

Religion and Philosophy in Dialogue: Reinterpreting the Eastern Peripatetic Synthesis of Reason and Revelation

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Abstract: *This article reinterprets the Eastern Peripatetic tradition as a philosophical dialogue between religion and philosophy within Islam. The main objective of this study is to analyze how Muslim philosophers particularly al-Kindi, al-Farabi, and Ibn Sina constructed a rational system that sought harmony between reason and revelation within the Islamic intellectual framework. Using a philosophical-historical approach, this research examines classical sources and contemporary interpretations to trace the epistemological synthesis that occurred in the development of the Peripatetic school. The analysis focuses on key concepts such as the active intellect, emanation, and the hierarchy of being, and their later reinterpretations by thinkers including al-Ghazali, Ibn Rushd, and Suhrawardi. The findings show that the Eastern Peripatetic synthesis transformed Aristotelian rationalism into a distinctive Islamic epistemology that integrates reason, metaphysics, and revelation. This transformation not only shaped the philosophical foundation of Islamic thought but also offers a conceptual framework for reconciling science and religion in modern Islamic philosophy. The study concludes that the novelty of this research lies in presenting the Peripatetic school not as a static continuation of Aristotelian thought, but as a dynamic and dialogical system that continues to inform contemporary Islamic epistemology and the philosophy of education.*

Keywords: *Peripatetic, Islamic Philosophy, Metaphysics, Epistemology*

Abstrak: *Artikel ini menafsirkan kembali tradisi Peripatetik Timur sebagai dialog filosofis antara agama dan filsafat dalam Islam. Tujuan utama penelitian ini adalah menganalisis bagaimana filsuf-filsuf Muslim, khususnya al-Kindi, al-Farabi, dan Ibn Sina, membangun sistem rasional yang mencari harmoni antara akal dan wahyu dalam kerangka intelektual Islam. Dengan pendekatan filosofis-historis, penelitian ini mengkaji sumber-sumber klasik dan interpretasi kontemporer untuk melacak sintesis epistemologis yang terjadi dalam perkembangan sekolah Peripatetik. Analisis berfokus pada konsep-konsep kunci seperti akal aktif, emanasi, dan hierarki keberadaan, serta reinterpretasi mereka oleh pemikir seperti al-Ghazali, Ibn Rushd, dan Suhrawardi. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa sintesis Peripatetik Timur mengubah rasionalisme Aristotelian menjadi epistemologi Islam yang khas, yang mengintegrasikan akal, metafisika, dan*

wahyu. Transformasi ini tidak hanya membentuk dasar filosofis pemikiran Islam, tetapi juga menawarkan kerangka konseptual untuk mendamaikan sains dan agama dalam filsafat Islam modern. Studi ini menyimpulkan bahwa keunikan penelitian ini terletak pada penyajian sekolah Peripatetik bukan sebagai kelanjutan statis pemikiran Aristotelian, melainkan sebagai sistem dinamis dan dialogis yang terus mempengaruhi epistemologi Islam kontemporer dan filsafat pendidikan.

Kata kunci: Peripatetik, filsafat Islam, metafisika, epistemologi

Introduction

Islamic philosophy has a long history in building a system of thought that seeks to be a link between rationality (reason) and revelation. Since classical times, Islamic philosophy has developed in various schools and styles of thought, one of which is the peripatetic school, which is sourced from the thoughts of Aristotle and Neoplatonism. This philosophical tradition not only shaped the style of rational thinking in Islam, but also contributed to the development of science.

Muslim philosophers such as al-Farabi and Ibn Sina have a central role in formulating epistemology and metaphysics that accommodate both reason and revelation in the structure of Islamic science. The peripatetic school emphasizes the role of reason as the main instrument in obtaining knowledge, while revelation is still recognized as a source of knowledge that has transcendent authority.¹ In this view, reality is understood through a rational approach that relies on active reason as a means to achieve ultimate truth. This concept is in line with Aristotelian principles, but in its development, Muslim philosophers synthesized this thought with Islamic teachings, creating a distinctive system of philosophy in the Islamic tradition.²

The Peripatetic school, with its systematic style of rationality, became the target of sharp criticism from within Islam itself. Al-Ghazali, through his monumental work *Tahafut al-Falasifah*, shook the foundations of philosophy by "accusing" philosophers of deviating from the faith, especially in relation to the eternity of nature and inconsistencies in understanding God's knowledge and the day of resurrection. This criticism was not just a theoretical debate, but a challenge to the claim of reason as the ultimate authority of truth.

Ibn Rushd emerged not only as a champion of philosophy, but as a champion of the integration between revelation and ratio in an Islamic context that continued to grapple with the definition of orthodoxy. Meanwhile, Suhrawardi rejected the dichotomy and formulated an illuminative epistemology that placed intuition as the light of truth, not just an additional instrument, but as a radical alternative to the dominance of Peripatetic reason. This discourse proves that in Islam, philosophy is never singular: it is a battleground of ideas between interpretation and authority between reason, revelation, and spiritual experience.

¹ Khairul Fahmi dan Salminawati, "Epistemological Questions: The Relationship between Reason, Sensing, Revelation and Intuition in the Foundation of Islamic Science," *Journal of Education Research* 2024 5 : 45–50.

² Marzuki, "Logic and Islamic Philosophy," *Tambusai Journal of Education*, 2022 : 34–45.

Despite criticism and challenges, the legacy of the peripatetic school remains influential in Islamic thought to this day. In the context of modern Islamic scholarship, this philosophy still has relevance, especially in the study of the philosophy of Islamic education, the integration of science and religion, and contemporary Islamic epistemology. Peripatetic thought provides insight into how Islam can dialogue with modern science without losing its theological roots. Therefore, the study of the peripatetic school is not only historical, but also has significance in shaping the Islamic scientific paradigm in the modern era.

This article aims to analyze the contributions of Eastern Muslim philosophers in the peripatetic school, explain how this school seeks to bridge religion and philosophy, and review its relevance in contemporary Islamic studies, especially in the philosophy of education and modern Islamic epistemology. The approach applied in this study is a literature review, by examining various classical and modern sources that discuss the peripatetic school and its relevance in Islamic scientific discourse.

