



Conceptual Thoughts of Science and Religion Perspective of Zakaria Ar-Razi

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Abstract: This paper will discuss one Muslim philosopher who has a strong identity as a Muslim philosopher. He is Zakaria Ar-Razi, in this paper, we will discuss Ar-Razi's biography, his works, and his thoughts. One of Ar-Razi's roles in the development of Islamic philosophy is to give a special style to Islamic philosophy regarding the concept of prophecy which has never been discussed in previous philosophies. This research is library research or called library research. The research method contains theories that are relevant to research problems. Ar-Razi is a Muslim scientist and philosopher who has made major contributions to the world of philosophy. Ar-Razi with his naturalistic rational view is also a strong identity about the existence of Islamic philosophy. His ideas on the concept of humans and humanity both physically and psychologically as well as his belief in reason in humans as individuals or groups of social beings led Ar-Razi to the naturalism discourse space. The strong identity conveyed by Ar-Razi is not to reject theological or metaphysical foundations regarding the existence of God, because Ar-Razi himself is still a Muslim who believes in the power of Allah SWT. However, this identity is more to Ar-Razi's efforts to reach the truth using a rationalist and philosophical approach rather than using a theological approach.

Keywords: Science; Religion; Zakaria Ar-Razi.

INTRODUCTION

Philosophy according to some philosophers is believed to be the mother of all sciences. Initially, the scope of philosophy was wider than science, science only discussed the empirical scope, while philosophy discussed empirical and non-empirical matters. Philosophy according to some philosophers is believed to be the mother of all sciences.

Initially, the scope of philosophy was wider than science, science only discussed the empirical scope, while philosophy discussed empirical and

non-empirical matters. However, over time, philosophy has become a part of science itself. Such as philosophy of law, philosophy of education, and philosophy of science. This is because philosophy cannot continue to be in the conceptual realm but must also be in the concrete realm and guide knowledge.

Islamic philosophy is a philosophy with Islamic nuances. Islamic philosophy is not a philosophy about Islam, but Islamic philosophy is an attempt to explain how Allah Almighty conveys truth and something *haqq* with intellectual

and rational language (Hermawan dan Sunarya 2011).

Islamic philosophy was born based on the Quran and Hadith as sources of information and encouragement. However, in his presentation, many thought that Islamic philosophy contradicted the Quran and Hadith. Even though in it discusses something that is not found in the Hadith or is *Zhanniy*. So Muslim philosophers and philosophies help to find doubts about religion. His position is almost like mujtahid in the scientific concept of Fiqh.

Islamic philosophy has the meaning of thinking freely, radically, and at the level of meaning. Islamic philosophy has a uniqueness that other philosophical schools do not have, Islamic philosophy has a nature that saves and gives peace of heart. In the treasures of Islamic philosophy, the introduction of the rational model of knowledge is not limited by the flow of thinking methodology alone but is continued and expanded with the meaning of the concept of spirituality.

This causes Islamic philosophy to have a unique view using a rational-transcendental approach. The rationality of Islamic philosophy lies in using the potential of free, radical, and meaningful thinking, which is used to analyze the empirical facts of an event, in the building of a scientific system of thinking.

While transcendence lies in the ability to use the heart or *qalb*, imaginative intuition, to penetrate, look, feel, and merge in metaphysical truth directly, and bear witness to the presence of Allah Almighty in the

reality of life (Hermawan dan Sunarya 2011).

This paper will discuss one Muslim philosopher who has a strong identity as a Muslim philosopher. He is Zakaria Ar-Razi, in this paper, we will discuss Ar-Razi's biography, his works, and his thoughts. One of Ar-Razi's roles in the development of Islamic philosophy is to give a special style to Islamic philosophy regarding the concept of prophecy which has never been discussed in previous philosophies.

The difference between Ar-Razi's thought and other Muslim philosophers lies in his views on Islamic philosophy. The majority of classical Muslim philosophers wanted to bring religion and philosophy together. For example, Al-Farabi, his thoughts were considered the most extreme and radical at that time, even his thoughts were criticized by Al-Ghazali in the book *Tahafut al-Falasifah*, according to al-Ghazali al-Farabi's thoughts had confused many Muslims at that time. However, al-Farabi argued for the concept of prophethood, according to which the prophet was endowed with an intellect that had an extraordinary capacity to grasp and communicate about the tenth intellect (*Jibril*) without practice.

