

Dr. Burhan Aḥmad Fārūqī's Concept Of Penetration Of Philosophy In Islāmic Sciences: An Analytical Study

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Abstract

Inception of some views and ideas under some methodology is the subject and area of functionality of philosophy. And Greek was the homeland of philosophy and it was nurtured there in the lap of Greek mythology. Islam has its own system of beliefs and convictions with its own system of emanation and methodology. Islam is not in need of any methodology other than that is prescribed in the holy Quran. Philosophy with all its methodologies was injected in Islam after the sorrowful insurgence of impracticality on Islam as a system. The amalgamated Islam was to be proved through utilizing the methods of the relevant portion. The question arises if there is any need of philosophy for Islām to be preached. Burhān Aḥmad Fārūqī (1905-1996) is the first ever philosopher among the Muslim scholars who felt that the issues must be resolved purely on the Qurānic methodology. It is very important to avoid the downfall of the Ummah to liberate Islam and the Muslims from the beliefs of other mythologies that can be penetrated through different methodologies. This paper provides an analytical study that Islāmic sciences were dragged to philosophy leaving the Qurānic methodology aside.

Keywords: System of Emanation, Insurgence of Impracticality, Amalgamated Islam Burhān Aḥmad Fārūqī, Downfall of the Ummah, Islāmic Sciences, Qurānic Methodology

(A) Introduction

Islāmic theology and Islāmic philosophy are taken for two synonymously equal and identical terms, but nothing is there that can be presented in this sense. All these are the bluffs delivered by the people who are not adept in both the fields of philosophy and theology. The raw-handed scholars in philosophy or theology had always been there who were often wrongly confused between these two terms. All the theological modules, upon which the skyscraper of Islam is based, are divinely defined and explained and are no longer from any corner tinged by philosophy. It can said that

both of the disciplines were traveling in the same coach of time and began to converse with each other and the common interest of talking was logic and reason. The entire theological approach is based on logic and reasoning and the same is the case with philosophy.

“The origin and inspiration of philosophy in Islām are quite different from those of Islāmic theology. Philosophy developed out of and around the nonreligious practical and theoretical sciences, it recognized no theoretical

limits other than those of human reason itself, and it assumed that the truth found by unaided reason does not disagree with the truth of Islām when both are properly understood.”¹

Islāmīc theology is purely revealed as it derives all of its parameters from Ilm bil Wahi, the philosophy engaged with it a lot of other sciences. Now about the philosophy, it is not necessary that if the person who is philosopher is a Muslim and the philosophy propounded by him is an Islāmīc philosophy.

Islāmīc philosophy was not a handmaid of theology. The two disciplines were related, because both followed the path of rational inquiry and distinguished themselves from traditional religious disciplines and from mysticism, which sought knowledge through practical, spiritual purification².

Islāmīc philosophy or philosophy in Islām is not something like a revealed commandment or an order of the Prophet ﷺ. It is something like an imported item that was interpolated to justify mysticism. Mysticism is the name of a practical phenomenon related to the purification of heart and for this noble purpose, philosophy was required to make it justified through its rational approach.

“Islāmīc theology was Islāmīc in the strict sense: it confined itself within the Islāmīc religious community, and it remained separate from the Christian and Jewish theologies that developed in the same cultural context and used Arabic as a linguistic medium.”³

Islāmīc philosophy does not depend upon the Islāmīc theology, but a relationship always exists there between them. The rational approach is common in both of them, as method of inquiry in them is based upon rationality. In both of them practical approach is common and goals are achieved through experimentation. Islāmīc theology was found only in Islāmīc societies and from there it was put into practice and the morality is developed is developed from there.

“No such separation is observable in the philosophy developed in the Islāmīc cultural context and written in Arabic: Muslims, Christians, and Jews participated in it and separated themselves according to the philosophic rather than the religious doctrines they held.”⁴

On the other hand, there are some moralists who are of the opinion that almost all types of moralities are derived and drove by the religion. They declared that particularly in the case of Islām along with all other activities; the moral values are extracted from the Islāmīc injunctions. “Ethical conceptions based on belief in God and life-after death, are determined by the nature of man’s ideas about God and life hereafter.”⁵

“The issue of the definition of Islāmīc philosophy has been controversial, and it probably should be classified as an essentially contested concept. There is nothing specifically Islāmīc about this issue, it occurs in all systems of philosophy which are classified under the label of a particular religion.”⁶

In Islāmīc philosophy the most debatable issue is the definition of philosophy because there is no specific as Islāmīc that is used under the

definition of philosophy. The parameters used in defining philosophy are not specific in Islāmic system of beliefs so, these perimeter are not termed as that they are pure Islāmic and can't be found in other systems of theology of other religions.

