

CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF ISLAMIC PHILOSOPHY ON SOCIAL MEDIA: A STUDY OF FAHRUDDIN FAIZ'S YOUTUBE CONTENT

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Abstract: *YouTube is one of the most visited platforms globally. Its position is second only to Google and has a major role in the dissemination of information on Islamic philosophy. One notable YouTube channel serving as a resource is Fahrudin Faiz at the Ngaji Philosophy channel. This endeavor takes place weekly on Wednesday evenings at the General Sudirman Mosque, Yogyakarta. The recorded sessions are subsequently shared on the MJS and Media Kontji YouTube channels. The focus of this study is on episode 37 on the MJS YouTube or 38 on the Media Koentji, which delves into the Ngaji Philosophy: Pre-Discourse-Islamic Philosophy. The research findings suggest that the YouTube channel of Ngaji Philosophy has significantly impacted the understanding of Islamic philosophy among students in Indonesian Islamic Universities. These results stem from a survey involving 114 students across five Islamic Theology and Philosophy (ITP) study programs in Indonesia. However, there is an inconsistency in defining Islamic philosophy and historical facts. The implication is the blurring of the meaning of Islamic philosophy, which has an impact on the scope and study. The definition used is not by the standards for making definitions, and the definitions conveyed by muslim philosophers. While historically, Faiz's statement is contradictory and incoherent with the historical works of Islamic philosophy. The approach used in this study is critical analysis and cross-reference techniques. This method functions, first, as complementary data for the explanation and, second, as validation and evidence that Faiz's definition and explanation are incoherent.*

Keywords: *Critical Analysis, Islamic Philosophy, Ngaji, Social Media, YouTube.*

Abstrak: Media sosial YouTube merupakan salah satu platform yang paling sering dikunjungi secara global. Posisinya berada di urutan kedua setelah Google dan memiliki

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peran besar dalam penyebaran filsafat Islam. Salah satu saluran YouTube terkenal yang berfungsi sebagai sumber informasi adalah milik Fahrudin Faiz di program *Ngaji Filsafat*. Kegiatan ini berlangsung setiap minggu pada Rabu malam di Masjid Jenderal Sudirman, Yogyakarta. Setiap kegiatan direkam kemudian dibagikan di saluran YouTube MJS dan Media Kontji. Fokus penelitian ini adalah episode 37 di YouTube MJS atau episode 38 di Media Koentji, dengan judul, *Ngaji Filsafat: Pra-Wacana-Filsafat Islam*. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa saluran *YouTube Ngaji Filsafat* telah berdampak signifikan terhadap pemahaman filsafat Islam di kalangan mahasiswa di Universitas Islam di Indonesia. Hasil ini berasal dari survei yang melibatkan 114 mahasiswa di lima Program Studi Aqidah dan Filsafat Islam (AFI) di Indonesia. Walaupun demikian, terdapat kerancuan dan inkonsistensi Fahrudin Faiz dalam mendefinisikan filsafat Islam, sejarah, ruang lingkup dan objek kajiannya. Implikasinya adalah kaburnya makna filsafat Islam yang dari definisi ini berdampak pada ruang lingkup dan kajian. Definisi yang digunakan tidak sesuai dengan standar membuat definisi dan juga definisi ini yang disampaikan para filsuf muslim. Sedangkan secara historis, pernyataan Faiz bertentangan dan koheren dengan karya-karya historis filsafat Islam. Pendekatan yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah analisa kritis dan teknik referensi silang. Metode ini berfungsi, pertama, sebagai data pelengkap untuk penjelasan tersebut dan kedua, sebagai validasi dan bukti bahwa definisi dan penjelasan Faiz tidak koheren.

Kata-kata Kunci: *Analisa Kritis, Filsafat Islam, Media Sosial, Ngaji, YouTube.*

Introduction

Researchers conducted a comprehensive examination on Ika Nurlita, a student of the ITP study program at the faculty of Ushuluddin of State Islamic University (UIN), Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, via the online platform Zoom on Monday, August 30, 2021 (Humaidi 2021a). The examination format consisted of a dialogue between the examiner (lecturer) and the examinee (student) focusing on predetermined themes such as theology, Islamic philosophy, and sufism. The primary resources utilized in this extensive assessment were the work of Harun Nasution, specifically *Islam Ditinjau dari Berbagai Aspeknya* (Nasution 1985, i), *Filsafat dan Mistisisme dalam Islam* (Nasution 2014, i), and *Muhammad Abduh dan Teologi Rasional Mu'tazilah* (Nasution 1987, i).

At the beginning of the examination, the researcher allocated the first session for the examinee to present their understanding of the readings. The subsequent session involved a series of questions and answers. These inquiries aimed to elucidate concepts such as the definition of Islamic philosophy, its object and scope of study, distinctions between Islamic philosophy, theology, and sufism, disparities between Islamic philosophy and Western philosophy, and its interrelation between those disciplines. Queries of a fundamental nature, such as these, were raised prior to exploring more particular subjects, such as the historical evolution and diverse branches of Islamic philosophy. When responding to the query, Ika cited Fahrudin Faiz's *Ngaji Philosophy* program on YouTube as a point of reference. The response pertains to the meaning, extent, and subject matter of Islamic philosophy. In her view, the subject matter of

Islamic philosophy encompasses the domains of God, the natural world, and humanity.

In addition to inquiries focused on academia, the researcher integrated an extra investigation that examines whether other students participate in observing *Ngaji Philosophy*. According to Ika, many of her acquaintances engage in viewing sessions as well. Based on these illustrations and empirical data, the researcher posits that a significant proportion of ITP students are involved in watching and listening to the podcast on the YouTube platform. To validate this hypothesis, a survey involving 82 incoming ITP students from the academic year 2021–2022 at the Faculty of Ushuluddin, State Islamic University (UIN) Jakarta, was conducted in September 2022 (Humaidi 2021b).

One of the inquiries posed was regarding the preferred sources for acquiring knowledge on Islamic philosophy. The responses revealed that 62.2% of students rely on online media for information, 18.3% turn to books, 14.6% engage in discussions, and 4.9% refer to journals. Subsequently, the following question was raised about the frequently accessed online platforms for obtaining insights into Islamic philosophy. The findings indicated that 42.7% opt for Instagram, 35.4% utilize YouTube, 17.1% access TikTok, and 4.9% use Facebook. The results obtained from this survey highlight the crucial function as the main conduit for spreading information in understanding Islamic philosophy (Humaidi 2021b).