It is compared to the reverse of the prophetic concept according to Ar-Razi, according to which humans can know all knowledge through reason. Allah SWT has given the intellect to the human use for whose name is seeking the truth. Ar-Razi also criticized the concept of prophethood, according to him why

God chooses certain individuals to be elevated to a higher rank than other humans, and makes people dependent on the figure of the prophet? It makes each group acknowledge the prophethood of each of them and deny the other when it should have been the prophet of the same and one purpose (Sarah Stroumsa 2013).

Regarding this highly controversial concept, some philosophers consider Ar-Razi to be an atheist, and even the majority of Syi'ah Ismailiyyah consider Ar-Razi infidels. But some consider this the freedom of thought echoed by Ar-Razi, this is the power of reason that accepts all knowledge thinking about it at the level of epistemology. This makes Ar-Razi's ideas about Islamic philosophy quite interesting to discuss and explore.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research uses library research methods. The research method contains theories that are relevant to research problems. The problem in this research is as described above regarding the thoughts of an Islamic philosopher, Zakaria Ar-Razi. The data sources used by researchers are all kinds of text, ranging from books, literature, journals, and several other text references, both print and web. Data analysis is carried out by organizing the data, explaining it into units, synthesizing or merging it, compiling it into patterns, selecting important data related to the theme, then concluding (Sugiyono 2013).

RESEARCH RESULTS and DISCUSSION

Biography of Zakaria Ar-Razi

In the Western world, ar-Razi has the full name Abu Bakr Muhammad Ibn Zakaria Ibn Yahya Ar-Razi, often referred to as Rhazes. He was born in the city of Ray (southern part of Tehran), Khurasan province on 1 Sha'ban 250 AH/ 864 AD. He was one of the leading physicians of the medieval era, even history records that he was the first physician to use chemistry in his medicine. Before his career as a doctor and philosopher, Ar-Razi had worked as a diamond man, *money changer*, and lute player.

At the age of thirty, Ar-Razi was appointed head of the hospital in his hometown because of his excellent reputation in the field of medicine. After a few years, he was appointed chief executive of the Baghdad hospital. Ar-Razi was given the title "inimitable Doctor of Islam" for his scientific knowledge in the field of medicine. He is also known as a generous, kind, and generous doctor who often provides free treatment to the public (Sulaiman 2016, 25)

Ar-Razi's intellectual intelligence was influenced by the environment in which he lived, this was based on the place where he lived, namely Khurasan which is now the country of Iran and is a gathering place for all kinds of advanced civilizations ranging from Greece, Persia, to Islam. This caused cities in Iran to have more advanced scientific treasures than the Arab civilization at that time.

So that is what caused Ar-Razi to have an intelligence level that was above average and became a great

doctor. Ar-Razi died in the same city in 313 AH / 925 AD at the age of approximately 63 years.

Ar-Razi who is known as a doctor and philosopher, has expertise in science in other fields such as logic, physics, metaphysics, divinity, ophthalmology, chemistry, biology, and architecture. With the many sciences he mastered, there were also many books written by Ar-Razi, including: (Harnedi 2015)

1. *Kitab Al-Asrar*: translated into Latin by Gerard of Cremona.
2. *Kitab Al-Hawi*: is an encyclopedia of medicine. Translated into Latin by Faraj ibn Salim under the title *Continens* in 1279. It was printed and disseminated and became a staple handbook in European medical circles until the 16th century.
3. *Kitab Al-Jidar wa Al Hasbah*: this book contains an analysis of measles and its prevention. This book was also translated into several languages, one of which was English in 1847 A.D. This book is considered compulsory reading of Western medicine.
4. *At-Thibb Al-Rohani*: book on the comprehensive thought of philosophy.
5. *Al-Sirah Al-Falsafiyah*: a book that contains the history of philosophy.
6. *Kitab Bur' as-saa'ah*: an essay by Ar-Razi containing diseases that can be cured in one hour.
7. *Kitab al-mansuri Fi al-Tibb*: a medical book written specifically for the ruler of al-

Rayy in 903, namely Abu Salih al-Mansur.

8. *Kitab Man La Yahduruhu al-Tabib*: The book written by Ar-Razi was for the poor, travelers, and ordinary citizens who could not see a doctor.