“Religion is a matter of faith and often seems to be opposed to philosophy, which is a system of ideas built on a foundation of reason. Yet much of the work which goes on under the label of Islāmic philosophy has nothing to do with religion at all or at least make no direct link with religion. One thinks in particular of logic here, and the other more technical aspects of philosophy. Then there is the fact that philosophy itself as a technical term had a range of meanings within the Islāmic world.”⁷

When we study about the achievements of philosophers and their philosophies, we will come to know, when people in certain area and in certain period of time became weaker in their faith, convictions and dogmas, the philosophers with their philosophies came forward and pooled up their achievements. In the centuries that produced great philosophers like Plato and Aristotle and are considered enriched in philosophy, logic and reasoning, the ecclesiastic approaches and interests were feeble to such an extent that they could not satisfy and prove a single idea related to any religion.

“The age of Socrates, Plato and Aristotle is considered as the golden age of philosophy. They have blown a new soul in the civilization and culture because of their ideas and thoughts. They arranged new ideas about the universe, the

soul and God. These ideas were transformed into the movements and then such a school of thought was produced, the free style of which had been deteriorating the convictions for long.”⁸

In the early days of Islām, the companions of the Prophet of Islām were steadfast in their convictions and firm in their faith in Allah and were lead hard in other beliefs of Islām. Indeed they were pure and practical Muslims and they have no time but to put Islām in their practices. Philosophical and logical argumentations could do nothing to lead them to the road other than that of Allah and the verge was kept on till the end of the era of all the four rightly guided caliphs of Islām.

“Islām is but beliefs, worships morality. Being open and above board and interesting, its basic principles were uniformly acceptable for all. The people who saw the Prophet and listened to his sayings, considered to act upon accordingly as their belief. It was not possible for them to become a prey to any reluctance. As long as they and their believers remained in the world, no philosophy could damage the force of the belief and religion of the Muslims.”⁹

The most common thing that is uniform in Islām is its uniformity the universality and that is its convictions and beliefs for all, worships and prayers for all and no specific areas in Islām are there that are specified for certain people. This uniformity in beliefs created uniformity in morality and this is the most beautiful facet of Islām. Islām is unparalleled in this regard as there is no example among a lot of religions of the world.

“After the rightly guided Caliph, the eagerness of governance indulged in the

sense of Caliphate and the political and social system of the Muslims got changed. In this regard, the Abbasid period is very important. They included their own will and voice along with tinge of their riches and luxuries in the eternal simplicity and equality of Islām. On the one side they transformed the Persian and Greek philosophies in to Arabic and on the other hand they developed the cultural and civilizational relations with the western nations.”¹⁰

Dr. Fārūqī is the only Muslim philosopher who is original particularly in his moral theory as all others extract their thoughts from their Greek masters. Dr. Fārūqī’s moral theory is purely extracted from the belief in the Oneness of Allah that in itself is derived from the holy Qurān. It is an astonishing and a jerking collusion in the sound and serene minds of the philosophers of the world, but an irrefutable fact that human morality and moral values are the outcomes of the beliefs in the attributes of Allah Al-Mighty, a right belief will infer in the form of rightful morality and vice versa. Man cannot live in isolation; to confine himself in his own life will toll heavy upon his nerves and resultantly he may end his life. He is bound to expose himself to his environment and to his fellow being; he has to show some attitude towards his whereabouts, he has to conceive ideas from this interaction and he is always curious to find out the realities of the objects scattered around him.

“Man becomes attentive with different kinds of desires against his objects. These desires are different aspects of human nature. These are called the forms of consciousness. Every form of consciousness discloses some facts that are different with

respect to their forms and bases.”¹¹.