The survey failed to inquire about the specific channels frequently accessed for information regarding Islamic philosophy. During October and November 2023, a survey was conducted to ascertain the media employed by students of Islamic Theology and Philosophy (ITP) in acquiring information and enhancing their understanding of Islamic philosophical concepts. A total of 114 students from 5 Islamic Religious Universities (PTKI) in Indonesia participated in this survey: UIN Syekh Nurjati Cirebon, West Java; UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, UIN Sjech M. Djamil Djambek Bukittinggi, West Sumatra; Sadra Islamic College (STAI) Jakarta; and UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta. One of the inquiries made in this survey pertained to the social media platforms often accessed in the realm of Islamic philosophy (Humaidi 2023).

The data gathered from the respondents revealed that YouTube was the preferred choice for 75.4% favored YouTube, 5.3% preferred TikTok, 3.5% chose Facebook, 1.8% selected Twitter, and 14% opted for other media sources. Subsequently, the survey posed a question regarding the preferred YouTube channels for content related to Islamic philosophy. The researchers presented 9 channel options, including Media Kontji (“Media Kontji, Online Video Recording,” n.d.), MJS channel (“Ngaji Filsafat, MJS Channel, Online Video Recording,” n.d.), Jeda Nulis (Hadar, n.d.), Mulyadhi Kartanegara, dialektika (dialectic), chayaningnalar, misykat TV, and

various other channels. Findings from the respondents revealed that 50.9% favored Media Kontji, 15.8% chose the MJS channel, 14% selected Jeda Nulis, 3.5% opted for Chayaning Nalar, 1.8% preferred the dialektika channel, and 10.5% indicated other channel preferences (Humaidi 2023).

The evidence presented in the surveys indicates that YouTube holds the top position as a key source of information on Islamic philosophy. On the one hand, YouTube social media has a positive impact on the dissemination of Islamic philosophy information. Based on the results of the study, it shows that the more people are connected to the YouTube channel, the more and easier it is for people to access information, contests, and dialogue ideas, including Islamic philosophy. This thesis aligns with the findings of Akram's study, revealing that YouTube attracts over 1 billion visitors monthly and ranks as the second most utilized search engine following Google (Akram and Kumar 2017, 347). These findings are in line with research by Jui-Lung Chen and Apritika Dermawan, which is based on a survey conducted by the media company "We Are Social" in 2017. From the survey results, it was found that the social media that is frequently used in Indonesia is YouTube (43%), followed by Facebook (41%), and WhatsApp 40%) (Chen and Dermawan 2020, 100).

But on the other hand, the complexity of Islamic philosophy often leads to misinterpretation due to inadequate delivery, lack of comprehensiveness, oversimplification, biased information, and absence of authoritative sources. Oversimplification and insufficient reference can lead to misinformation, ultimately exerting a detrimental influence on the audience. These problems are the negative side of social media, YouTube, and in fact also exist on the *Ngaji Philosophy* Fahrudin Faiz channel, which is the object of study in this research. The less comprehensive in reading of Islamic philosophy, the more it will obscure the meaning and scope of its study. This ambiguity has had an impact on misperceptions in understanding Islamic philosophy.

The *Ngaji Philosophy* on YouTube serves as a prominent platform influencing students' understanding of Islamic philosophy. The influence is based on findings obtained through observation, survey, interview, and answers from AFI UIN Jakarta students during comprehensive exams in particular and dialogues, discussions, and Q&A in class when the teaching and learning process takes place. When students are asked the question, what is meant by Islamic philosophy? The answer to the question, referring to Faiz's explanation, is a philosophy that explains Islamic teachings using reason, or a philosophy that explains what is contained in the Qur'an. Another answer is that Islamic philosophy is a philosophy that exists in the Islamic world.

These answers are based on Faiz's explanation, which states that the position of philosophy is classified into four parts: philosophy as religion, philosophy helps religion, philosophy and religion go hand in hand, and

philosophy as nature to study religion. For Faiz, based on this classification, [Islamic] philosophy is the same as religion or philosophy as a tool to study religion. Another influence of Faiz's explanation is on the scope and object of study of Islamic philosophy. According to them, students, the object of study and the main issues of Islamic philosophy are God, nature, and humans. When asked, what is the difference between God studied in philosophy and theology? Isn't the definition of theology, etymologically consisting of two syllables, namely *theo* and *logos*, a science that studies God? Answering this question, God in Islamic philosophy uses reason, while theology explains God based on sacred texts.

Some of the answers from the students above show confusion in thinking, especially in defining and limiting Islamic philosophy. Likewise, the scope and object of study of Islamic philosophy are blurred with theology. As a result, theology is Islamic philosophy, and Islamic philosophy is theology. This confusion stems from Faiz's YouTube channel, which is the main reference for explaining the meaning of Islamic philosophy. The influence and confusion are one of the problems and backgrounds of this study. Therefore, this study aims to examine, evaluate, and critique the Islamic philosophy content on the *Ngaji Philosophy* YouTube channel, specifically focusing on *Pre-Discourse: Islamic Philosophy* (Faiz 2023). The formulation of the problem of this study, first, is how the role and influence of Fahrudin Faiz's YouTube channel shape the understanding of Islamic philosophy. Second, how is Faiz's confusion and incoherence in defining Islamic philosophy?

The significant and rationale behind the choice to restrict the focus of this study is supported by numerous considerations. Firstly, precise definitions play a crucial role in outlining the domain of a scientific field, including delineating the boundaries, scope, and subjects of inquiry within Islamic philosophy. Ambiguities or inadequacies in definitions, as per Ibn Sīnā, can significantly impact the comprehension and exploration of Islamic philosophy itself. Secondly, the misconceptions surrounding Islamic philosophy often led to its conflation with theology (Tantray and Khan 2021, 108), stemming from unclear and incorrect meanings and definitions. Lastly, YouTube stands as a primary platform for knowledge dissemination, including information on Islamic philosophy.

