

# Muslim Scientists From The East: A Comparison Thought Of Al-Kindi And Ar-Razi

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## Abstract

The development of science is inseparable from philosophy, this is because philosophy is the parent of all science itself. With the efforts of Muslim leaders to translate philosophical books into Arabic, there is a new science in Islam. In this process also arises differences of opinion from each philosophical figure. This research will compare the philosophical thoughts of Al-Kindi and Al-Razi. The research method used is the literature review. The data sources in this research are journals, articles, books, and proceedings that are directly related to this theme. The concept of thought compared in this study is the concept of soul, morals, and ethics from Al-Kindi and Al-Razi. Islamic thinkers like Al-Kindi and Al-Razi provided numerous avenues for the advancement of contemporary science. Thanks to their unwavering determination, Muslims reached the Golden Age of their era. Furthermore, a large number of Islamic scientists who worked in related or even unrelated fields emerged from their ideas. The roles played by Al-Kindi and Al-Razi demonstrate how human beings were endowed with minds that enabled them to reason and learn about everything in the universe, whether it takes the shape of knowledge, logic, or discovery

Keywords: Al-Kindi, Al-Razi, Philosophy of the East

## **Introduction**

Philosophy comes from the word "Philosophia" (Greek), which is a compound word consisting of two words "Philo" and "Sophia" which means love and wisdom. Thus, it can be understood as the love of wisdom. In addition, the word philosophy in English is called "philosophy" which in Indonesian is referred to as philosophy or falsafah in Arabic. Philosophy itself gives freedom to the human brain to think, this aims only to know the certainty of a problem. However, whether the results obtained or what is known should be trusted or not is another matter (Faizah, 2017).

Before the emergence of Islamic philosophy, there were various thoughts in both the East and West, including ancient Egypt, Sumeria, Babylon, Assyria, India, China, and Greece. The history of the development of philosophy in the Islamic world takes place through very long stages, both through external and internal paths of Islamic teachings. The external path in question is the discovery of Greek, Egyptian, and Persian philosophical thought, as well as the discovery of Islamic and non-Islamic figures, which often causes theological controversy, which in principle can only be resolved by logical philosophical argumentation. The inner path is a strong encouragement from the holy books, both from the verses of the Koran and from the examples given by the Prophet Muhammad SAW about the importance of using reason. Many verses of the Quran submit to and even require the use of logical reasoning, whether for the sake of knowing God or otherwise (Kanafi, 2019).

For Islamic thinkers, philosophy is essentially a search for truth and ultimate conviction, which leads to practical human needs, both material and spiritual. Muslim thinkers tried to find facts, truths, and perspectives that free them from doubt. The goal of philosophy is not just a synthesis of various sciences to metaphysics, but a synthesis between essence and purpose. Islamic thinkers wanted to satisfy not only intellectual but also moral, religious and social impulses. Therefore, philosophy is considered an important theoretical foundation for an ideal life (Khan, 2023).

The development of science is inseparable from philosophy, this is because philosophy is the parent of all science itself. Philosophical thought continues to develop according to its civilization. Where the development of this philosophy can be grouped based on their respective civilizations that are influenced by cultural backgrounds, environments, regions, beliefs, and so on where philosophical thinking was born and developed. Philosophy also plays a major role in the creation of various new branches of science. Where these new branches of science brought a new civilization progress for humanity at that time (Ruzakki & Maimunah, 2021).

With the development and new civilization, new philosophers from all over the world also emerged. Especially in the Islamic world itself, philosophers from east to west appeared. With this philosopher comes differences in thought and views on a matter. They describe the concepts of the natural semester according to their thoughts.

This is what encourages researchers to compare the thoughts of philosophers from the east, namely Al-Kindi and Ar-Razi regarding some of their famous concepts of thought. The concepts of thought that will be compared in this study are the concept of soul, the concept of ethics, and the concept of morals.

## **Method**

This research uses a library study approach. Through this method, the author collected various materials from the library, including reference works, the results of previous similar studies, articles, and magazines related to the relevant issues.

These collected sources helped the author to gain a comprehensive understanding of the thoughts of Al-Kindi and Al-Razi (Nazir, 2014). By referring to these sources, the author gets the framework of the thoughts of Al-Kindi and Al-Razi who are famous as Islamic philosophers from the East. The method used in this research is descriptive analysis where the collected sources are analyzed and then described. At this stage, the author carefully analyzes the sources collected. The author reads, understands, and knows the thoughts of Al-Kindi and Al-Razi from various sources collected. In the following, the author describes and summarizes the important conclusions resulting from the analysis. Library research limits its activities to the collection of library materials without field research (Zed, 2014).

The method used is descriptive analysis. The author compares the thoughts of Al-Kindi and Al-Razi related to their three main thoughts, namely the concept of soul, the concept of ethics, and the concept of morals. Thus, this study makes an important contribution to broadening our understanding of Al-Kindi and Al-Razi's thoughts and the differences in their thoughts.