When we think about the objects of the heaven and the earth, a loud voice of countlessness resound in our ears and all these things beg for our attentions. When we pay heed to this universe of objectiveness the images of picturesqueness take positions in our senses and according to the nature of the object positions in the chambers of senses are assigned. Theoretical consciousness, moral consciousness and religious consciousness are the main attitudes that are taking possession in our senses.

Under theoretical consciousness all the physical objects are put into discussion and this discussion is inferred into physical sciences.

“The theoretical consciousness is that desire that is produced in a man against the external world and epistemology or modern logic is the science which studies the nature and implications of this consciousness”.¹²

Human consciousness that is related to the attributes of man that are commonly known as humanity are called moral consciousness.

“Another desire that is created in a man is the moral consciousness i.e. this desire is created against humanity and ethics or the philosophy of morality is the science that discusses implications and laws about this subject.”¹³

The human consciousness that is always chasing after the reality is known as religious consciousness.

“Religious consciousness is that desire that is created in man against the reality of the right for its closeness and theology or religious philosophy is that branch of knowledge whose subject is

the nature and implications of this consciousness."¹⁴

The problem that the UMMAH had been facing at least for the last twelve centuries was the amalgamation of the revelation with the man-made physical and metaphysical sciences. According to Dr. Fārūqī this amalgamation is the root cause of all the problems. It is a serious problem and to poke into it is also a very dangerous and Dr. Fārūqī is smart enough to handle it. And for the purpose he elaborated the concept of theoretical, moral and religious consciousness. According to Dr. Fārūqī, the separation of all the three types of consciousness is necessary to draw guidance from the holy Qurān.

When man opened his eyes, he saw some objects in front of him, his theoretical consciousness took off and kept on soaring higher and higher as the process of seeing the objects was unending, similarly at the very earlier stage his interaction with his fellow being appeared as it was the demand of his social nature and likewise curious nature compelled him to reach the origins of the objects around him. Theoretical consciousness that is the responsible of all the physical sciences and social sciences, moral consciousness the custodian of ethics or morality and the religious consciousness that is emerging the religions; all the three agents have their own separate jurisdictions but, sometimes they become a supplement of one another and at some other place they differ to one another. The discipline of philosophy fixates their limits and limitations and at some stages manages a chain of interaction among them.

(B) Empirical Philosophy

According to Dr. Fārūqī study is from outwards to inwards or it can be conducted from inwards to outwards and he termed these studies as subjective and objective studies respectively. The empiricists took their environment under their observation and study each and every thing to reach some inferences and they always tried anything out of the entire universe from which the entire universe sprouted out.

"حسی خیالات کے مفکرین
مدرکات یعنی کثرت کی
طرف سے ابتدا کرتے
ہیں۔ اور ان کی خواہش یہ
ہے کہ کوئی وجود موجود
ایسا تلاش کیا جائے اور
اسے ایسے وجودِ واحد کے
طور پر لایا جا سکے جو
تمام موجودات کا منبع
ہو۔ طالیس ایسی ٹھوس
وحدت پانی میں سمجھتا ہے
جسے وہ تمام اشیاء کا اصل
اصول قرار دیتا ہے۔"¹⁵

(The empirically-minded thinkers start from objects; multiplicity. They want to seek some empirical object which may be used as a principal of unity farming the basis of all existence. According to Thales this concrete unity is in water which he finds to be the principal of all things.)

Thales took water as the sprouting factor and took a stand that each and every thing in this universe has the main ingredient as water, so water is that element that is the responsible of all beings. He further strengthened his point of view from the fact that no life without water.

"انکسامندر پاتا ہے کہ وہ
وحدت مادہ غیر متعین ہے۔
انکسامینیسس کہتا ہے کہ وہ
ہوا ہے۔ دیمقراطیس یہ مانتا
ہے کہ ایسی وحدت اشیاء
مادی کے ذرات یعنی
اجزائے لا یتجزی ہیں اور
خلاہ برطانوی حسینین کے
گروہ کا دعویٰ ہے کہ وہ
وحدت تصورات
واحساسات ہیں ان میں سے
ہر ایک مفکر یہ واضح
کرنے کی سعی کرتا ہے کہ
حقیقت اشیاء اس موجود
میں مضمحل ہے۔"¹⁶

(Alexamander finds it in the undetermined matter. Anaximenes finds it in the air. Democritus finds such a unitary in particles of physical things 'atoms and space.