Systematically, this article will be organized as follows: The first part will discuss the genealogy and epistemological basis of the Paripatetic School, the second part will review the debate between philosophers who are opposed to the Peripatetic School and the third part reviews the influence of the Peripatetic School on contemporary scientific discourse .

Based on the description above, the author wants to develop several issues. First, how is the contribution of the thought of Muslim philosophers in an effort to become a bridge between reason and revelation? Second, how does the issue of the relationship between religion and philosophy develop in the Islamic philosophical tradition? Third, what is the position of philosophy with other Islamic sciences?

The study of peripatetic Islamic philosophy has previously been written by Fathul Mufid and Subaidi with the title "The First School of Islamic Philosophy Paripatetic Philosophy" discusses the early development of the peripatetic school as the first school in Islamic philosophy and discusses various scientific aspects related to Islamic philosophy.³

In line with the above study, Syarkawi also wrote with the title "The Concept of Paripatetic Philosophy and its Contribution in Islamic Philosophy". This essay discusses the view of Peripatetic Philosophy that the growth of reason and intelligence and the satisfaction of soul desires can lead humans to happiness. The purpose of this research is to investigate the idea of peripatetic philosophy and how it relates to Islamic philosophy.⁴ Hasan Bakti Nasution also greeted his research entitled "Peripatetic Mazhab (Masy-sya'iy) in Islamic Philosophy". This research discusses the "Peripatetic School (Masy-Sya'iy) in Islamic Philosophy" with a focus on its history, development, and influence in the Islamic philosophical tradition.⁵

³ Fathul Mufid, *Mazhab Pertama filsafat islam: Filsafat paripatetik* (al-Hikmah al-Massy'a'iyah), 1 ed. (goresan pena, t.t.).

⁴ Syarkawi, "The Concept of Paripatetic Philosophy and its Contribution in Islamic Philosophy," *Universal Grace Journal*, 2023 1 : 84–91.

⁵ Hasan Bakti, "Mashsha'iyah: Mazhab Awal Filsafat Islam," *Jurnal Theologia* 27, no. 1 (2016): 73–102, <https://doi.org/10.21580/teo.2016.27.1.919>.

However, these studies generally remain descriptive limited to historical mapping, conceptual outlining, and explanatory accounts of peripatetic doctrines without offering a deeper epistemological analysis of how Eastern Muslim philosophers transformed Aristotelian rationalism into an integrative framework that negotiates the relationship between reason and revelation. This gap includes the absence of a systematic reinterpretation of core Peripatetic concepts within the context of contemporary Islamic epistemology and the philosophy of education.

This paper formulates a model of Eastern Peripatetic epistemological synthesis that not only places reason and revelation in an integrative relationship, but also reconstructs the relationship between the two as a conceptual foundation that enables the renewal of the direction of Islamic epistemology and the strengthening of the philosophical basis of contemporary science.

Method

This paper uses a qualitative library research using hermeneutic interpretation. This approach is used because the object of research is the ideas and thoughts of Muslim philosophers in the East in the Peripatetic school, particularly al-Farabi and Ibn Sina, which are more appropriately analyzed through texts and written works. The primary data in this study was obtained from the original works of these philosophers, such as al-Madina al-Fadilah by al-Farabi and others, while the secondary data was obtained from modern literature in the form of books, journal articles, and previous studies relevant to the study of the Peripatetic school of thought. Data analysis in this study was conducted in two complementary stages.

First, content analysis was used to identify, classify, and interpret the main philosophical concepts related to the synthesis between reason and revelation in the corpus of Eastern Peripatetic thought. This stage involved tracing the logical structure of arguments, conceptual terminology, and epistemic assumptions contained in these texts. Second, a historical-philosophical approach is used to contextualize these concepts within the broader development of Islamic thought.

Through these two stages, the analysis moves from textual interpretation to conceptual synthesis, enabling this study to reconstruct how the Eastern Peripatetic tradition formulated a dialogical relationship between philosophy and religion that remains relevant to modern Islamic epistemology.

Result

a. Contributions of Muslim Philosophers in the East in the Peripatetic School

After coming into contact with Greek philosophy through the translation movement, Islamic philosophy developed in Persia. According to records, Aristotle's Categories, Hermeneutica, and Analytica Posteriora were translated by Abdullah bin Al-Muqaffa during the reign of Caliph Al-Manshur.⁶ Paripatetic, also known as Mashsha'iyah, comes from the Arabic مشاعی, which means "walking".

⁶ Majid Fakhry, "History of Islamic philosophy: a chronological map", (Yogyakarta: Jendela Publisher, 2001.): 33.

Peripateticism is the term used in English, where "peripatetic" means wandering or moving. The Greek word *peripatein*, which means to walk around, can also be used with this term. Since Aristotle often walked around while teaching, this stream (flow) was given the term wandering or walking.⁷ In addition, it is connected to the Peripatos corner of the sports hall in Athens.⁸ There are two ways to interpret the meaning of *mashsha'iyah*: ontology and methodology.

Muslim philosophers adopted the Peripatetic approach to explain metaphysical and epistemological concepts in Islam. They emphasized that reason and revelation are not contradictory, but rather complement each other in the search for truth. This approach later became the foundation for the classical Islamic philosophical tradition and remains relevant to contemporary philosophical debates on the relationship between rationality and spirituality.⁹

The ontological school of *Mashsha'iyah* combines Aristotle's and Neoplatonic philosophy with Islamic beliefs.¹⁰ Subsequently written Islamic Intellectuals. In addition, Plotinus' thought was also influential, combining with the concept of revelation in Islam.¹¹ Thus, in Islam, the term "peripatetics" refers to Platonism and Neo-Platonism in addition to Aristotle. In order for the school to take a complete form, the philosophers Iransyahri, al-Kindi, al-Farabi, Abu Sulayman al-Sijistani, and Ibn Sina refined their ideas.¹² In Islamic philosophy Paripatetism was introduced by al-Farabi or known as *al Mua'allim Tsani*.¹³

In the context of contemporary theory, the Peripatetic approach can be understood through the theory of hierarchical rationality, in which reason is positioned as an instrument for understanding metaphysical reality without negating the divine dimension. The idea of synthesizing reason and revelation intersects with Fazlur Rahman's thinking, which emphasizes that rationality is an integral part of reading revelation, so that religion and philosophy cannot be separated from the human intellectual process. Thus, the Peripatetic framework remains an integrative epistemological model that can bridge the discourse of classical Islamic philosophy and modern intellectual needs.¹⁴

Al-Farabi's idea of active reason (al-'aql al-fa'al), for example, can be equated with the concept of agent intellect in modern philosophy of mind, which explains the connection between human consciousness and the source of universal knowledge.