## **Findings and Discussion**

### ***Biography of Al-Kindi***

Al-Kindi is known as the first Muslim philosopher of Arab descent, his full name is Abu Yusuf Jacob ibn Isaac ibn al-Shabban ibn Imran ibn Muhammad ibn al-Ash'as ibn Qa'is al-Kindi. He is popularly known as Al-Kindi, which is attributed to Kindah, a leading pre-Islamic tribe which is a branch of Banu Kahlan who settled in Yemen (Aziza Aryati, 2015). He was born in Kufa around 185 AH (801 AD) to a wealthy and honorable family. His great-grandfather, Al-Ash'as ibn Qais was one of the companions of the Prophet who died with Sa'ad ibn Abi Waqqas in the battle between the Muslims and the Persians in Iraq. His father Ishaq ibn al-Shabbah was the governor of Kufa during the reign of Al-Mahdi (775-785 AD) and Al-Rashid (786-809 AD). His father died when he was still a child, but he still had the opportunity to study well in Bashrah and Baghdad where he could mingle with famous scholars (Umar & Indo Satalia, 2022).

Al-Kindi's education began in Kufa, where he studied the Qur'an, Arabic grammar, literature, arithmetic, fiqh, and theology. Noteworthy, the city of Kufa at that time was the center of Islamic science and culture, in addition to Basrah, and Kufa tended to rational scientific studies (aqliyah). These conditions and situations seem to have led al-Kindi to choose and explore science and philosophy in his later years (Achmad Khudori Soleh, 2016).

Scholars differ in opinion about the death of al-Kindi, Mustaffa 'Abd al-Raziq for example said that al-Kindi died in 252 AH, while Massignon, Henry Corbin, and Nellino agreed that al-Kindi's death occurred in 260 AH. Meanwhile, Yaqut al-Himawi believes that al-Kindi died after the age of 80 years or less (Restiana Mustika Sari & Yudi Setiadi, 2020).

### ***Biography of Al-Razi***

Al-Razi has the curial name Abu Bakr Muhammad bin Zakaria Al-Razi. He was born in Rayy, near Tehran which is now known as Iran. Al-Razi is known as a doctor, philosopher, chemist, and free thinker. In the Western world, he is known as Rhazes.

In his youth, he was a diamond maker, a money changer, and a musician. However, he also lived moving from one city to another. He was the greatest doctor born from the womb of the golden history of Islam (Drajat, 2002). In the city of Rayy, he studied medicine to ibn Rabban al-Thabari. So

he was appointed as the leader of the hospital in Rayy when Manshur ibn Ishaq ibn Ahmad ibn Azad became the governor of Rayy (Anshori, 2016).

### *Thoughts of Al-Kindi & Al-Razi*

#### Concept of the Soul

According to al-Kindi, human souls originated from the world-soul. al-Kindi found it difficult to explain the abode of the spiritual human soul in the temporal-material human body. For him, the soul was uncomposed, simple, noble and perfect. Its substance comes from God, and its relationship with God is like the relationship between light and the sun. The soul and body each have their own form, because the body is full of lust, and the soul always tries to oppose it. Thanks to its purity, the soul is able to grasp true knowledge of a spiritual nature. Whereas the senses can only capture material things. This kind of human sensory knowledge is like animal knowledge.

The rational faculty is capable of knowing the meaning of the universal spiritual essence. The human soul can attain true knowledge by giving up animalism, optimizing thinking activity, leaving the material world, and concentrating on contemplating God. And that we do not come to this realm like a footbridge or a bridge over which waders cross, having no lasting place. The permanent place we hope for is the sublime higher realm where our souls will move after death (Pattimahu, 2017).

Al-Kindi divided the powers of the soul into three: appetitive, irascible, and cognitive. Like Plato, he compared the powers of the soul by likening the power of thinking to science because the other two powers (anger and lust) are the two horses that pull the area. If the intellect can develop properly, then the other two powers of the soul.

According to Al-Razi's thoughts regarding the concept of the soul, the universal soul is the second eternal source. In natural objects, there is life force and motion that is difficult to know because it is formless which comes from the universal soul which is eternal. But because it is possessed by the instinct to unite with the first matter, then there is a form that can accept the physical substance. While the first matter is without physicality, God came to the aid of the spirit by creating the universe including the human body occupied by the spirit, so that the soul could vent its cruel lust by taking material pleasures (Ismail, 2013).

For this reason, God gave the soul the potential of reason that can make humans realize not to be deceived by material pleasures, and realize that the real world and true pleasure are outside the material world. The soul remains in the material world as long as it has not managed to purify itself; and this purification can be done through philosophy. When the soul is pure, it can enter its original realm again. That is when the material world is destroyed and returns to the original material (Drajat, 2002).

In his book, *al-Thibb al-Ruhani (Medicine of the Soul)* it is clear that al-Razi gives the highest respect to reason. According to him, reason is God's greatest gift to humans. Thanks to reason humans become nobler than animals, know many things, improve life, achieve goals, and even know God. Without reason, humans are like animals. Therefore, reason must be respected and must not be harassed; it must be used as a judge for all problems (Ismail, 2013).