The British School of empiricists finds it in ideas and sensations. Each of them tries to show that the essence of things consist in these entities.)

In their subject oriented study the philosophers like Alexamander, Anaximenes, Democritus and some British philosophers of subjective study took matter, air, atom and space, ideas and sensations as the basic and sprouting element respectively, but all of them were wandering in skies of their imaginations, and was there that could be termed as fact related to this world.

لیکن جب ان وجودوں پر اس نظر سے غور کیا جائے کہ وہ اصول وحدت کا کام دے سکیں تو ثابت یہ ہوتا ہے کہ وہ حقیقتاً تصورات ہیں۔ پس ان میں سے ہر ایک کوشش اس امر کی ہے کہ وحدت کو ایک ایسے تصور (وجود معقول فی الذہن) کی حیثیت سے متصور کیا جائے جس سے کثرت کو منتزع کیا جا سکے۔¹⁷

(But when these entities are taken as principle of unity, are proved to be really concepts. Each of these attempts is there for an attempt to conceive the unity as a concept from which the multiplicity is deduced.)

According to Dr. Fārūqī all these attempts proved to be a wild goose chase and useless as none of the ideas seemed to approach the reality and the modern sciences whether physical or metaphysical, rejected these ideas unanimously.

(C) Rational Philosophy

The rationalists who trust in the findings of the five senses and nothing beyond are considered as something that can exist. Their point of view is that the thought and being are the two names of a single thing means that thought and being

is the same thing. And the deduction of other things from it is very easy.

"استدلالی خیال کے مفکرین یہ مانتے ہیں کہ تصور اور وجود حقیقتاً ایک ہیں۔ بالفاظ دیگر تصور ہی وجود کی حقیقت ہے، وہ اصول وحدت کی جستجو میں طور پر ایسے تصور یا نظام تصورات میں کرتے ہیں جس سے ہر چیز کو منتزع کیا جا سکے۔¹⁸

(The rationalist thinkers recognized that thought and being are really the one and same thing; or that thought is the essence of being. They seek the principle of unity expressly in a concept or system of concepts from which everything could be deduced logically.)

فرمانیدس سمجھتا ہے کہ ایسا تصور وجود ہے۔ افلاطون مانتا ہے کہ وہ تصور یا تصور خیر ہے۔ ارسطو کے نزدیک وہ تصور صورت ہے۔ سپینوزا جوہر کو ایسا تصور سمجھتا ہے اور ہیگل تصور مطلق کو جو تمام مقولات کو اپنے اندر جذب کر لیتا ہے۔¹⁹

(Parmenides considers that such a concept is 'being'. Plato takes it an idea or the idea of good. According to Aristotle it is form. Spinoza thinks it as a substance and Hegel takes it an absolute idea that can absorb all the system of ideas.)

Whether it is idea or conception, it is form or being; none of the theories are there that can answer the confronted question and no of the theories is there that can address the issues faced by man.

(D) The Muslims Adopted Philosophy as a sideline

When philosophy entered into the Muslim areas, the Muslims adopted it to solve some problems like that of mysticism and spirituality. The Muslims did not adopt it as a profession as it was there in the time of the Greek masters like Aristotle and Plato.

“Of course the idea of philosophy as a technical profession is quite modern and Socrates would himself have been horrified at the prospect of philosophers being paid for their services. He argued that the philosopher should be able to earn his living doing something else, thus leaving him free to say what he likes when doing philosophy.”²⁰

When we study the history of Muslim Philosophers we would come to know that the philosophers like Ibn Ṭufail, Ibn Baja, Ibn Rushd and al-Ghazālī adopted some professions other than philosophy. They only consulted it into some issues where logic and reasoning as used in philosophy, were being used.

Most of the Islāmic philosophers earned their livings doing a variety of occupations, and philosophy itself was often a sideline or minor interest in a far more extensive career as something else.”²¹

It seems that it was an earlier practice among the Muslims that they did not adopt it as their profession, but latter philosophers joined the courts of the kings and earned a lot using their skills in philosophy.

