslims carry it, thus it will be a sin for all Muslims.²⁸ The idea of *farḍ kifāyah* to urge Muslims seeking knowledge in order to fulfill their obligation as a caliph appointed by Allah. Understanding *farḍ ‘ayn* and *farḍ kifāyah* in the present context is very important for the progress of Muslims. The scenario that is happening today emphasis on just one part and ignoring other parts pose problems to the Muslim community. Because both of them are closely related to the formation and construction of individual Muslim characteristics. Similarly to *‘aqli* and *naqli*, if one’s only equipped themselves with *‘aqli*, it will jeopardize the whole system of knowledge in Islam. In order to have solid system, where every units are connected to each other, possessing both of them is a must. The use of reason extends beyond religion to the study of creation and its natural sciences. The reconciliation is not enough for Muslims to understand the value creation beyond *naqli* and *‘aqli*.

A Muslim may be capable of differentiating between both of knowledge, but some of them may have a difficult time on how to explain the value or outcome if both philosophies of *naqli* and *‘aqli* are integrated as one. A study done by a scholars from Universiti of Sains Islam Malaysia found that respondents faced the difficulty in presenting the clear example to explain the integration of *naqli* and *‘aqli*.²⁹ Ironically, the successfulness integration of *‘aqli* and *naqli* may

²⁷ Hasan Langgulung, *Pengenalan Tamadun Islam dalam Pendidikan* (Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 1986).

²⁸ Mukhlis Nugraha, “Konsep Ilmu Fardu Ain dan Fardu Kifayah dan Kepentingan Amalannya dalam Kurikulum Pendidikan Islam”, *TAFHIM: IKIM Journal of Islam and the Contemporary World*, Vol. 10 (2017), 103–149.

²⁹ Ibrahim, Mohamed Akhiruddin, Azniwati Abdul Aziz, Wan Amir Nudin Wan Ishak, Sanusi Shariff, Rasmina Hasbullah, and Irwan Mohd Subri, “The Intergration

resulted in positive mental health and well-being of individual.³⁰ They found that mature spirituality involves a kind of self-transcendence where individuals develop the ability to go beyond themselves in truthful knowledge, free commitment, and loving relationship with others, both human and Divine. The development of spiritual within cognitive thinking may harmonize one's mind with the nature, and at same time reducing rational thinking of self-interest. Although, definition of spirituality may varied, but in this context of study, it is associate with the religion, as spirituality in Islam are derived from al-Qur'ān and Ḥadīth. As defined by Said Nursi Bediuzzaman, spirituality encompasses the endeavour to gain and increase in faith in Allah, and in knowledge and awareness of Him.³¹ Islam is not a mere religion, it is a comprehensive way of life that touches every aspect of its adherent.

The voices that claimed Islam rejects science and physical development are baseless, such as claimed by Bernard Lewis, in his book, *What Went Wrong?*, accused Islam reluctant to accept the modernization, by portraying Islam's lack of freedom, backward and problematic religion.³² Moreover, the Western holds on belief that "conservatism" and fatalism of Islam led to economic stagnation and scientific advancement in Islamic land. Islam is thought as a fundamental obstacle to progress and it needs to break the hold on the masses so that progress would automatically follow.³³ Furthermore, the Orientalists also interpret Islam as a "conservative religious forces"³⁴, and a "narrow, rigid and closed' religion that hindered any progress of science"³⁵. The Western also blame the al-

Concept of *Naqli* and '*Aqli* Knowledge: Study on Students' Perception", *IJASOS-International E-journal of Advances in Social Sciences* (August 31, 2017).

³⁰ Nik Ahmad Hisham Ismail et al., "Students' Islamic Personality on Ibadah: A Structural Modelling Approach", *Procedia—Social and Behavioral Sciences*, Vol. 219 (May 31, 2016), 755-761.

³¹ A. Setia, "Spiritual Dimensions of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi's *Risale-i-Nur*, Edited and Introduced by Ibrahim M. Abu Rabi", *Journal of Islamic Studies*, Vol. 20, No. 3 (September 1, 2009), 420-422.