⁷ Amroeni Drajat, "A Critique of Peripatetic Philosophy", 1 ed. (Lembaga Pengkajian Islam dan Sosial LKIS, 2005), 75.

⁸ M. Said Shaykh, "Dictionary of Islamic Philosophy", transl. Machnun Husein (Jakarta: Rajawali, 1991), 154.

⁹ Oliver Leaman, "An Introduction to Classical Islamic Philosophy", (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002) : 87-102.

¹⁰ Seyyed Hossein Nasr, "Intellectual Islam; Theology, Philosophy and Gnosis", trans. Suharsono & Djamaruddin MZ (Jakarta: Pustaka Belajar, 1996), 33.

¹¹ Seyyed Hossein Nasr, "Islamic Spirituality: Manifestations, World Spirituality", vol. 20 (New York Crossroad, 1991), 44.

¹² Sayyed Hossein Nasr, "Three Islamic Thinkers; Ibn Sina, Suhrawardi, Ibn Arabi", (Jakarta: Risalah, 1985), 3 .

¹³ Majid Fakhry, "A Short Introduction to Islamic Philosophy, Theology and Mysticism, " (Bandung: Mizan, 2002) : 100.

¹⁴ Fazlur Rahman, "Islam and Modernity: Transformation of an Intellectual Tradition", (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982): 6-14.

Meanwhile, the Paripatetic effort to integrate reason and revelation has parallels with the contemporary theory of “critical faith rationality,” developed by John Cottingham and Seyyed Hossein Nasr, namely the view that rationality and spirituality are two epistemic sides that reinforce each other.¹⁵

By adopting this perspective, the Peripatetic school can be positioned as an early model of integrative epistemology in Islamic philosophy—a framework that combines deductive rationality, spiritual illumination, and revelatory authority into a single, coherent system of knowledge. In the context of modern Islamic philosophy, this framework forms the basis for the ideas of the Islamization of knowledge and the integration of science and religion, which have been developed by thinkers such as Syed Naquib al-Attas and Mulla Sadra.¹⁶

Muslim philosophers adopted the Paripatetic approach to explain the concepts of metaphysics and epistemology in Islam. They emphasized that reason and revelation are not contradictory, but complementary in the search for truth. Al-Farabi, for example, developed a theory of "active reason" that explains how humans can achieve knowledge through an intellectual process guided by revelation.¹⁷

1. Al-Kindi: Pioneer of Islamic Philosophy

Al-Kindi is a stage name or the name by which he is more popularly known, whose full name is Abu Yusuf Ya'qub Ibn Ishaq Ibn al-Shabbah Ibn 'Imran Ibn Muhammad Ibn al-Ash'as Ibn Qais al-Kindi. Al-Kindi is known as the first philosopher to introduce philosophy to Islam and pioneered the use of Arabic in the study of philosophy and science, similar to how Descartes used French in his thought, although both differed in period, style of thought and scope of discussion. Al-Kindi is considered the first Muslim Arab to study and become an expert in Greek philosophy. In his book *Tabaqat al-Umam*, al-Qadhi Sa'id al-Andalusi says that Ya'qub (al-Kindi) is the only other famous Islamic philosopher.¹⁸ Similarly, Jamaluddin al-Qafati expressed his views on al-Kindi by calling him an "Arab philosopher."

One of al-Kindi's main focuses was his attempt at reconciling Islam with philosophy. Furthermore, by emphasizing that the universe is God's creation, which came into being from nothing and will return to nothing - a concept known as creation ex nihilo - he corrected the ideas of Greek thinkers such as Aristotle and Plato regarding the eternity of nature.

Al-Kindi's writings on the Greek philosophical heritage show his interest in the ideas of Aristotle and Plato. In many of his works, he frequently referred to these two philosophers. Despite his limitations in the Greek language, al-Kindi was able to study Aristotle's great works through available translations, including the *Metaphysics*, which

¹⁵ John Cottingham, “The Rationality of Religious Belief: A Critique of Pure Faith and Pure Reason,” *Religious Studies* 56, no. 3 (2020): 347–64, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0034412520000028>.

¹⁶ M. Kamal Hassan, “*The Integration of Knowledge and the Islamization of the Mindset*,” *Intellectual Discourse* 29, no. 1 (2021): 1–20.

¹⁷ Ibrahim, *The Synergy of Reason and Revelation in the Philosophy of Islamic Peripateticism*, 1, vol. 2 (2023): 1–10.

¹⁸ Al-Qadhi Shaid Al-Andalūsī, *Tabaqat Al-Umam* (Cairo, t.t.) : 81.

he later commented on. He also wrote commentaries on other works of Aristotle such as *De Caelio*. In addition, he also had a copy of Aristotle's dialogue titled *Eudemus*.¹⁹

Al-Kindi's passion in studying and delving into philosophy shows his strong determination to introduce Greek philosophy to Arabic speakers. Furthermore, according to al-Kindi, the highest branch of philosophy is the philosophy of divinity, because the discussion of God is considered the most important. It is not surprising that his thinking was influenced by the Mu'tazilah school, which emphasizes the use of reason and refers to the Qur'an in discussing divine issues, while also getting an impact from Greek philosophy.²⁰