(E) **The Belief in Oneness of Allah: A Moral Factor**

Controlling authority; the conception of the God plays a vital role in the formulation of the structure of a certain morality. The belief in the oneness of Allah and His attributes, the belief in the life after death, the belief in the

accountability and reward and punishment therein and the belief in the pleasure and wrath of Allah are the driving and dragging forces to follow the role model of Morality embodied in the conduct of the prophet of Islām. So, clarity in the religion is the key to noble morality. People who believe in the oneness of Allah have certain morality and the level of the morality depends upon the level of the purity of their faith in Allah. The moral status of a pure Muslim has an ideal Islāmic morality and the morality of the Muslims who are not practical in their approach, have always inclination to that of the polytheistic morality. The people, who do not believe in God or believe but, associate somebody with Him or to His attributes, have a different type of morality. In a Muslim society, it is observed that people aver to be Muslims but, they are guilty of associating something that is created by the Creator, with the Creator who is One and Only. They have some goddesses in their imaginations and have believed that some powers are vested with these falsified goddesses. Their morality and that of the pure Muslims, is seen diametrically opposite in approach.

“These polytheistic beliefs have reached to absurdity the doctrine of life-after-death with the result that the whole structure of morality built up by religion has crumbled to dust. Though many moral teachings of religions are still preserved in the pages of religious literature and are endowed with all outward show of respect, nevertheless, beliefs of the nature have provided innumerable avenues of escape from the necessity of fulfilling the moral obligations, and that too in such a wonderful way that whichever avenue of escape they choose to take, they are always sure of

reaching invariably the goal of solvation.”²²

The conviction of the life after death made all the conceptions of moralities meaningful as it provides a sanction to avoid wrongs and to act upon the rightful morality. A lot of sanctions are there to stimulate for the morality, but the escapades are very easy and the morality and the moral values are ridiculed.

(F) **An Exclusive Sanction behind the Muslim Moral System**

There is an exclusive system of sanctions behind the Islāmic concept of morality and it is the blessing of the belief in hereafter. The concept of reward for good deeds in the form of paradise is a sanction behind the noble kind of Islāmic morality among the general Muslims and the concept of punishment of throwing in the depth of hell is the source of the eradication of the ill morality. The concept of reward by Allah and the wrath of Allah otherwise is a spontaneous system bestowed by the exalted belief in the Oneness of Allah.

“A few acts, a few ceremonies, a few rites and rituals and a few restrictions in the sphere of individual and family life are all that God appears to demand of His believers and, in exchange for these offerings, He has prepared for them a soothing paradise. If they fulfill the demands in relation to God, they are at liberty to pursue other affairs of this world as they wish.”²³

Being Rahman and Raheem to His people, Allah’s objective is to forgive the shortcomings and sins of His people. But, the people who are raw in Islām and not firm in faith and even could not understand the true meaning of the attributes of Allah, keep on doing sinful deeds and adopt the verge of ill morality. “If they fail to carry out even these easy religious duties, they can still hope for Devine forgiveness which will throw open to them the gates of

Paradise and secure for them unrestricted entrance therein despite of their heavy load of sins.”²⁴

Allah’s true people, true in his love and firm in beliefs; the practical Muslims always fear Allah and keep themselves far away from the sins. They always keep in mind that Allah is Pure (Subhan), and He dislikes the dirt of sins and they purified themselves to be liked by their Lord.

(G) **Pre Islāmic Arabian Thoughts**

Moral and cultural developments are directly proportional and as we know that most of the Arabs were devoid of permanent habitation that in itself is the basic element of the cultural nourishment. Thus the moral lineage of the Arabs is of no use for the moral issues of this age because we cannot find any type of occasional level of any art or science that can be associated with moral development.

Restless and vagabond, with no permanent habitations, they stood at an occasional level of culture and were innocent of these arts and sciences that square measure associated in our minds with civilized life. The art of reading and writing was confined solely to many individuals in sure business centres, whereas illiteracy was nearly universal among the sons of the desert. Their mental horizon was slim, and therefore the struggle for existence in their inhospitable atmosphere was thus severe that their energies were exhausted in satisfying the sensible and material wants of standard of living, and that they had very little time or inclination for non-secular or philosophic speculation. Their faith was an imprecise theism and their philosophy was summed up in an exceedingly range of pithy sayings.