And several other books according to some historians by Ar-Razi reached 232 essays consisting of 118 books, 19 letters, 4 verses, and 7 papers. From his writings, it can be seen that Ar-Razi was a rationalist who was also a supporter of ancient naturalists. His ideas on Islam came under fire from his opponents. Especially on the concept of *nubuwwah* according to him (Sulaiman 2016).

The Dialectic of Science and Religion at the Time of Zakaria Ar-Razi

The development of science in Islamic civilization cannot be separated from several other civilizations, such as Indian, Persian, and Greek civilizations. From Indian Civilization Islamic scientists gained knowledge of arithmetic, astronomy, medicine, and mathematics.

These sciences are very influential on the process of scientific development in Islamic civilization, starting from numbers, Islamic scientists take numbers from Indian civilization or Indian numerals which are now often known by Westerners as Arabic numerals. From Persian civilization, Islamic scientists derived earth science, logic, philosophy, astronomy, measurability, medicine, literature, and art.

Persian influence is very thick, especially in literature and art, this is

allegedly because Islamic civilization in the Middle Ages moved to Baghdad where it was the center of the previous Persian civilization. This also made Muslim scientists absorb Persian civilization more dominant than Indian civilization.

The last is the Greek civilization which according to Ahmad Amin became the source of knowledge and philosophy for Islamic civilization. This is because the contact of Muslims with Greek culture coincided with the writing of Islamic sciences and the translation of literature, so entered into it elements of Greek culture that gave it a certain style, especially in form and content (Hambali 2010).

The activity of translating literature took place during the leadership of the Abbasid dynasty and reached the peak of Caliph Al-Makmun, he was also an intellectual caliph and was very interested in science and philosophy. With the activities of literary translation, Muslims were able to learn and master the knowledge of three civilizations that had reached their golden age.

Islamic scientists were not only able to master the science and philosophy of earlier civilizations, but they were also able to develop their observations into science and their ideas into the field of philosophy. What is more interesting is that Islamic scientists can integrate science and philosophy with the treasures of Islamic religious science (Zar 1994).

The development of Islamic philosophy has several periods starting from the first period in the

8th to 12th centuries AD, where this period is often referred to as *the Mu'tazila* period because the style of philosophy still carries Greek philosophical thoughts that are so thick, this help sometimes contradicts Islamic religious concepts, such as Zakaria Ar-Razi.

The next period, the period of major Islamic philosophy, occurred around the 8th to 11th centuries AD, most philosophers of this period relied on Hellenistic thought. The third period is referred to as the *Asy'ari* period, where Muslim philosophers referred to prophetic or atomistic concepts. The last period was in the 11th to 12th centuries, whose school of thought referred to the peripatetic system (Chanisma 2021).

Zakaria Ar-Razi or often called Ar-Razi is one of the philosophers who lived during the Saman Dynasty (204 – 395 H) precisely during the leadership of Caliph Al-Muktafi. Ar-Razi lived in a region and era that upheld science, this is evidenced by his mastery of several scientific fields, including science, mathematics, chemistry, medicine, and philosophy. But in his lifetime he was better known as a chemist and medicine than a philosopher (Zar 1994). However, his thoughts in the field of Islamic philosophy were very influential in the movement of philosophical scholarship in later times.

Conceptual Thinking of Zakaria Ar-Razi

- a. **Knowledge Sources:** Ar-Razi is considered an Islamic philosopher with a rationalist

school that adheres to naturalism. According to Ar-Razi, there are three sources of knowledge, namely thinking based on logical reason, the traditions of the predecessors written in true history, and instincts that guide people without requiring much thought (Mustofa 1997).

The first source is a logical reason, in one of his *muqoddimah* works *Al-Thibb Ar-Ruhani*: "Lord, praise be to him, who has given us reason so that with him we may obtain as much benefit as possible, this is the Lord's best gift to us. With reason, we see everything as useful to us and that makes our lives good. With reason, we know the dark, the distant, and the hidden from us. With reason, we also gain knowledge of God, the highest knowledge we gain." (Basri 2009).

In this *muqoddimah* quote, for Ar-Razi reason is a psychic element that is seen as the greatest, best, and most useful gift given by God to man and not given to other beings. The intellect can also make man raise his level, choose the best choice for him, and color every human day. This view confirms that the rational aspect of Ar-Razi's thought is naturalistic in explaining human problems, morals, and even approaches to religious matters.