The first Islamic philosopher to put forward a logical philosophical argument about God was Al-Kindi. He used the al-Haudust argument, also known as the novelty argument, to prove the existence of God. Al-Kindi argued that anything finite cannot have an infinite beginning because the universe, no matter how large, is finite. In other words, nature needs a starting point in time. The universe must begin at a certain time regardless of how far it can be traced back, and it is impossible to go back in time indefinitely or *tasalsul*.²¹

Al-Kindi is known for his efforts in adapting and integrating the Greek philosophical tradition into Islamic thought, a project referred to as the "Arabization" of philosophy. He utilized ancient philosophy and science as tools in ideological debates against conservative groups. In response, the conservatives counterattacked by relying on the gnosis-irfan tradition encapsulated in the teachings of Sufism as well as the revealed laws embodied in the science of fiqh, although these two approaches were often at odds with each other.²²

Al-Kindi's greatest contribution also lies in his work in philosophy, which made him a pioneer in the dissemination of Greek philosophy, particularly the thought of Aristotle and Neo-Platonism, to Islam. However, al-Kindi did not simply accept these ideas in their entirety, rather he adapted them to Islamic principles through modification and renewal of thought.²³

Among al-Kindi's works in philosophy are: "al-Falsafah al-Ūlā, al-Falsafah al-Dākhilah, al-Bahts 'ala Ta'allum al-Falsafah, Fi Qasd Aristū fī al-Maqālāt, Kammiyāt Kutub Aristū, fī al-Hudūd al-Ashyā', Aqsām Ilm al-Ilāhī, Māhiyah al-Ilm wa Aqsāmuhi, Risālah fī Māhiyah al-'Aql and others." Al-Kindi wrote various philosophical treatises on the rational sciences as part of his efforts to spread philosophical thought. He deliberately kept his writings short and easy to understand in order to make them accessible to a wide range of people, both laymen and intellectuals. In his works, he expressed a rational view of nature and human beings, while maintaining and respecting the teachings of Islam. In

¹⁹ Hasan Basri, "Islamic Philosophy", (Directorate General of Islamic Education, Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, 2013.) : 36.

²⁰ Havis Aravik dan Hoirul Amri, "Menguak Hal-Hal Penting Dalam Pemikiran Filsafat al-Kindi," *Salam: Jurnal Sosial dan Budaya Syar-i* 6, no. 2 (2019): 191–206, <https://doi.org/10.15408/sjsbs.v6i2.11228>.

²¹ Zaprulkhan, "Islamic Philosophy: A Thematic Study" (Jakarta: Raja Grafindo Persada, 2014) : 26.

²² Ahmad Baso, "Al Jabiri, Europe and Us Dialogue on Islamic Methodology for the World", (Jakarta: Pustaka Afid, 2018) : 117.

²³ Klein Franke, "Al-Kindi, in History of Islamic Philosophy", Ed Seyyed Hosein Nasr and Oliver Leaman (t.t.).

addition, he also confronts the fuqaha, who he believes are a group that is far from the ultimate truth.²⁴

Based on the above description, it can be concluded that al-Kindi had several contributions:

-Arabization of Greek Philosophy

Al-Kindi is known as a figure who translated and developed Greek philosophical thought, especially Aristotle and Plotinus, into Arabic. He was a key figure in the Bayt al-Hikmah (House of Wisdom) initiative based in Baghdad, which developed into a center for translating Greek literary works into Arabic. Al-Kindi refused to merely be a successor to Greek thought; he Islamized these rational ideas by linking them to the concepts of monotheism and the creation of the universe. This process made philosophy no longer the exclusive domain of the Greek world, but an integral part of the scientific heritage of Islam.²⁵

-Reconciling Philosophy and Religion

Al-Kindi sought to harmonize Islamic teachings with philosophy. He argued that since philosophy and revelation both aim to discover the truth, they are not mutually exclusive. He asserted that the Qur'ān also presents more convincing truths, and that philosophy is the science of truth. Al-Kindi argued that philosophy should not contradict religion, because both are rooted in the same God as the source of absolute truth. Al-Kindi's epistemology "bridges philosophy and religion by placing revelation as the highest truth while allowing reason to act as its rational interpreter," demonstrating a balance between faith and rationality in the Islamic philosophical system.²⁶

-Metaphysical Thoughts and the Concept of God

In the field of metaphysics, al-Kindi emphasized the concept of *creatio ex nihilo* (creation from nothingness), which rejected the Greek idea of the eternity of nature. For him, everything that is finite must have a beginning, so the existence of the universe necessitates the existence of an infinite first cause namely, God. Through the argument of al-huduth or the argument of contingency, al-Kindi established a theological basis for Islamic philosophy that affirms the dependence of the universe's existence on God. In *Fi al-Falsafa al-Ula* (First Philosophy), Al-Kindi discussed the concept of God as "First Truth" and "First Cause". He also supported the concept of creation *ex nihilo* (creation from nothing), which differed from Aristotle's view of the eternity of nature. Al-Kindi not only adopted Greek philosophy, but also corrected it with the foundation of monotheism. With this thinking, al-Kindi asserted that philosophical truth cannot be separated from theological truth.²⁷

²⁴ Alkindi, "al-Falsafatul Ula, in *Rasail al-Kindi al-Falsafiyah*., Ed Abdul Hadi Abu Raidah", (Cairo, 1950) : 102.

²⁵ Harda Armayanto dkk., "Al-Kindī's Metaphysics: The Integration Of Greek Philosophy In Islamic Philosophy," *Kanz Philosophia: A Journal for Islamic Philosophy and Mysticism* 11, no. 1 (2025): 89–104, <https://doi.org/10.20871/kpjpm.v11i1.410>.

²⁶ Sarpini, "The Epistemology of Abu Yusuf Ya'qub bin Ishaq Al-Kindi (Philosophy and Religion)," *Islamic Studies Jurnal* 2, no. 1 (2023), <https://doi.org/10.24090/isj.v2i1.7188>.

²⁷ Muhammad Nurush Shobah dan Salman al-Farizi, "Philosophical Arguments for the Cosmology of Creation: Al-Kindi's Response to Western Philosophical Views," *Jurnal Kaca: Jurnal Dialogis Ilmu Ushuluddin*, 14, no. 2 (2022), <https://doi.org/10.36781/kaca.v14i2.631>.