(H) **Greek Philosophy about Morality**

It was considered that to the Western thinkers, up to the Stoics and Skeptics, Greek philosophy opened the doors in a particular methodology of thinking that provided the roots for the Western intellectual tradition. Here, there is generally a definite preference for the time period of reason and rational thought. We tend to discover proto-

scientific explanations of the life among the Milesian thinkers, which we tend to hear thinker posit atoms—indivisible and invisible units—as the basic stuff of all matter. With Socrates comes a sustained inquiry into ethical matters—an orientation towards human living and so the most effective life for social groups. With thinkers come one in each of the foremost creative and versatile ways in which of doing philosophy, that some have since tried to imitate by writing philosophical dialogues covering topics still of interest currently in ethics, political thought, philosophy, and philosophy.

“Plato’s student, Aristotle, was one of the most prolific of ancient authors. He wrote treatises on each of these topics, as well as on the investigation of the natural world, including the composition of animals. The Hellenists—Epicurus, the Cynics, the Stoics, and the Skeptics—developed schools or movements devoted to distinct philosophical lifestyles, each with reason at its foundation.”²⁵

Philosophers were perhaps habitual about stating the ideas of the intellectuals of the past and in this way the philosophers of the remote past are still alive there in the books of the present era the love and interest for the past and antiques have been alive.

“With this preference for reason came a critique of traditional ways of living, believing, and thinking, which sometimes caused political trouble for the philosophers themselves. Xenophanes directly challenged the traditional anthropomorphic depiction of the gods, and Socrates was put to death for allegedly inventing new gods and not

believing in the gods mandated by the city of Athens.”²⁶

The problem of the general people had been always there that adore their gods too much and they never wanted to listen a single word against their gods. Whether it is Plato or Aristotle, people were ready to put them to the same fate, if an intellectual was even to say something against their gods.

“After the fall of Alexander the Great, and because of Aristotle’s ties with Alexander and his court, Aristotle escaped the same fate as Socrates by fleeing Athens. Epicurus, like Xenophanes, claimed that the mass of people is impious, since the people conceive of the gods as little more than super-humans, even though human characteristics cannot appropriately be ascribed to the gods.”²⁷

The insertion of a lot of gods in the convictions of the general mass was meant to construct a frail morality and the intellectuals of all the times were going after to strengthen the morality and resultantly they weakened the culture and traditions related to the theology of many gods.

In short, not only did ancient Greek philosophy pave the way for the Western intellectual tradition, including modern science, but it also shook cultural foundations in its own time.”²⁸

The credit goes to the Greek Philosophy, that the blind faith in superstitions decreased in Europe and the logic and reasoning got prevalence in the society and the path of scientific thoughts was paved.

(H) Conclusion

It is absolutely below sagacity on the end of the eastern scholastic circle that everything emerging from Europe is venomous for Islam and Muslims. Interaction with other nations and the loose grip at the basic beliefs along with the little and incomplete and fragmental knowledge of Islam inferred into the inculcation of superstitions in the hard and fast system of beliefs of this divine religion. It is logic and reasoning; the inevitable and unavoidable elements of philosophy, brought through modernity and scientific methodology in Islam and in the Islamic sciences that is the main stay against which Islam is stranding. In the earlier and the foundation years of Islam the Muslims were practical and were very close to Islam and the earned results in the form of nobility of

character and morality. It was without any conducting media and resultantly the real Islam was prevailing and surviving. After the loose practice of the Muslims in Islam and Islamic injunctions, they were to prove the truthfulness of Islam and for the purpose they were to consult philosophy and the philosophical methodology. Very few among the Muslims were there who moved to the Qurānic methodology, and they wasted their time and energy to drive philosophy in Islam and Islam in philosophy. Whereas Islam is the revealed religion, revealed according to the human nature by the Creator and Lord of man.

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²⁵ <http://muslimphilosophy.com/hmp/7.htm>

²⁶<http://muslimphilosophy.com/hmp/7.htm>

²⁷<http://muslimphilosophy.com/hmp/7.htm>

²⁸ <http://muslimphilosophy.com/hmp/7.htm>