One of Ar-Razi's naturalist arguments is about the process of spreading religion in society. According to him, the spread of religion is not carried out openly. Religious leaders tend to manipulate rationality and distance themselves from reading naturalistic phenomena from religious doctrines. Ar-Razi also did not emphasize religious understanding through the *nash-nash* of the Qur'an or Hadith, but he emphasized more through the Burhani approach. He assumed that reason would never contradict religion, whereas true religion would never contradict reason.

The second source of knowledge comes from the traditions of the predecessors. The taking of Ar-Razi using this second source can be found in one of his books entitled *al-Hawi fii al-Tibb*. In the book, many quotations taken by Ar-Razi from some of his predecessors, such as the opinions of Hippocrates and Galen regarding each disease and the way they were treated systematically, then added Ar-Razi's own opinion which corrected the opinion of his predecessor which was inaccurate or incomplete.

Ar-Razi also conducted many experiments to prove the theories of medicine of his predecessors, which led him to turn classical theoretical

medicine into empirical medicinal knowledge which he proved with thirty-three cases written in Kitab *al-Hawi fii al-Tibb*. From this journey of gathering knowledge, Ar-Razi seemed to follow in the footsteps of his predecessor, Aristotle, using observation, and abstraction which was then changed and processed with logic (Nayernouri 2008). The last source of knowledge is instinct. Freud said that instinct and conscience are the results of formation that have been a doctrine since man began to know the world (Juraman 2017). Regarding this last source of knowledge, it comes purely from the thought of Ar-Razi, because there is no similarity between his thought and that of previous philosophers. This makes instinct one of God's gifts besides mind and heart.

- b. **Prophetic Concept:** Ar-Razi's view continued to the concept of prophethood. Because the concept of prophethood is a new pattern of philosophical discussion in Islamic philosophy. Ar-Razi asked in his book *Rasail Al-Falsafiyah* "Whether instinctively and naturally man with his intellect can distinguish between good and bad? The answer is certainly yes. If this is the case, then where lies the prophetic urgency?". What Ar-Razi promulgated was not to eliminate the concept of prophethood or

that the concept of prophethood was no longer needed. What Ar-Razi emphasized is that even though there is a Prophet or Apostle there is not a man must give up his intellectual reason to reach the truth. It is precisely for Ar-Razi that intellectual reason is original and fundamental in man, and it is a reason that can determine whether the Prophet or Messenger is genuine or false.

Ar-Razi views that the concept of prophethood has both positive and negative impacts. The negative impact is that it often occurs whenever the prophet sent a lot of conflict in it. There are also many group wars because each group believes in people they consider prophets in their respective groups (Putra dan Hasim 2019). So Ar-Razi wanted to make this prophetic concept still guided by the human mind that his nature can distinguish something good and bad.

- c. **Ethical Concepts:** Furthermore, this naturalistic principle of balance was used by Ar-Razi to formulate ethical principles. According to him, balance and adequacy between psychic and physical are the main conditions for forming a moral human personality. This moral concept that rests on psychic

and physical balance is called *ta'dil al-af'al an-nufus*.

This paradigm expressed by Ar-Razi refutes the thinking of Greek philosophers in moral formation. Ar-Razi rejected the spiritualistic thought of Socrates as having a meta-spiritualistic tendency. He rejected Plato's idealistic thinking so that it lacked a foothold in reality. And he also rejected Aristotle's thought because he thought it was mechanistic-biological (Zuhri 2015).

Ar-Razi's rational view emphasizes that basically if a man can empower his intellect properly and correctly, then he will become more aware (converted) of his existence. The whole ethical concept of Ar-Razi is focused on the exhortation of reason to control passions to realize a wise and wise human being. Ar-Razi often uses the word "Hawa" rather than other Islamic moral philosophers, in expressing the importance of restraint, combat, and control of lust (Supriyadi 2009).

Ar-Razi argued that philosophers should be moderate, not too aloof, and not too lust-loving. There are two limits in human life according to Ar-Razi, the highest limit and the lowest limit. The highest limit is the limit that a philosopher should not exceed, for example, to have fun, to do

injustice, and to do something contrary to reason. While the lowest limit is the limit that should not be done by a philosopher. Such as eating food that makes you sick and wearing clothes that are not appropriate. Ar-Razi never violated these two restrictions during his lifetime (Hermawan dan Sunarya 2011).