2. Al-Farabi

Al-Farabi holds a unique place in the annals of Muslim philosophy. His ideas continue to influence subsequent itinerant philosophy. He was praised by Massignon as the first Muslim philosopher whose thoughts were of great significance. In fact, Ibn Khalkan lauded him as a Muslim philosopher of unparalleled scholarship.²⁸ Al-Farabi was an Islamic thinker who was highly skilled in interpreting Greek philosophy.

Although he most likely did not master the Greek language, he had a deep understanding of the thoughts of philosophers such as Plato, Aristotle, and Plotinus. As with other Muslim philosophers, Al-Farabi's philosophical thinking was influenced by Plato as seen in his thoughts on the social class structure in society. Before getting to know more about al-Farabi's thought we will discuss a brief biography of the *Mu'allim al-Tsāni*.

Al-Farabi's brief biography

His real name is Abu Nasr Muhammad Bin Muhammad Bin Lharkhan ibn Uzalagh al-Farabi, born in the city of Wesij in 259H/872. Al-Farabi's father is thought to have had Persian heritage or origin, although his great-grandfather's name implies Turkish descent. Meanwhile, his mother was also Persian. His mother's occupation is unknown, but his father was a civil servant in the royal military. Due to his diverse family background, Al-Farabian can be said to have both Persian and Turkish identities.²⁹

Al-Farabi had an enormous contribution to make in that he had managed to reconstitute Aristotle's original framework of Logic (manthiq). If Aristotle is known as the "first master" for his services in developing logic, then Al-Farabi, he is known as the "second master" (al-mu'allim ats-tsāni) for his ability to combine the ideas of Plato and Aristotle. Al-Farabi was dubbed the "second master" for two reasons: first, his mastery of logic (manthiq), which was the basis for many other fields, particularly philosophy and logic, that had been established by Aristotle. Secondly, after the Greek philosophers who were able to reconcile the ideas of Aristotle and the Neo-Platonists, al Farabi was the best philosopher. Third, he was very good at organizing philosophical information into patterns that were easy for others to learn later on.³⁰

In Ārā' Ahl al-Madīnah al-Fadhlīyah, al-Farabi outlines his philosophical views on creation, beginning his discussion of God as the first cause. This reflects his earnestness in uncovering metaphysical thought, where God is seen as the ultimate source of the universe's many things.³¹ Al-Farabi's philosophical ideas developed beautifully, especially in the fields of logic (manthiq) and philosophy, bridging the gap between Greek and Islamic philosophy.

As a result, he became known as al-mu'allim ats-tsāni (the second teacher). He is believed to have studied logic in Baghdad under Christian philosophers such as Abu Bisir Matta (d. 940 CE) and Yuhanna ibn Hailan (d. 910 CE). It should be noted that at that

²⁸ Ahmad Halim Mahmud, "at-Tafkīr al-Falsaf al-Islam", (Cairo: Dār al-Ma'ārif, t.t.): 237.

²⁹ Munawir Sjadjali, "Islam and State Administration": Teachings, History and Thought (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1990): 49.

³⁰ Irfan A.N., "The Entry of Elements of Speculative Thought in Islam: A Study of al-Farabi's Logic and Metaphysics," *Journal of Middle Eastern Studies, CMES*, vol. 7 (2024): 177.

³¹ Daulisi Uliri, "Al-Fikr Al-'Arabiy Wa Makānuhū Fī at-Tārīkh", (Cairo: Ālam al-Kutub, 1961): 167.

time, Baghdad was the main center of the Alexandrian tradition of philosophy and medicine.³²

In addition to the above contributions, Al-Farabi also contributed to the political field, especially in terms of the ideal state (al-Madīnah al-Fāḍilah). Plato's idea of the state, which compares it to the many parts of the human body, had an impact on Al-Farabi's ideas, where each part has its own function. According to him, the head is the highest part of the human body because it acts as the control center of all actions, while the work of the brain itself is controlled by the heart.³³

The discussion of the Ideal State begins with an explanation of the origins of the state. According to Al-Farabi, the state emerges from a group of individuals who need each other to fulfill their needs, which is the origin of the state. He argues that the state is formed based on mutual agreement among people who work together to fulfill their respective needs. Each individual has different skills, but they are committed to using their skills for the common good in order to achieve the ultimate goal of happiness. Al-Farabi mentions in his book *Ārā' Ahl al-Madīnah al-Fāḍilah*

"Every human being naturally needs each other in his community to fulfill his many needs, so he will not be able to solve everything individually, but he needs the Kaum to solve every problem."³⁴

Al-Farabi was also a prolific scholar, among his important works are *Risālah Tahsīl al-Sā'adah*, *At-Ta'līqāt*, *al-Jam'u Bainā Ra'yu al-Hākimain*, *al-Siyāsāt al-Madīnah al-Fadhīlah*, *Risālah al-Ithbāt al-Mufāraqāt*, *'Uyūn al-Masā'il*, *al-Madīnah al-Fadhīlah*, *al-Mūsiqā al-Kabīr*, *Ārā' Ahl al-Madīnah al-Fadhīlah*".

3. Ibn Sina

Ibn Sina was also an Eastern Muslim philosopher who influenced the development of the parathetic school of philosophy that marked the peak of Islamic philosophy. Abu Ali al-Husein bin Abdulah Ibn Sina, a famous judge with the title al-Syeikh al-Ra'is, his full name. He was born in the village of Afshanah, near the Bukhara region, in 370 AH, or 980 AD. By the age of ten, he had memorized the Qur'an. He also studied literature, learned some of the basics of Islam, and mastered logic and mathematics.³⁵

Ibn Sina is famous for his earnestness in studying his day is used to earn a living and his night is used to meditate on Allah subhanahu Wa ta'ala. So that many works produced by Ibn Sina in the course of his life. Call it the Book of Asy-Syifa. This book is the most important philosophical work written by Ibn Sina and is divided into four main aspects: "logic, mathematics, physics, and metaphysics (divine science)."³⁶

³² Qosim Nurseha Dzulhadi, "Al-Farabi and the Philosophy of Prophethood," *Kalimah Journal*, Vol, 12 (Maret 2014): 125.