³² Bernard Lewis, *What Went Wrong?: The Clash between Islam and Modernity in the Middle East* (New York: Perennial, 2003).

³³ Nur Yalman, "Some Observations on Secularism in Islam: The Cultural Revolution in Turkey Author", *Daedalus*, Vol. 102, No. 1 (2011), 139-168

³⁴ Lewis Goldziher, *Introduction to Islamic Theology and Law* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1981).

³⁵ John Joseph Saunders, *A History of Medieval Islam* (London: Routledge, 1965).

Ghazālī on the declination of Islamic philosophy, simultaneously championing Ibn Rushd on defending philosopher, naming him as the modern philosophy of Islam and capable to led Muslims to the new Muslim Renaissance and Enlightenment, perhaps par with scientific advancement achieved by Western Europe and America³⁶. However, the argument given by Westerns is far from the truth. The argument needs to be understood by Westerners that is Islam is not a Christian, a mere orthodox religion that randomly rejected any form of scientific thinking such as happened during the Dark Age of Europe. The reason why Muslim at that time rejected Ibn Rushd due to primacy that Ibn Rushd allocates to reason, even in religious matters, and dislike of supernatural explanation, as well as his efforts to weaken the hold of the class of Islamic jurist and theologians upon philosophy, thoughts, and society.³⁷ The philosophy brought by Ibn Rushd feared will diminish the way of Muslims thinking. The Islamic jurists, at that time, taking into account the capability of common Muslims to understand the complexity of western philosophy. If a person randomly brings their reasoning idea on the theology context, especially on the matter that cannot be explained nor be provided with solid proof, it can collapse the faith and destroy common Muslims thinking as not everyone possessed a level of thinking and knowledge at disposal.

The philosophy of Aristotelian infamously known rejected God, while most Western philosophies are based on positivism, separating religion from the aspect of life, introducing secularism, championing freedom of life to the fullest, and based on moral reasoning that developed from Western thinking. The benevolent of Muslims thinking are based on religion should not be separated from a human being and God (Allah) centered-thinking. The application of *'aqli* and *naqli* should be the main focus for Muslim knowledge advancement, instead of blindly following Western philosophy. For instance, there are a lot of cases Muslims in job employment are being discriminated against, such as issues of performing *ṣalāt* (prayer) during working hours. The employers are reluctant to give permission

³⁶ Paul Kurtz, "Intellectual Freedom, Rationality, and Enlightenment: The Contribution of Averroes", in M. Wahbah and M. Abousenna (eds.), *Averroes and the Enlightenment* (Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 1996).

³⁷ Chryssi Sidiropoulou, "Qur'anic Interpretation and the Problem of Literalism: Ibn Rushd and the Enlightenment Project in the Islamic World", *Religions*, Vol. 6, No. 3 (2015), 1082-1106.

due to believing it is a waste of time, reduces the efficiency and productivity of workers. It is a basic tenet of Western philosophy on positivism that higher productivity will positively impacted company performance. However, from Islamic context, performing *Salah* will bring benefit to individual life, such as get a reward in *dunya*/hereafter from Allah, and also bring *barakah* (get a bless from Allah; bring profit and growth) for business owners. Does this type of thinking exist within positivism and logical reasoning thinkers? Furthermore, relationship between human and hereafter also have been denied by philosopher.³⁸ The introduction on concept of Islamic Systemology seems very useful in explaining on how Muslim should redefining the way they adopted philosophy or the way of thinking in their aspect of life. Human being aspect of life is not a linear line, not everything can be explained as our life are impacted by something that we cannot overall explain by our limited knowledge. It is our faith and belief, which both of them located in grey area, that help us to explain something that cannot be explained by scientific method.