Research on the topic of Islamic philosophy on YouTube remains scarce. Nevertheless, numerous studies have been conducted on the *Ngaji Philosophy* channel. Among these are academic works authored by Muhammad Renaldi (Renaldi 2021, i), Nasya Az Zahra (Zahra 2020, i), and Mudrikah (Mudrikah 2019, i). These scholarly writings focus on Faiz's philosophical ideas within his preaching endeavors.

Scholarly articles encompass the contributions of Dian Putri Ayuni and Atiqa Sabardilla (Ayuni and Sabardilla 2021, 262), Purwanto, Kasprabowo, and Soepriatmadji (Purwanto, Kasprabowo, and Soepriatmadji 2021, 77),

as well as Asmaroini, Mahardhani, and Mahrus (Asmaroini, Mahardhani, and Mahrus 2020, 271). While these studies address various aspects, such as rhetorical, Siti Jenar's teachings, the influence of mosques on Pancasila, and preaching messages, none of them delve directly into the realm of Islamic philosophy.

Research on Islamic philosophy includes the works of Syamsudin Arif (Arif 2014, 1), Bayujati Prakoso (Prakoso 2020, 1), and Win Usuluddin (Usuluddin 2012, 259). Arif and Usuluddin explore the debates surrounding the essence of Islamic philosophy, with Ushuluddin challenging the significance of philosophical disciplines. On the other hand, Prakoso's study highlights the efficacy of Philosophy Studies on Instagram in fostering positive transformations like enhancing religious awareness, promoting self-improvement, and stimulating societal change.

Conversely, research focusing on the impact of YouTube is the work of W. Akram and R. Kumar (Akram and Kumar 2017, 347), as well as Ann Majchrzak, Samer Faraj, Gerald C. Kane, and Bijan Azad (Majchrzak et al. 2013, 36). Although YouTube is not the central subject in these articles, it is a key point of analysis. These studies underscore the dual nature of social media platforms like YouTube, acknowledging their positive aspects while also highlighting the potential for misinformation and societal discord.

None of the studies have specifically explored Islamic philosophy on YouTube and adopted critical analytical approaches. However, there are parallels with prior research endeavors. The similarities can be drawn with Prakoso's study on Islamic philosophy on Instagram, Arif's methodological framework for Islamic philosophy, and the examination of YouTube's role in disseminating philosophical concepts. Nevertheless, the shortcomings identified, particularly in terms of source tracking, suggest the need for a more comprehensive approach in future studies.

M. Laeeq Khan and Aqdas Malik emphasize the necessity of employing interdisciplinary methodologies rather than relying on a singular approach when researching YouTube (Sloan et al. 2022, 651). They identified various methodologies suitable for YouTube research, such as surveys, interviews, focus groups, content analysis, and experiments. Consequently, the initial methodology applied in this study involved a survey carried out between 2022 and 2023 to assess the impact, reach, and extent of the YouTube channel.

This study uses an open survey, namely distributing questionnaires related to the research theme and providing the freedom to answer them openly according to the respondent's experience. This approach is different from a closed survey, where the answers are already limited. The questions are as follows: Where did you learn about Islamic philosophy? What are the main references in the field of Islamic philosophy? What social media is often watched in the field of Islamic philosophy? What

YouTube social media is often accessed in the field of Islamic philosophy? Does YouTube social media have benefits in studying Islamic philosophy? Does YouTube social media have an influence on the knowledge of Islamic philosophy?

Subsequently, content analysis was conducted, particularly focusing on Islamic philosophical content available on MJS YouTube and Media Kontji (Alias et al. 2013, 11). This method is used to analyze Faiz's description, explanation, argumentation, and conclusion. The analysis uses the principle of coherence and correspondence, both logically and epistemologically, and in reference sources (Repp 2017, 59). It will analyze the definitions and statements as true if it is coherent or by the standard of definition, other arguments, and the work of a muslim philosopher. While in the context of sources and references, it is related to references that are quoted in statements, arguments, and conclusions compared with the muslim philosopher's work.

In academic writing, the preferred methodology is descriptive-analytical-critical. The descriptive aspect involves presenting data obtained from primary sources, while the analytical component entails processes like classification, grouping, and comparing different pieces of information. The final stage involves critiquing the themes and subjects of the research, specifically the content of Islamic Philosophy. When critiquing the definition of Islamic philosophy, the methodology primarily involves utilizing Ibn Sīnā's definition theory (Strobino 2021, 287), and is perfected with a cross-reference approach. Cross-reference denotes a citation from one section of a publication, inventory, index, or similar sources to another section, providing supplementary elucidation ("Definition of Cross-Reference," 2024).

This approach first aims to provide additional information or references to Faiz's description in explaining Islamic philosophy. This is because he did not mention the references and references from which the statement came. Second, this method is a tool to trace the origin of Faiz's statements, explanations, and arguments. Third, as a comparison between Faiz's statements and the opinions of muslim philosophers and other scientists. Fourth, by conducting cross-references through comparison and tracking of reference sources, it is possible to show and prove inconsistencies, ambiguities, and confusion in his narrative and the error in defining Islamic philosophy.

History of *Ngaji Philosophy*

The inception of *Ngaji Philosophy* can be traced back to its foundational gathering on Sunday, April 21, 2013, which saw the participation of seven students (Faiz, n.d.-b). This significant event was meticulously recorded by MJS YouTube and Media Kontji. Subsequently, from that point until the research conducted on December 15, 2023, it has been regularly

conducted every Wednesday from 8:00 to 10:00 p.m. at the General Sudirman Mosque, Rajawali 10, Demangan Baru, Sleman, Yogyakarta 55281.

At the forefront of this initiative is Fahrudin Faiz, a lecturer at the State Islamic University (UIN), Sunan Kalijaga, Yogyakarta. He posits that the term "*Ngaji Philosophy*" lacks a specific connotation and emerged informally, "*beginning from a casual conversation, nothing more.*" Nevertheless, through an anthropological lens, the term is rooted in the Javanese tradition of using "*ngaji*," which signifies studying or "*kaji*" in Indonesian (Faiz, n.d.-a). Notably, the term "*ngaji*" is absent from the Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI), but its equivalent "*kaji*" denotes reasoning within the religious domain. A further extension of "*kaji*" involves reciting, referring to the act of reading the Qur'an, learning Arabic script, or acquiring religious knowledge.