³³ Hayimsyah Nasution, "Islamic Philosophy" (Jakarta: Gaya Media Pratama, 2002): 41.

³⁴ Al Farabi, "Ārā' Ahl al-Madīnah al-Fāḍilah", (Beirut: Dār al-Masyriq, 2002): 118.

³⁵ Muhammad Kamil al-Hurri, "Ibn Sina Hayatuhu Atsaruhu wa Falsafatuhu", (Beirut: Dar al-Kitab al-'Islamiyah, 1991): 10.

³⁶ Isnainiyah Isnainiyah dan Sofyan Sauri, "Kriteria Kebenaran dan Sikap Ilmiah Ibnu Sina Sebagai Ilmuwan Muslim di Abad Pertengahan," *Aqlania* 12, no. 2 (2021): 199, <https://doi.org/10.32678/aqlania.v12i2.3615>.

To facilitate understanding of the critical analysis and comparison of the thoughts of Al-Kindi, Al-Farabi, and Ibn Sina, please refer to the following table.

Aspect	Al-Kindi	Al-Farabi	Ibn Sina	Critical Analysis
Metaphysics and Ontology	Criticism Focused on rational proof of God and introduction to Greek philosophy; metaphysics not yet systematic	Established hierarchy of intellect & emanation; religion placed as political symbol	Distinction between essence and existence; theory of Necessary Being; highly complex ontological system.	Al-Kindi was a pioneer, but lacked systematicity; Al-Farabi bridged religion and philosophy with a hierarchy; Ibn Sina was the most mature but sparked major theological criticism.
Epistemology	Reason as a means of understanding revelation; rejecting the contradiction between reason and revelation	Philosophy for the elite, religion for the masses; revelation is considered symbolic	Reason is autonomous in metaphysics, revelation is understood through rational prophetic theory	Differences show the dynamics of the synthesis of reason and revelation: Al-Kindi is apologetic, Al-Farabi is pragmatic, Ibn Sina is systematic but controversial
Methods and Logic	Fragmentary essays; adaptation of Greek logic	Systematic, classification of science, language theory & political logic	Analytical, encyclopedic, highly detailed logic	There is progressiveness: from the pioneering work of Al-Kindi the systematization of Al-Farabi to the peak of Ibn Sina's system
Politics and Ethics	Minimal; more focused on natural philosophy and theology	Al-Madīnah al-Fāḍilah: philosophy as leader, religion as social media	Politics is not dominant; more focused on prophetic theory and ideal society.	Al-Farabi provides a political basis for the harmonization of religion and philosophy; Ibn Sina is more focused on normative metaphysics
Main Criticism	More apologetic than systematic	Elitist: subordination of religion philosophy; problem of legitimacy of authority	Complex, sometimes diminishing the role of normative revelation; opposed by theologians	This criticism is important for a critical reading of the relationship between religion and philosophy in the contemporary

This voluminous work consists of eighteen volumes and is considered a major encyclopedia of philosophy. Through this book, Ibn Sina achieved high recognition in both the Islamic and Western worlds. The work represents an 11th-century Islamic-Greek encyclopedia of knowledge, spanning from logic to metaphysics. In addition, we also have *Qanun fi at-Tiib*, which contains medical science that was very popular among European society and European students until the end of the 17th century.

b. The Issue of the Relationship between Religion and Philosophy

Philosophy and religion basically have various differences, however, philosophy and religion both have the aim of achieving truth. Religion is based on belief without eliminating reason, philosophy is based on a question or doubt about something. This difference is what makes various perspectives from philosophers.

Al-Kindi argued that philosophy and religion should not contradict each other, because both have the same goal, namely seeking truth and goodness. Therefore, they need to be reconciled. Three main principles underlie the harmony between philosophy and religion: first, religion is a component of philosophy; second, the prophetic word and philosophical truth are identical; and third, religious goals are in harmony with logical principles. According to Al-Kindi, philosophy is the study of all aspects of truth to the best of human ability.³⁷

Thus, according to Azad and al-Kindi concurred with him-human reason must be regarded as an auxiliary tool, albeit a very important one, for revelation to function in the life of the individual and society. Reason is an ally of faith. Tillich's words as if they were from al-Kindi: "Reason does not reject revelation. It asks for it, because revelation means the reunification of reason." Thus, philosophy (reason) and religion (revelation) are likened to two travelers walking towards the same destination: revelation is the guide, while reason follows. Both are in perfect harmony. They do not contradict each other, for if they did, it would be disastrous for both. Reason without revelation would lose its direction, and revelation without reason would lose its important function, as there would be nothing to be guided by it.

Al-Kindi formulated a harmonious relationship between religion and philosophy, placing them as two paths that lead to the same goal, the search for truth. The truth in question is valid knowledge about God, man and the universe. According to him, the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad and the revelations revealed by God are in accordance with rational principles. Only those who reject the role of reason oppose these rational standards.³⁸

In Islam, philosophical thinking is not just allowed, it is strongly encouraged and even commanded. Al-Kindi realized this, although he did not give it enough emphasis. In fact, this idea can be a strong foundation in bridging philosophy and religion. With this approach, al-Kindi could have been more effective in responding to criticism from those

³⁷ Kamaluddin Kamaluddin, "Al-Kindi: Filsafat Agama dan An-Nafs," *Aqlania* 12, no. 1 (2021): 95, <https://doi.org/10.32678/aqlania.v12i1.4392>.

³⁸ Khaeruddin Khaeruddin, "Kontribusi Al-Kindi Dalam Peradaban Islam Dan Dunia (809 – 861 M)," *Tajdid: Jurnal Pemikiran Keislaman dan Kemanusiaan*, 9, no. 1 (2025): 420–32, <https://doi.org/10.52266/tajid.v9i1.3465>.

who regarded philosophy as heresy and accused philosophers of being innovators who only argued to defend their erroneous views, in order to gain power and use religion for personal gain.³⁹

The Qur'an is essentially inductive in nature, not simply providing ready-made rules for various conditions, but rather inviting its readers to develop a critical mindset and conduct empirical research. The Qur'an encourages its followers to explore the world, observe phenomena and draw their own conclusions.