Perspective on System Thinking

Prevailing system thinking so powerful in field of biology, ecology, engineering, psychology management and etc. However, there is no finite definition of system thinking as it varies according to field of studies. The term “System philosophy” was coined by Ervin Laszlo in his book *Introduction to Systems Philosophy*, published in 1972. Another pioneer of System philosophy is Ludwig von Bertalanffy, the founder of General Systems Theory. However, the origins of system thinking originated from Greek philosophy, Aristotle, who pointed out that a system is more than the sum of its part, consist of all main branches of learning, establishing a classification of categories and diagrammed it with Tree of Porphyry.³⁹ Systems thinking balance the focus between the whole and its parts and take multi perspectives into account.⁴⁰ The fundamental of system thinking is an approach to analysis on how the different parts of a system interrelate and how systems work within

³⁸ John H. Whittaker, “Philosophy and the Afterlife”, *Theology*, Vol. 85, No. 706 (1982), 278-283.

³⁹ F. LeRon Shults, *Iconoclastic Theology: Gilles Deleuze and the Secretion of Atheism* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2015).

⁴⁰ Derek Cabrera, Laura Colosi, and Claire Lobdell, “Systems Thinking’, *Evaluation and Program Planning*”, Vol. 31, No. 3 (August 2008), 299-310.

the context of larger system. It is a holistic approach that can be used in many areas of research to explain the connection of unit to a larger system.

The system approach assists us in seeing how different complex entities interact and influence each other and make up the whole system. In effect, each unit within the system, working together towards a goal. For instance, in business organization, a unit of system can be assigned to raw materials, human resources, capital, and technology (input), bring into organization environment often called as transformation process to produce an output of final product or profit to the organization.

Another definition that needs to be understood in the system thinking is collective thinking of a single unit, integrate with the environment to create a large system. If the collected unit, the majority of them influenced by same beliefs and values, it will create strong and impregnable system thinking that is hard to accept any changes, or anyone who tried to resist it might found out there will be outside of the system. Furthermore, if a person is not able to think or assume to have a different type of way of thinking, it will jeopardize their existence and harden for them to gain recognition within the system. For instance, there is a strong connection of link between education and job searching. It is believed by majority people in the world that a good education level would help someone to land on better job with good salary. It is a normal logical thinking in our society today, even among Muslims. In some countries, for instance, Malaysia, it is a normal norm that before searching for a bride, they will look at the education level, as they believe that education is important to create a fortune for the future family. In a business context, the ends of system thinking in business environment always for capitalism as organizations only seek to achieve higher financial performance, as it already been generalized and being acceptable within business environment.

The effect of system thinking is pandemic, as it becomes an embedded belief, later a norm and widely accepted within society. The transformation of belief and values cause by system thinking can be explained as follows (1) the value and beliefs becoming habit and routine in our life (2) the habit is sediment strongly as it already becomes norm to be followed or ought to be followed (3) the beliefs and value gained legitimacy as it already part of our system thinking.

Current system thinking can be said influence by positivism philosophy, Aristotelian logic on logical reasoning, cause and effect by David Hume and other Western philosophy. The ideal type “modern” seems to imply a successful society, rationally organized in the direction of sustained economic growth and scientific advancement. The “conservatism” and fatalism of Islam led to economic stagnation and scientific advancement in Islamic land. Islam is thought as a fundamental obstacle to progress and it needs to break the hold on the masses so that progress would automatically follow.⁴¹ By breaking, altering or modifying Muslim’s belief, it would separate Muslims from their religion or Allah-centred thinking, which is far from human *fitrah*, state of nature of Muslims in their inclination towards Allah. By changing the *fitrah*, subsequently lead Muslims into secularism thinking, perhaps into more rationalist thinking by abandoning the importance of *naqli* in their aspect of life. It is also will be weakening the identity and personality of Muslims. Thus Islam only viewed as an “affiliation, symbol, culture” merely a status or just a religion, no longer a comprehensive way of life, including the way that Muslims should adopt.