Furthermore, he argues that the designation "philosophy lectures" may connote an increased level of complexity, given the challenging nature of philosophy itself. Hence, the term *Ngaji Philosophy* is a commonplace expression among the Javanese populace. Hermeneutically, the utilization of "*ngaji*," derived from "*aji*," signifies 'nobleness,' with "*ngaji*" implying 'striving for nobility' or 'pursuing honor.' Within Islamic discourse, "*aji*" is tantamount to '*karamah*'. Therefore, he elucidates that "*Ngaji Philosophy*" embodies the concept of "*aspiring for glory and nobility through philosophical pursuits.*" This discourse predominantly employs the foundational term of *ngaji*, rather than mere study (Faiz, n.d.-a).

The first release of *Ngaji Philosophy* drew an audience of 154,375 viewers, with 2.4 thousand likes and 205 comments. As of the research date, December 15, 2023, it had already reached the age of 6 years. However, considering its inception on April 13, 2013, until December 25, 2023, it is 10 years and 8 months old (Faiz, n.d.-b). The MJS YouTube channel, established on May 19, 2016, received positive feedback on Indonesian social media. It currently features 1,040 videos, boasts 305 thousand subscribers, and has been viewed 38,524,003 times.

In addition to the MJS Channel, *Ngaji Philosophy* also aired on Media Kontji, which made its debut on December 17, 2015. In terms of chronology, Media Kontji precedes MJS Channel, originating in 2017. Not only do their upload timings differ, but the video formats also vary. While MJS uploads complete videos on YouTube, Media Kontji divides them into 4 segments: introduction to general philosophy 1, 2, 3, and 4. Nonetheless, the video content remains the same.

Another contrast lies in the video arrangement from one edition to the next. While MJS's YouTube videos lack a clear structure, Media Kontji organizes them in sequence, starting from *Ngaji Philosophy* episodes 1-50, followed by episodes 50-100 in a single folder (Faiz, n.d.-c). In 2020, episode 256 was published by Media Kontji, with a specific emphasis on

Economic Philosophy: Max Weber's The Spirit of Capitalism. On the other hand, the MJS channel has reached the *Ngaji Philosophy* episode 414 titled "*Ngaji Philosophy 414: Religion and Mental Health*," uploaded on December 10, 2023. This episode garnered 23 thousand viewers, 761 likes, and 62 comments. Consequently, viewers interested in watching the *Ngaji Philosophy* in chronological order can do so on Media Kontji, whereas those seeking to watch a random video may prefer the MJS channel.

The diverse themes explored on the *Ngaji Philosophy* YouTube channel encompass a wide array of topics, ranging from the historical perspectives of philosophy, whether Islamic or Western, to various branches of philosophical inquiry such as ontology, epistemology, and axiology. This also includes exploration of both major and minor philosophical themes, as well as an examination of sufism and Indonesian Islamic philosophy (Faiz, n.d.-c).

In light of the aforementioned content, the explicit episodes directly related to Islamic philosophy include one dedicated to Islamic epistemology, particularly episode 3, and another focusing on the significance and historical evolution of Islamic Philosophy, especially in episodes 37 or 38. Moreover, a series of eight episodes is dedicated to muslim philosophers such as al-Kindī, al-Farābī, Ibn Sīnā, al-Ghazālī, Ibn Bājjah, Ibn Ṭufayl, Ibn Khaldūn, and Ibn Rushd, spanning from episode 39 to episode 46. Additional discussions on muslim philosophers in episodes 1 to 50 encompass examinations of al-Ghazālī's religious ethics and Muḥammad Iqbāl's existentialism in episodes 24 and 35. It is worth noting that this research exclusively concentrates on the thematic exploration of Islamic philosophy, particularly emphasizing episode 37 on YouTube MJS and episode 38 on Media Kondji.

Islamic Philosophy on YouTube of *Ngaji Philosophy*

As previously indicated, the themes presented in the *Ngaji Philosophy* encompass not solely Islamic philosophy, but also Western philosophy and other thematic philosophies like happiness, prophecy, and love. The depiction of Islamic philosophy in the *Ngaji Philosophy* YouTube can be found in episode 37 or 38, labeled as Pre-Discourse Islamic Philosophy. Within this section, an outline of the video's content will be provided, followed by an analysis and critique employing Ibn Sīnā's conventional definition approach and intertextuality scrutiny.

Commencing the video, Faiz articulates that after 35 sessions, he will initiate an exploration of Islamic philosophy originating from the peripatetic school and subsequently the illumination. However, prior to delving into Islamic philosophy, the correlation between philosophy and religion will be expounded upon. The prevailing belief that philosophy clashes with Islam stems from the contrasting requisites of absolute

submission in religion and the foundation of philosophical inquiry on free thought and critical analysis. Consequently, there exists dissent regarding the utilization of the term Islamic philosophy, with concerns raised regarding its potential to undermine Islam through critical scrutiny. Conversely, some posit that it is Islam that has constrained philosophy with its emphasis on unwavering obedience. Considering this issue, he asserts that this episode aims to address and resolve these conflicts.

In addressing this matter, Faiz initially explores the nexus between religion and philosophy. The inquiry revolves around the presence of philosophy within religion. Historically, four models have been postulated to elucidate the relationship between religion and philosophy. The first model proposes that philosophy assumes a religious identity, particularly in the study of divinity, allowing philosophers autonomy in their exploration, devoid of religious constraints (Faiz 2023).

The second relationship entails philosophy bolstering religion, like *uṣūl al-fiqh*, *'ulūm al-Qur'ān*, and *'ulūm al-hadīth*. Notably, when Shāfi'ī authored the *Kitāb al-Risālah*, forming the basis of *uṣūl al-fiqh* and influencing the determination of halal and haram in Islam, the underpinning principles were rooted in logic and philosophy. It illustrates philosophy's supportive role in religion.