Ar-Razi during his lifetime greatly exemplified the concept of ethics that he initiated. He never served the monarchy as a minister or military, but instead served as a doctor or health adviser. He is not greedy and has a tolerant spirit. He never ate, drank, and lived excessively. He loves knowledge and wisdom very much. From his works and concepts of thought, he is considered one of the philosophers of Islam.

- d. **The concept of "The Eternal Five":** Furthermore, there is also the concept expressed by Ar-Razi in his book which caused debate among philosophers and received criticism from Abu Hatim Ar-Razi, a Syi'ah Imamiyyah figure who lived during Ar-Razi's time but was hostile to his thoughts (Drajat 2005). Abu Haitam in addition to disagreeing with Ar-Razi's rejection of the concept of prophethood, he also disagreed with the concept of the five Eternals proposed by Ar-Razi. The philosophy of

the "the eternal five" is: (Drajat 2005)

God: Allah Almighty is the Creator and Governing of all nature. According to Ar-Razi, the existence of this universe did not start from nothing, there was a Substance that existed from the beginning and it was this Substance that formed the first matter that could eventually become a universe like this. God is the All-Wise and All-Knowing Substance to govern the four things namely the universal soul, the first matter, absolute space, and absolute time. The eternity of Allah Almighty is different from the eternity of the other four materials.

Universal Soul: The existence of living things in nature proves the existence of souls and comes from a universal soul. Allah Almighty also helped to make man and the universe a temporary vessels for the soul. So when a man dies, his soul will return to the place of the soul and remain there.

First Matter: The existence of nature does not begin in nothingness. According to Ar-Razi, of course, there is such a thing as the first material that ignites the formation of other materials. According to Ar-Razi, there were early atoms that had volumes that eventually made up the universe and its contents. The first matter to

meet the soul will form living things like humans.

Absolute Space: Ar-Razi argues that space can be eternal because the first matter always needs space. Because the first matter is eternal, space becomes something eternal as well. The matter is composed of the first matter and always requires space. Therefore space must exist and the space of all matter is called absolute space.

Absolute Period: Matter or nature is subject to the law of change, this limitation will later create time. People can limit the time to hours, days, months, years, and so on. And the limited period is referred to as time. It is strange that if a matter arises from nothing and turns into nothing, the matter will remain and change forever. This period that goes on without any restrictions is meant by absolute time.

Of the five eternal, only God and the universal soul are always active. As for the matter, it has always been in a passive state. Meanwhile, space and time do not experience active or passive states (Drajat 2005). But Ar-Razi's opinion about these "the eternal five" was refuted. Apart from Abu Hatim, Nashir Khusraw, a Persian philosopher, also denied this opinion. But according to Fakhruddin Ar-Razi, an Islamic philosopher in 1210, supporting Ar-Razi's opinion, he stated that the universe was made with these five

elements with God as the driving force (Adamson 2021).

CONCLUSION

So put aside any controversy over Ar-Razi's ideas that he conveyed. Ar-Razi was a Muslim scientist and philosopher who made great contributions to the world of philosophy. He gave a strong complexion to Islamic philosophy. Ar-Razi with his naturalistic rational views also became a strong identity about the existence of Islamic philosophy.

His ideas on the concept of man and humanity both physically and psychologically and his belief in reason in humans either as individuals or groups of social beings led Ar-Razi to the discourse space of naturalism.

His thoughts on the source of knowledge, the prophetic concept, the concept of ethics, and the concept of the "five eternal" became a strong identity conveyed by Ar-Razi not to reject the theological or metaphysical foundations of the existence of God and religion, because Ar-Razi himself was still a Muslim who believed in the power of Allah Almighty. But this identity is more about Ar-Razi's efforts to reach the truth using rationalist and philosophical approaches rather than using theological approaches.

Therefore, it can be concluded that Ar-Razi naturalism is a methodological naturalism to strengthen the roles of humanity which has a more role in carrying the concept of truth to arrive at the construction of *An-Nathiqah Al-Ilahiyyah* or the tendency with God as

the peak of the direction of human reason in his life.

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