Conceptual on Islamic Systemology

The occupation of Muslim countries by non-Muslims and the fall of the Muslim caliphate drastically weakened the Muslim world. In addition, the fast-changing world, the adoption of postmodernism and eagerness of Muslim countries to copy everything from West saw Muslims had to assimilate Western philosophy and way of life in order to be ranked as a modern society. Without realizing, they had to sacrifice the way of their thinking that had been protected by Imam Hambali and also Al-Ghazālī. In today society, Islam almost fully treated by its followers as a ritual religion only for the sake of hereafter. Muslims are championing their *dunyā* (world) with rational and logical thinking in every aspect of their life. For instance, in business organizations, all unit in system (human resource, raw material, technology) must doing their task effectively and efficiently in order to achieve positive means for organization which is to ensure survival and profit for organization. This mean that the system of organization put the higher hierarchy of organization and centred only on survival and profit. Consequently, it create issues of

⁴¹ Yalman, “Some Observations on Secularism in Islam”, 139-168.

opportunism, determinism, self-interest, negative corporate culture and unethically practice by abandoning value creation for *ummah* (society). Correspondingly, in term of educational, one belief that higher education is the only way for one's to change their fate of life, not because of Allah. The role and term of "Allah" as a centred for all living forms is forgotten due to our system tend to be aligned with system thinking of philosophy which is not based on Islamic Systemology. The *'aqli* and *naqli* ways of thinking are already there but will be redefining into Islamic Systemology to increase the understanding and correcting the ways of Muslim thinking.

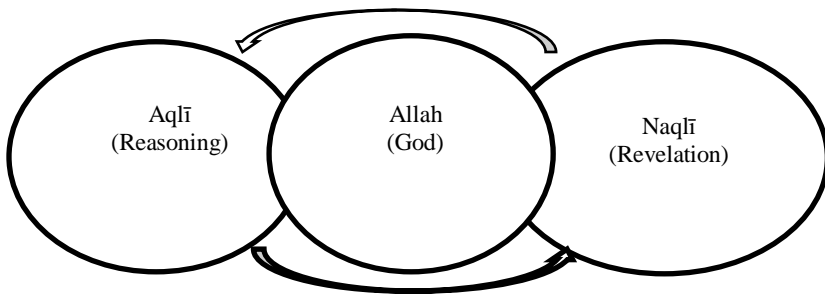


Figure 1: Propose Conceptual on Islamic Systemology

A proposition of Islamic Systemology in a simple word proposes that system thinking based on the understanding that everything is only for and coming from Allah. If a unit of system associated the way of he/she thinks and take action based on Allah and value of Islam and integrated it in a larger system, it will ingrain strong Islamic Systemology which is accordance with the concept of Islam as a complex of social relations, not only for religions, but as a civilization, a way of life, all comprehensive, self-contained, and worldly system of life in many aspects of sociology, politics, psychology, ecology, business, economic, etc. Islamic Systemology assists a unit/person to view system from a broad perspective that includes seeing overall structure, patterns, and cycles in system based on Islamic value. Through it, Muslims able to identify solutions in ethical manner and believes whatever takes place all because of Allah.

This is identical to the al-Ghazālī thoughts that all things happened and ended solely because of Allah. In order to acquire knowledge that beyond our limit, Muslims should be based on *'aqli* and *naqli* when interpreting the objectivity or subjectivity of the value. According to al-Ghazālī, in his book of *Deliverance Muslims* need a

yaqīn (strong faith) or *ilm-al-yaqīn* where strong faith will quell off our dilemma and ambiguity.⁴² However, a Muslim must be aware that not everything in this world can be obtained and validity by empiricism. This is because only Allah has rights whether to reveal or not to reveal the knowledge to us. Allah acts as an agent for everything that happened in this world. The Islamic Systemology proposed in this paper sounds simple and easy to be understood. However the real challenge on the appreciation and true understanding might be an issue.

Besides, truly achieving Islamic Systemology might not be an easy one; this is due to the difficulties in ones to change their way of thinking. However, to fully operationalize Islamic Systemology, ones must know the elements, (1) Allah-centred thinking, everything that happened in this world, such as our fate, natural events, our sustenance, our path of life, and events in our life all has been determined by Allah (2) rationalization and empiricism which is always based on spirit of forecast and true answer must not fully utilize in our life, for instances, doing charity might affect one's financial situation or become broke, if you are not working, you will not have something to eat and to sustain your life and are Sunnah foods reliable in preserving one's health (because some of them do not have solid scientific studies to prove its benefit) (3) limited knowledge and no true of the truth, our minds has limited knowledge due to our capabilities as low creature created by Allah and only Him knows the true of the truth.