The third relationship delineates a state of autonomy, where religion pertains to faith and philosophy to rationality, each existing independently without convergence. Even endeavors to rationalize religion are deemed futile. Faiz cites the example of Immanuel Kant, who extensively deliberated on religion but abandoned the pursuit. Thus, the advocated course of action is to allow religion its space, devoid of entanglement with philosophy (Petrescu 2020, 7). The fourth relationship between philosophy and religion lies in philosophy's role as a supporter of religion, serving as an interpreter and elucidator of religious concepts. This framework is widely used in academic research. Through the utilization of philosophical tools, scholars and individuals can elucidate religious phenomena and doctrines from an external perspective.

Following an introductory overview, Faiz posed the question of how philosophy contributes to the realm of religion, particularly in the context of Islam. To answer this inquiry, he delineates at least four key aspects:

1. Philosophy facilitates the comprehension of God and the understanding of faith. Philosophy fosters rational thinking, particularly about faith and the divine. Indeed, scholars advocate for the commencement of faith with reason, positing reason as a precursor to the Qur'an.
2. Philosophy enables individuals to liberate themselves from entrenched beliefs, thereby emancipating them from the notion of unquestioning submission devoid of critical analysis as Muḥammad

Arkūn said that a prevalent affliction among Muslims is the sanctification of religious ideologies, wherein human interpretations of religion, particularly Islam, are revered above Allah Himself (Mur-tadlo 2019, 205).

3. Philosophy aids in adapting religious practices to contemporary contexts. By contextualizing religious principles considering present circumstances, philosophy facilitates interpretations and reinterpretations, such as tafsir and *ta'wīl* (Humaidi and Rahman 2023, 1). Integration of rational and philosophical modes of thinking has sustained the vitality of Islamic scholarship throughout history.
4. Philosophy encourages introspection, contemplation of nature, contemplation of the divine, and the development of theological insights. Hence, opposition to philosophy equates to opposition to critical thinking, which in turn impedes the proper practice of Islam. Religion, Islam included, necessitates the incorporation of philosophical perspectives.

The subsequent inquiry pertains to whether philosophy is permissible within the realm of Islam. Before delving into this matter, Faiz elaborated on the terminology associated with Islamic philosophy. These include Islamic philosophy, Arab philosophy, muslim philosophy, and philosophy within the Islamic sphere. Of these designations, Islamic philosophy stands out as the most prevalent. Conversely, in the Western context, the terms muslim philosophy (Syarief 1963, i), Arab philosophy (Gutas 2002, 5), and philosophy in the Islamic world are favored by some contemporary scholars (Paya 2014, 265).

According to Faiz, the concept of Islamic philosophy predominantly functions as a designation for literary works and areas of scholarly investigation. Nonetheless, it has not been immune to scrutiny, with questions arising about whether Islamic philosophy truly embodies Islamic principles. An argument posits the impossibility of Islam transforming into philosophy, and vice versa, whereby philosophy transitions into Islam. The subsequent term, muslim philosophy, does not delineate the essence of the teachings but rather emphasizes the religious affiliation of the scholars engaging with the subject matter. However, this categorization falls short as many scholars of Islamic philosophy are not adherents of Islam. Notable examples include Maimonides, a Jewish rabbi (Ber-Sela et al. 1964, 3), and Yaḥyā ibn 'Adī, a Christian (Omar 2015, 308), residing in the Islamic world despite their non-muslim status (Rahman, Walid, and Humaidi 2022, 49). Moreover, atheist muslims like Ibn al-Rāwandī (Sallam and Mohammed 2020, 362), Abū 'Īsā al-Warrāq, and Abū Bakr al-Rāzī, contribute to Islamic philosophy despite their atheistic and anti-Islamic stance (Bushra et al. 2023, 725). The inclusion of al-Rāzī

in Islamic philosophy texts, despite his critical views on Islam, has raised objections against the classification of muslim philosophy.

In response to the dilemma, a third term, Arabic philosophy, emerges. He posits that this designation is flawed as Islam's influence extends beyond Arabia, with philosophers emerging from various regions such as Spain and Persia. The notion that only Arab individuals can engage in philosophy is erroneous, considering the diverse geographical and cultural origins of philosophers. Thus, the utilization of the term Arabic philosophy is deemed unsuitable.

The fourth term in the Islamic world pertains to philosophy. The inquiry concerns the delineation of the Islamic world. Historically, this was ascertainable due to the presence of caliphs like the Ottoman caliphate. Presently, the whereabouts of the so-called Islamic world remain ambiguous. In the United States and Europe, numerous scholars specialize in Islamic philosophy, albeit some terminologies remain perplexing. Consequently, Islamic philosophy stands out as the most prevalent.

Following the elucidation of Islamic philosophy's nomenclature, he delved into the technical designations and fields. Within the Islamic sphere, three terms denote philosophy: philosophy, wisdom, and *al-'ulūm al-awā'il*. The term "philosophy" originates from the Greek "philosophia," which connotes love of wisdom, designating individuals as philosophers. Citing the *Ikhwān al-Ṣafā'* (Walid et al. 2024, 1), philosophy is the affection for science with the intent of aligning actions with scientific principles. Thus, mere contemplation of philosophy without practical application precludes one from being deemed a philosopher (Maulana et al. 2021, 25). Philosophy encapsulates the affection for science and the implementation of scientific findings.

The second facet of Islamic philosophy is "*ḥ hikmah*," a term chosen due to the resemblance between Greek philosophy and Arabic wisdom, as evidenced in the Qur'an, such as Q.S. Al-Baqarah [2]: 231. Furthermore, Faiz referenced al-Kindī's assertion equating wisdom and philosophy. Ibn Sīnā delineated wisdom as the culmination of an individual's soul upon comprehending significance, enabling the articulation of ideas commensurate with one's human capacities. Wisdom denotes the discernment of virtue with profound comprehension. Conversely, the third concept in philosophy is "*al-'ulūm al-awā'il*," signifying the ancient sciences (Aldabuwr 2013, 236), which in the Islamic realm do not solely trace back to Greece but draw from diverse civilizations.