Their comparison regarding the soul is about the phase after the soul and body separate. Al-Kindi argued that when our soul and body separate, the soul will return to its original matter and the body will slowly become extinct. The pure soul will go directly to its original realm while the shabby soul must travel from one material to another for purification, after a long time then the shabby soul becomes pure and can enter its original realm. Whereas Al-Razi's opinion is that when the soul and body

are separated, the soul will stay in this material realm until it is pure, only then can it enter its original realm and leave the body which will return to its original material.

### The Concept of Ethics

Al-Kindi's ethics is closely related to the definition of philosophy or philosophical ideals. Philosophy is an attempt to imitate the deeds of God as far as human abilities can reach. What is meant by this definition is that humans have perfect virtues, also given a definition that is an exercise to die. What is meant is the mortification of the passions by putting them to death in order to attain virtue. The outward pleasures of life are vices. Working to obtain external pleasure means abandoning the use of reason.

Ar-Razi's concept of ethics is teleological in nature, meaning that a value can be said to be good or bad depending on the final consequences of the moral action. As with miserliness, ar-Razi still recognizes that miserliness is a despicable act. However, he sees miserliness from the intention and the final consequence of the action. If they are miserly on the pretext of pleasure alone to enrich themselves will be judged as bad. On the other hand, it will not be bad if the intention is to save oneself for fear of unwanted things happening in the future. Similarly, generosity will be of good value if it is in accordance with the path of harmony/alignment.

Charity is a good trait, but if it is so excessive there is nothing left to donate. This will also have a bad impact on himself and possibly on his family. Ar-Razi calls it *ta'dil al-af'al al-nufus* as a balancing act of the soul (Hamdani, 2020).

The comparison of *al-Kindi's* and *Al-Razi's* thoughts on ethics lies in the results of their actions. Al-Kindi sees ethics as a human endeavor to become better, while Al-Razi sees ethics as the result of deeds done during his lifetime.

### The Concept of Morals

According to Al-Kindi, philosophy should deepen man's knowledge of the self, and a philosopher must lead a moral life. Wisdom is not sought for oneself (Aristotle), but for a happy life. Al-Kindi condemned the clerics who traded religion for self-enrichment and the philosophers who displayed an animalistic spirit to maintain their position in the state. He felt himself a victim of the state's tyranny like Socrates (Umar & Indo Satalia, 2022). In his distress, the spirit of philosophy consoled him and directed him to exercise courage and wisdom in balance as a personal virtue, but also justice to improve the state system. As a philosopher, Al-Kindi was concerned that the Shari'a did not ensure the natural development of personality. Therefore, in morals or morals, he prioritizes the Socratic method (Aziza Aryati, 2015).

As for Al-Razi's thinking, that behavior must be based on the instructions of the ratio. Man needs to know his shortcomings so he can ask a friend who has the ability to reason to tell him about the shortcomings. The soul factor is one of the bases of Al-Razi's treatment. According to him, there is a close relationship between body and soul. For example, mental emotions will not occur except through sensory perception. Excessive mental emotion will affect the balance of the body, resulting in doubts and melancholy. Similarly, the nature of *hasut* or envy will be able to bring danger to humans psychologically and physically, excessive worry can also cause hallucinations and melancholy or self-melancholy (Ismail, 2013).

### The Influence of Al-Kindi and Al-Razi

Al-Kindi was the first key to opening the gates of philosophy in the Islamic world. Through his efforts, Al-Kindi succeeded in paving the way for Muslims to accept philosophy. Al-Kindi had a great influence and contribution to the development of science in the Islamic world. History proves that Al-Kindi's achievements have made him crowned as a famous Muslim philosopher who is equal to other giant thinkers. He was the first Islamic philosopher to harmonize religion with philosophy.

He paved the way for al-Farabi, Ibn Sina, and Ibn Rushd. He gave two different views. The first followed the path of the logicians and philosophized religion. The second views religion as divine knowledge and places it above philosophy. Divine knowledge is known through the prophets. However, through philosophical interpretation, religion became compatible with philosophy. Al-Kindi's greatness has been proven by Al-Kindi's influence on the progress of Islamic civilization; the progress of science in the Islamic world spearheaded by Al-Kindi has led Al-Kindi and his works to decorate the kingdom of Al-Mu'tasim. Al-Kindi's thought has inspired many other thinkers at that time. It was translated into Latin by Gerard of Cremona. These works greatly influenced medieval Europe (Maksalmina, 2014).

Al-Razi's most famous work is al-Hawi, which is now used as a reference by doctors and the most important book in the field of medicine. This book includes an encyclopedia of medical science, starting with all diseases that exist throughout the human body and explaining how to treat them. It also contains a section on prevention before the appearance of these diseases.

### Conclusion

Islamic philosophers such as Al-Kindi and Al-Razi opened many doors to modern science. Their dedication led Muslims to the Golden Age of their time. Not only that, but from their thoughts came many other Islamic scientists who worked in the same or even new fields.

The roles of Al-Kindi and Al-Razi reflect that humans were created with a mind that allows us to think and find out everything in this world. Be it in the form of truth, justification, to discovery. This is also what we must do as academic successors. With the support of adequate facilities and infrastructure, we can see the world more broadly. Therefore, our attitude and curiosity about all things must be revived. Do as much research as possible in search of truth or even discovery.

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