The conceptual model and ideas of this paper not only aim to redefine the *'aqli* and *naqli* into Islamic Sytemology but also wanted to draft a separation line between Islamic thoughts and philosophy. The two words "thoughts" and "philosophy" might be similar where both of them have terminology on the process of thinking, principle, ideas, and opinion, but actually they do have different structures in area of appreciation and understanding. Al-Ghazālī, in his book of *Tabāḥfut al-Falāsifah* (The Incoherence of the Philosophers), clearly stated that philosophy is a word of game and a very confusing. It's lead us to question things over and over again and make us looking for most logical answer to satisfy ourselves and people around us. Due to

⁴² Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī and Richard Joseph McCarthy, *Deliverance from Error: An Annotated Translation of al-Munqidh min al-Dalāl* and Other Relevant Works of al-Ghazālī (Louisville: Fons Vitae, 1999).

philosophy brought by ancient Greek philosophers such as Diogenes, Xenophanes, Theodorus, and Stratos, Westerners believe they set themselves free from the religious dogma. According to Bertrand Russell in the book *The Value of Free Thought*, they are explaining how one can gain freedom from the chain of thought that engaging them by achieving freedom of way of thinking, especially on thoughts that tried to control them or enslaved by those thoughts. It is clearly pictured that religion is a dogma that tried to enslave its followers. Thus the followers must break the chain of it.

The way of thinking invented by Western should only be applied to them, not on Muslims. This is because the roots of Muslims are different from Christianity. Islam does not reject modernism. Even in al-Qur'ān, there are many scientific topics that have been discussed thoroughly, such as human terminology, the benefit of honey, disadvantage of usury and etc. Again, what needs to be done by Muslims is to look at this universe based on Islamic Systemology.

Concluding Remarks

The ultimate of objectives of this paper to promote the Islamic Systemology, a way of thoughts that based on *'aqlī* and *naqlī*. The current situation of Muslims is more weighing on using *'aqlī* rather than *naqlī* in their life. Up to some point, the minority of Muslims started to think that Islam is a backward and non-scientific religion. To make the matter worst, Islamic scientist such as Omar Cajjam or Ibn al-Khayyām, a philosophy, astronomy, a poet, and a mathematician is skeptical on the idea of the hereafter. He is also questioning why human beings created from the soil, God should be the one who carries the sins, and ultimately he opined that religion is a liar.⁴³ The questions are, do we need to adhere to *'aqlī* solely in order to achieve greater in our life? Is being associated with Islamic values and thoughts hinder Muslims to move forward? Is Allah really do not play any roles in our success and achievements? It is a question that Muslims need to ask themselves should they separate their ways from Islam. Islamic thoughts do not hinder any Muslim movements. It is Muslims who cannot attain the purest of Islamic thoughts.

⁴³ Srdjan M. Jovanovic, "Ancient Disbelievers: Notable Freethinkers and Atheists from Ancient History to the Middle Ages", in Aleksej Kisjuhas and Marko Skoric (eds.), *Ateizam i Moralni* (University of Novi Sad, 2017), 31.

By redefining *'aqli* and *naqli* into Islamic Systemology, this paper hopes to reinstate back the position of *naqli* into Muslim ways of thinking. *'aqli* and *naqli* can be presumed identical with Yin and Yang in traditional Chinese thoughts. It is a concept of dualism where both of them complementary, interconnected, and interdependent between each other. If ones not balancing one of them, it will create disharmony, imbalanced, and jeopardized the equilibrium or ecosystem of the world. For instance, there is moon and sun to balance the world, dark and light, and male and women. The Islamic Systemology of *'aqli* and *naqli* are hoping to assist Muslims in seeing the world in a better manner by not having world thinking only. Throwing away *naqli* will jeopardize one's belief towards Allah. It will destroy the system with Allah as the center of everything.

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