The standing of Islamic philosophy in academia prompts inquiry. He outlines three paradigms regarding the perception of Islamic philosophy. The first viewpoint, as orientalist advocated, asserts that Islamic philosophy is an extension of ancient Greek philosophy. He concurs with this notion but underscores its derogatory undertones. This perspective

insinuates that Muslims lack the capacity for philosophical ruminations, suggesting that philosophy is not inherent to Islam but borrowed from Greece. According to him, a deficiency in borrowing from other traditions impedes rational thinking. He cites Bertrand Russell, who contended that Muslims lack critical thinking skills (Russell n.d., 423), relying solely on Greek philosophical contributions.

The second perspective posits that Islamic philosophy primarily engages in a reactive and dialectical discourse with other cultures, as Maimonides said. This assertion aligns with the Orientalist viewpoint, suggesting that Islamic philosophy is essentially a continuation of the Christian world, like practices of the Hajj and seclusion, devoid of originality.

On the contrary, the third viewpoint argues that although the origins of philosophy can be traced back to Greek, Persian, and various other ancient societies, Islamic philosophy exhibits a distinct sense of originality. This perspective acknowledges the interplay of civilizations influencing each other, emphasizing Islam's distinctive originality (Faiz 2023). Similarly, it holds that Aristotle's ideas were transmitted to the Islamic realm, yet they were assimilated by Muslims, leading to the development of fields such as logic, which evolved into *'ulūm al-Qur'ān*, *'ulūm al-ḥadīth*, and *uṣūl fiqh*. The realm of theological contemplation also exhibits originality, for example is the schools of thought within Mu'tazilah and Shiite ideologies. Upon elucidating numerous concepts and their corresponding objections, he concluded that:

Islamic philosophy serves as a comprehensive and distinctive term denoting the entirety of intellectual discourse that originated and flourished within the realm of Islamic civilization, encompassing individuals of Arab and non-Arab descent, adherents of Islam or other faiths, residing in the Middle East or beyond, and utilizing languages such as Arabic, Persian, Hebrew, Turkish, or Malay as vehicles of expression, spanning from antiquity to the present era (Faiz 2023).

The inception of Islamic philosophy can be traced back to the 2nd century Hijriyah and experienced swift progression until the 15th century. Throughout this epoch, Islamic philosophical doctrines exerted a noteworthy influence on Western philosophical thought. Indeed, the genesis of the Renaissance in the Western world can be attributed to the impact of Islamic philosophy (Dossett 2014, 88). The initial phase of Islamic philosophy commenced with al-Kindī and culminated with Ibn Rushd, characterized by the prevalence of the peripatetic school of thought known as *mashshā'iyūn* in Arabic, signifying "the way." The term "peripatetic" alludes to the practice of Aristotle, who imparted his teachings while strolling outdoors.

Peripatetic philosophy in the Western world started to diminish following the passing of Ibn Rushd. Subsequently, Eastern philosophy emerged, known as the school of illumination in Indian philosophy.

Referred to as eastern philosophy is Ibn Sīnā, this philosophical tradition signifies the second wave, encompassing theosophy. The decline of this period coincided with the era of Mullā Ṣadrā, leading to the waning of Islamic philosophy due to Western colonization. Nevertheless, Islamic philosophy remains vibrant, evolving through various reformers like Muḥammad ‘Abduh, Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī, Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā, and Muḥammad Iqbāl, recognized as modernist figures.

Post-independence from colonial rule, Islamic philosophy underwent significant Western scientism and positivism influences. Presently, the entire Islamic world, including Indonesia, reflects the scientism and positivism thinking paradigm, emphasizing disciplines like physics and mathematics. This paradigm originates from the classical Islamic philosophical heritage, giving rise to a new phase of contemporary Islamic philosophy with scholars like Ḥasan Ḥanafī, Muḥammad Arkūn, and Naṣr Ḥāmid Abū Zayd, constituting the second wave post the era of Muḥammad Iqbāl and his contemporaries.

During the discourse, Faiz highlighted the distinctions between Islamic philosophy and Western philosophy. In Islamic tradition, the purpose of philosophical inquiry is not solely to discover the truth but rather to uphold the truth and refute falsehood, known as *iḥqāq al-ḥaq* and *ibtāl al-bāṭil*. Additionally, the study of philosophy is considered *farḍ kifāyah*, obligatory not for everyone; in-depth study is reserved for a select few, the intellectual elite.

Faiz’s Incoherence in the Conceptualization of Islamic Philosophy

This sub-chapter presents an examination, assessment, and critique of Faiz’s perspectives on Islamic philosophy, encompassing various key points. Firstly, the discussion revolves around the description and conceptualization of Islamic philosophy, and at this point, Ibn Sīnā’s theory of definition is employed. Secondly, predominant historical methodologies pertain to historical evidence, in terms of historical evaluation, and adopt a cross-reference methodology (Sirry 2022, 1).

Faiz’s Definition of Islamic Philosophy

Faiz subscribes to the designation of “Islamic philosophy” over alternative terms, as highlighted earlier. This endorsement serves to contradict the assertion that Islamic philosophy does not exist, but rather Arab philosophy, muslim philosophy, or philosophy within the Islamic sphere. According to him, the essence of Islamic philosophy encompasses “all intellectual discourse that originated and evolved within the domain of Islamic civilization.” This delineation offers various criteria for defining Islamic philosophy, encompassing the entirety of Islamic ideology and societal development.

Describing Islamic philosophy as encompassing all ideologies that

emerged within Islamic civilization results in an excessively broad definition. The term “all thought” is overly general and lacks specificity concerning philosophy. While thought can be considered a broader category of philosophy, it does not directly align due to the various intricate forms it embodies, such as demonstrative, dialectical, sophistry, bias, and opinion. According to al-Kindī (Adamson and Pormann 2012, 13), al-Farābī (Booth 2017, 97), Ibn Sīnā (Avicenna 2005, 12–13), and Ibn Rushd (Rushd and Rafiabadi 2003, 64), philosophy must possess a rational-demonstrative nature. If it lacks demonstrative qualities, it cannot be classified as philosophy but rather as theology or religion. Hence, not all forms of thought equate to philosophical ruminations, except for those rooted in rational-demonstrative, critical, and methodical thinking, which constitute the essence of philosophy.