According to al-Kindi, prophethood and philosophy are two different paths to truth. He distinguished between them in four aspects. First, one must undergo a long process of learning and training to become a philosopher, whereas prophethood is given directly by God. Second, a philosopher has to seek the truth by his own efforts-with great difficulty-whereas a prophet receives the truth through revelation from God. Third, the prophet's understanding, because it comes from divine revelation, is clearer and more comprehensive than that of philosophy. Fourthly, the way in which the prophet conveys this understanding to the people is superior to that used by philosophers. Therefore, al-Kindi concludes that the prophet is superior in terms of ease and certainty in receiving the truth as well as in the way it is conveyed. However, an important implication of his view is that the content of knowledge of prophets and philosophers is essentially the same.

In addition to al-Kindi, a Muslim philosopher Ibn Rushd also paid attention to the issue of the relationship between philosophy and religion, he built a reform of the relationship between religion and philosophy by basing himself on his own reasoning methodology which later aimed to invite virtue and glory. Ibn Rushd's broad and completely universal view is one of his interesting characteristics. He strongly believes in a perspective that views the components as a totality.

This method of thought has mathematical characteristics that make it possible to escape the influence of the polemics of kalam science and the problem of harmonizing religion and reason. Among the famous scholars discussing how the fallacy of philosophers is imam al-Ghazali, he argues that this philosophy can endanger the aqidah of Muslims. So there is a work that aims to explain the various fallacies expressed by philosophers. The book was later named *Tahafut al-Falasifah*. The fallacies include,⁴⁰

First, about the qadiman of nature. Philosophers believe that nature is eternal and always exists temporally with God, meaning that it occurs simultaneously as a result of God's presence, according to al-Ghazali. They likened it to the relationship between effect and cause or like sunlight and the sun itself.

Second, God does not know things that are juz'iyat. Al-Ghazali divided the philosophers' opinions about God's knowledge into two groups. The first group argues that God does not know anything except Himself and only knows Himself. According to the second group, which includes Ibn Sina, God knows everything that exists outside Himself, but this knowledge is *kulli* and universal (time-bound). Scholars argue that insight depends on the object. If the object of knowledge changes, then the knower must

³⁹ Dwi Ayu Angraini, "Harmonization or Harmony, Al-Kindi, Philosophy and Religion," *Journal of Islamic Thought and Philosophy* 2, no. 1 (2023): 1–19, <https://doi.org/10.15642/jitp.2023.2.1.1-19>.

⁴⁰ Al Ghazali, "Kerancuan Filsafat (*Tahafut al-Falasifah*) terj. Achmad Maimun", 1 ed. (Yogyakarta: Grup Relasi Inti Media, 2015): 219.

also change. Therefore, if God knows the particulars (juz'iyat) that are constantly changing, it means that God is also changing, which according to them is impossible.

Thirdly, regarding the resurrection of the body, according to the philosophers, the soul lives on in a state of indescribable bliss after the body dies and the misery experienced by humans can be so great that it is difficult to describe because it is so intense. Sometimes, the suffering is eternal, but other times it gradually dissipates over time. In terms of levels of misery and happiness, humans are divided into countless groups. This is similar to their differences in the levels of worldly life and enjoyment, which are also infinitely diverse. Thus, a pure and perfect Soul is the only one who can taste eternal pleasure. An imperfect and impure soul is destined to suffer forever. For impure but perfect souls, temporary suffering is natural.⁴¹

In Ibn Rushd's view, philosophers are not against religion as alleged by Al Ghazali because philosophers are not allowed to talk and argue about the doctrinal principles of religion because each discipline has its own basic principles of thinking and epistemology. And it is a must for every reviewer of one discipline to accept and be bound by the scope of the basic principles that each has with an attitude of denying or justifying these principles. Moreover, it is a Sharia discipline. This is where Al Ghazali in Ibn Rushd's view does not comply with the rules of this principle. He directly attacks philosophers without mentioning the epistemological principles that motivate them to believe in certain doctrines or teachings.⁴²

Ibn Rushd stated that "there is no conflict between religion and philosophy, on the contrary, philosophy is a loyal friend of religion and a sibling with it (al-Hikmah hiya shahibu ash-Shari'ah wa al-Ukhtu al-Radhi'ah)".⁴³ Everything will lead to the same goal, namely achieving perfection, if each stands alone with its own set of methodological logic and epistemological principles, glory and truth. One truth will not contradict the other, but they will support and reinforce each other.⁴⁴

Then what about people who contradict philosophy and religion or call their respective purposes different and contradictory? Ibn Rushd argues that these people do not understand the principles that are the basis of the two disciplines. If at first sight it appears as a difference or even a contradiction, then it is more often due to misinterpretation and ignorance. The methods used to adjust and overcome them are according to the level of understanding of the layman because the purpose of religion is for all mankind. In particular, the approaches used are the dialectical approach (jadaliyah), the persuasion approach (iqna'iyah), and the rhetorical approach (khitabiyah).⁴⁵ But instead of rejecting scientific and logical processes, religion promotes them. Call it the method of takwil or rational interpretation.

So it is clear that Ibn Rushd's project provides a new perspective that is unique and logical because it can cover aspects of rationality in both philosophy and religion,

⁴¹ Hasyimsyah Nasution, *Op. Cit.* 86.

⁴² Ahmad Baso, "Al Jabiri, Europe and Us Dialogue on Islamic Methodology for the World" (Jakarta: Pustaka Afid, 2018: 314).

⁴³ Ibnu Rusyd, "Fashlu al-Maqal wa Taqrir ma Bain al-Syari'ati wa al-Hikmati mina al-Ittishal", terj. Ahmad Fadhil, (Bandung: Srikandi Empat Widya Utama, 2024): 210.