Furthermore, the concept of Islamic civilization does not serve as a definitive or intrinsic aspect of Islamic philosophy. The broad scope of Islamic civilization encompasses various facets of muslim life and history, including politics, economics, and Qur’anic science, hadith science, with philosophy being just one component. Consequently, Islamic civilization should not serve as an explanatory or restrictive factor for Islamic philosophy, as it would obscure the meaning and principles of Islamic philosophy, rendering them ambiguous and increasingly incomprehensible.

When Islamic civilization is mentioned, there exists a multitude of variables and indicators. If a definition employs diverse boundaries and lacks clarity, according to Faiz in a separate video, the defined concept may become ambiguous. His inconsistency in delineating Islamic philosophy is evident through the utilization of varied boundaries. One method to address this issue is to categorize, identify, expound, depict, define, and confine Islamic civilization solely to its philosophical components.

Comparison with Classical Philosophers

Ibn Sīnā postulated two types of definitions: complete and incomplete. A definition is deemed complete if both the genus and differentiation are intrinsic or indispensable to the entity being defined, while an incomplete definition serves as a constraint or elucidation that lacks necessity and fundamental importance (Strobino 2021, 291–93). For instance, a complete definition asserts that humans are rational animals. The attributes of being an animal and being rational are inseparable components of humans. Rationality serves as a distinguishing feature of humans in contrast to other animals. On the other hand, an incomplete definition posits that humans are beings with physical bodies, bipedal locomotion, and the ability to shed tears. These characteristics do not define humans inherently, as they are also exhibited in other creatures like chickens, birds, monkeys, or chimpanzees. These traits are not

exclusive to humans.

These established definitions can be applied in the elucidation and depiction of Islamic philosophy. By adhering to the criteria set forth by Ibn Sīnā, Faiz's definition of Islamic philosophy is inaccurate. Thus, when Islamic civilization is referenced with a focus on the philosophical facet, it pertains to the works of muslim philosophers. For instance, al-Kindī, recognized as the first muslim philosopher, stressed that philosophy belongs to the realm of human arts, with the highest status and noblest stature being the art of philosophy, defined as the comprehension of reality to the extent possible for humans (Adamson and Pormann 2012, 10).

Al-Farābī, often referred to as the second teacher following Aristotle, in the Book of *al-Ḥurūf*, al-Farābī asserts that philosophy serves as the foundation of all knowledge and is interconnected with all that exists. He also delineated between philosophy grounded in demonstrable truth and that based on opinion, dialectics, and sophistry (Farābī 1986, 108–9). In the book *al-Jam'ū Bayna Ra'yay al-Ḥakīmayn*, al-Farābī explicitly articulates that the scope and core of philosophy is the existence as it is (Farābī 1968, 80).

Conversely, Ibn Sīnā, in *al-Risālah fī Aqsām al-'Ulūm al-'Aqliyyah*, underscored that wisdom is the skill of comprehension essential for humans to realize their internal existence and imperative for self-regulation, self-improvement, actualization, and genuine understanding, akin to the realm of existence (Sīnā 1989, 104–5). This preparation is crucial for attaining ultimate happiness in the hereafter, within human capacities.

The definition of philosophy provided above is further elaborated by Mullā Ṣadrā, who views it as the process of refining the human soul to its utmost capacity through an understanding of the essence of things as they truly exist, utilizing rational and demonstrative reasoning rather than mere opinion or imitation. Mullā Ṣadrā, according to Seyyed Hossein Nasr, underscores the importance of purifying the soul and achieving self-awareness in the quest for knowledge (Nasr 2006, 37).

Drawing upon the established definitions put forth by muslim philosophers and the criteria of civilization, it can be observed that the assertions and definitions are considered inadequate. The definition provided lacks crucial elements, including intrinsic nature, proximate category, and distinctiveness, which are closely linked to Islamic philosophy. The criterion of "comprehensive thought," which embodies the essence of Islamic philosophy, is notably encompassing, spanning various domains of knowledge including theological discourse, sufism, philosophical inquiry, and exegesis, encompassing both rational and non-rational thoughts. Similarly, while adhering to the standards of civilization, despite being labeled as Islamic civilization, does not encapsulate the

essence of Islamic philosophy. When Faiz examines the definition and constraints of philosophy as a muslim philosopher employed, such as al-Kindī (Stefaniuk 2021, 213), al-Farābī (Hasan 2020, 27), Ibn Sīnā, and Mullā Ṣadrā, the challenge of clearly defining philosophy will undoubtedly be avoided (Michael and Salaudin 2022, 33).

According to Murtaẓā Muṭahharī, there are two types of definitions of Islamic philosophy: general and specific. The general meaning encompasses all rational sciences, *'aqli*, which stand in contrast to revealed knowledge, *naqli*. Ibn Sīnā's categorization of rational sciences divides them into two categories: theoretical and practical. Theoretical sciences include metaphysics, mathematics, and natural science, while practical sciences encompass ethics, economics, and political science. The distinct meaning of philosophy is denoted as genuine science, fundamental philosophy, metaphysics, and comprehensive science, forming a subset of theoretical science. The subject of study in this specific definition is existence in its essence (Mutahhari 2002, 11).

Even if Faiz's definition is assimilated into the general sense as per Muṭahharī, this criterion is deemed inadequate. He defines philosophy as all rational sciences aside from revealed or transmitted knowledge, whereas he defines it as "all thought," signifying the cognitive activity and potential of the intellect or soul about all phenomena. The preference for rational sciences is due to their role as the core and category of philosophy as a science, while thinking does not constitute a category or essence, except in its approximation, resemblance, and emulation of rational sciences.

Historical Inaccuracies: Theological vs. Philosophical Distinctions

Apart from the ambiguity encountered in delineating Islamic philosophy, it is contended that Islamic philosophy is synonymous with theology. A notable assertion in this context is made when discussing the correlation between philosophy and religion, specifying the subjects of study in Islamic philosophy as encompassing God, nature, and humanity. If the focus is on God, how does this differ from theology, which essentially comprises *'theo'* denoting God, and *'logos'* signifying knowledge? Theology can thus be defined as the field of study concerning God. By asserting that Islamic philosophy involves the exploration of God, a connection between philosophy and theology emerges. This constitutes the secondary dimension of inconsistency.