⁴⁴ Ahmad Baso, *Op. Cit.* 319

⁴⁵ Ibn Rushd, *Op. Cit.* 28

especially regarding the relationship between the two. On the other hand, religious rationality is based on the principles and goals set by the bearers of sharia. In the field of religious sciences, the concept of the goals and purposes of sharia is analogous to the laws of cause and effect in nature in philosophy.

c. The Position of Philosophy in Islamic Scholarship and Contemporary Scholarship

The Paripatetic heritage can be seen as the historical foundation for dialogue between science and religion. Al-Farabi emphasized the importance of revelation as a pedagogical medium, while reason performs the function of reasoning in understanding metaphysical reality. Ibn Sina went further by distinguishing between essence and existence, which shows that reason has the capacity to understand the structure of reality while affirming the existence of God as a Necessary Being. This view is relevant to modern discourse, where the relationship between science and religion is often positioned dichotomously.

The dialogue between science and religion can be reconciled through an orientation towards the common good, which is in line with the principle of maslahah in Islam.⁴⁶ This reinforces that the Peripatetic heritage is still relevant for building an integrative paradigm between science and religion in the contemporary era.

The development of modern technology raises complex ethical problems, ranging from issues of privacy and artificial intelligence to biotechnology. In this regard, Peripatetic thinking can provide a normative framework. Al-Farabi, through the concept of madīnah al-fādilah, asserts that science and knowledge should be directed towards social welfare, not merely practical interests or power. Ibn Sina emphasizes that the goal of science is happiness and the perfection of reason, so that moral aspects cannot be separated from technological development. Recent research confirms that the dialectic of faith and reason can be a normative basis for formulating the ethics of science and technology.

As stated by Rahmat Hidayat, “faith and reason are not two opposing poles, but two instruments that reinforce each other in understanding reality”.⁴⁷ Within this framework, the Peripatetic tradition teaches that technological progress must be subject to ethical orientation, not merely instrumental rationality.

In addition, one of the significant contributions of the Paripatetic tradition is its success in adopting, filtering, and developing Greek philosophy within the framework of Islam. This shows that the transmission of knowledge is not passive, but active and creative. This context is highly relevant to contemporary debates on the decolonization of knowledge, where criticism has been raised against the dominance of Western epistemology in education and research.

⁴⁶ Aulia Shifa Hamida dkk., “Reconciling Science And Religion Based On The Common Good: Remedy For Islamic Fundamentalism And Path Toward Democracy,” *Al-A’raf: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam dan Filsafat* 18, no. 2 (2021): 281–306, <https://doi.org/10.22515/ajpif.v18i2.4408>.

⁴⁷ Andi Malaka dkk., “Dialogue between the Philosophy of Religion and Science: Dialectics Between Faith and Reason,” *Socio Politica : Jurnal Ilmiah Jurusan Sosiologi* 15, no. 1 (2025): 81–92, <https://doi.org/10.15575/socio-politica.v15i1.43157>.

Halim Rane emphasizes that “Islamic decolonial practices not only reject Western epistemic domination, but also build a new scientific basis through the integration of revelatory sources, traditions, and local experiences.”⁴⁸ Thus, the Peripatetic tradition can serve as a model for efforts to decolonize knowledge in the modern era: not merely replacing the dominant narrative, but building an epistemic synthesis rooted in tradition while remaining open to universal rationality.

The influence of the peripatetic school can also be seen in contemporary scholarship, such as:

- Integration of science and ethics. In the Peripatetic framework, science must always be directed towards universal benefits. In the context of digitalization, when technology is developing rapidly and brings broad social impacts such as artificial intelligence, genetic engineering, and digital data, the integration between science and ethics becomes increasingly urgent. Without moral control, technological innovation has the potential to cause dehumanization, social inequality, and ecological crisis. The Peripatetic approach that bridges rationality and normative values offers an epistemological model that is not only methodologically objective, but also ethically reflective.⁴⁹
- Development of scientific methodology. The Peripatetic rationalistic approach has influenced the development of scientific research methodologies, including in education and technology, by emphasizing the importance of logic and critical analysis.
- The foundation for the integration of science and religion. This school acts as a conceptual bridge between science and religion, avoiding the dichotomy between rationality and faith. It offers an integrative framework, where science is not merely descriptive and technical, but also aimed at moral and spiritual goals. In this context, Paripatetics provides philosophical legitimacy for the development of science in Islamic civilization without having to abandon its religious foundations. This approach not only strengthens the autonomy of reason in science, but also maintains the integrity of revelation as normative guidance in human life.⁵⁰

d. Conclusion

The Eastern Peripatetic philosophers developed a distinctive framework in which reason and revelation function not as opposing epistemic forces but as complementary paths toward truth. These contributions represent more than historical continuity they form an epistemological architecture that integrates metaphysics, ethics, and rational inquiry within an Islamic worldview.

⁴⁸ Halim Rane dkk., “Mobilising a Decolonial–Islamic Praxis: Covenants in Islam and Muslim–Indigenous Relations,” *Religions* 15, no. 3 (2024): 365, <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel15030365>.

⁴⁹ Adinda Rizkiningrum dkk., “The Relevance of Philosophy in the Age of Technology: An Exploration of Ethics and Morality in Artificial Intelligence Development,” *Humanities* 1, no. 1 (2024): 13–19.

⁵⁰ Fathurrahman Djamil, “Epistemological Foundations of Islamic Philosophy: A Study of the Paripatetic School,” *Philosophy* 33, no. 1 (2023): 57–70.

The relevance of this intellectual legacy extends into contemporary debates in philosophy. The Peripatetic synthesis offers a conceptual foundation for dialogue between science and religion, providing an alternative to the rigid secular–sacred dichotomy in modern epistemology. As a theoretical contribution, this study proposes the epistemic triad of reason–revelation–intuition, where reason functions as a critical and analytical instrument, revelation provides normative and metaphysical orientation, and intuition serves as a creative bridge to transcendent knowledge.

Therefore, this study contributes to understanding the distinctive synthesis between reason and revelation in Eastern Islamic philosophy, and demonstrates its continued relevance for strengthening contemporary philosophical discourse and constructing integrative frameworks for modern scientific inquiry.

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