Al-Farābī emphasized that from a methodological standpoint, philosophy diverges from theology. Theological inquiry employs dialectical and sophistical methodologies, whereas philosophy utilizes demonstrative approaches. The discipline of theology is frequently identified as a type of philosophy that is characterized by uncertainty and ambiguity, whereas demonstrative philosophy is distinguished by

its emphasis on certainty. Philosophy takes precedence over religion, just as the user of tools precedes tools (Farābī 2001, 85). Al-Farābī's assertion finds full validation in Ibn Rushd's work *'Faṣl al-Maql'* (Rushd and Rafiabadi 2003, 135).

The inclination towards equating Islamic philosophy with theology stems from a lack of recognition regarding the essence and constraints of Islamic philosophy comprehensively and inclusively. Within his framework, Islamic philosophy is dichotomized solely into a methodological approach, akin to theology. Islamic philosophy is segmented into three dimensions: as a discipline, a methodology, and a way of life (Rizvi 2012, 33). Islamic philosophy possesses distinctive characteristics, styles, subject matter, and methodologies that set it apart from disciplines like theology, *fiqh*, mathematics, physics, ethics, and psychology. However, it also shares common ground with these sciences, leading al-Farābī to describe it as the "mother of science." The incorporation of philosophy in theology, *uṣūl al-fiqh*, and tafsir stems from its role as a methodology to support religion. Despite employing similar demonstrative rational methods as Islamic philosophy, theology is differentiated from it due to the nature of its subject matter. His assertion equating philosophy with theology thus presents a point of confusion (Ali and Almulla 2023, 1).

Philosophy's third role is as a way of life, signifying that Islamic philosophy serves as an object of study, a wellspring of knowledge and truth, and a methodology in itself. This position of philosophy carries implications for individuals engaged in its study and practice (Rizvi 2012, 33). Those embracing philosophy as a way of life earn the title of philosopher, contrasting with individuals leveraging philosophy solely as a tool, who are identified based on the subjects they explore, such as theologian, sufi, and *mufassīr*.

Another incoherence of Faiz's explanation is on the history of Islamic philosophy. He posits a division into Western and Eastern branches, associating the former with the peripatetic tradition and the latter with illumination. The Western lineage commences with al-Kindī and culminates with Ibn Rushd. In contrast, the Eastern strand encompasses the school of illumination, identifying figures such as Ibn Sīnā and Suhrawardī. Additionally, he mentions the theosophy of Mullā Ṣadrā (Jome, Ganjvar, and Sarmadi 2020, 1), marking a decline in Islamic philosophy following these developments.

One area of uncertainty pertains to his classification of Western and Eastern traditions. His characterization of the Western branch as peripatetic lacks clarity, particularly if it is linked to Aristotle, the progenitor of this tradition, who resided in Greece, a Western region. Moreover, attributing peripatetic solely to Ibn Rushd, a figure from Spain, seems problematic given the origins of other key thinkers like al-Kindī and al-Farābī. Furthermore, the narrative does not conclude with Ibn

Rushd, as scholars such as Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī continued to develop ideas rooted in Ibn Sīnā's concept of the unity of being (Sharipovna 2021, 17).

Another source of confusion lies in Faiz's depiction of the school of illumination originating in India with figures like Ibn Sīnā and Suhrawardī. However, historical works on Islamic philosophy do not support the claim that Suhrawardī, the founder of this school, hailed from India; rather, he was born in northwestern Iran (Obaidullah 2015, 135). In India, there exists a sufi order known as Suhrawardī (Mohabbat, Hussain, and Ihsan 2021, 340); however, it should be noted that this order is distinct from Suhrawardī al-Maqtūl, who is recognized as the originator of the Illumination School. Similarly, Ibn Sīnā's philosophical framework, often associated with Neo-Platonism due to its theory of emanation or the peripatetic tradition because of its rational underpinnings (Rizvi 2017, 841), contradicts his assertion of it being aligned with illumination. While some scholars like Seyyed Hossen Nasr and Henri Corbin hint at mystical elements in Ibn Sīnā's works (Szpiech 2010, 185), his omissions of primary sources contribute to the inconsistencies in his analysis of Islamic philosophy.

The occurrence of coherence in Faiz's thinking, as described above, is due to several factors. First, because of the limited space of social media itself, such as YouTube, which does not provide a direct interaction space. Second, because of the lack of reference to primary and authoritative sources in the field of Islamic philosophy. Third, because of the lack of comprehensiveness and depth in reading and researching Islamic philosophy. Fourth, errors in identifying, defining, and making boundaries between Islamic philosophy and other fields of science. The implication is the existence of oversimplification of the meaning, scope, and purpose of Islamic philosophy. In addition. Incoherence, oversimplification, and insufficient referencing can cause errors in interpreting Islamic philosophy, and this is proven based on the survey data at the beginning of this article.

Conclusion

Based on an examination of data, surveys, elucidations, debates, and defenses, the deduction can be drawn that the depiction of Islamic philosophy articulated on YouTube *Ngaji Philosophy* is perplexing and inconsistent in presenting historical data, identifying, making boundaries, categories, and scope. This perplexity and inconsistency bear implications for the definition and status of Islamic philosophy, indicating that Islamic philosophy is often misconstrued as synonymous with theology. However, Islamic philosophy is distinct from theology in terms of its breadth, subject of inquiry, and methodology, hence the nomenclature. Additional perplexities and inconsistencies emerge about the historical narrative of Islamic philosophy. In order to avoid

incoherence, confusion, and obscurity, it is necessary to be more detailed in presenting Islamic philosophy, more comprehensive, and to refer to primary and authoritative sources.

Notwithstanding these issues, encompassing Islamic Philosophy plays a pivotal role in disseminating, educating, and establishing the foundations of philosophy in general and Islamic philosophy in particular in Indonesia. The scope of the study is confined to a singular theme explored in a single episode, specifically, Pre-Discourse-Islamic Philosophy. Consequently, there exists a plethora of other themes within Islamic philosophy that could be explored in subsequent research endeavors, related to specific themes and in dialogue with modern discourses and thoughts, such as the philosophy of the soul in Islamic philosophy and its relationship to modern psychology, Islamic epistemology in the face of the advancement of artificial intelligence.

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