

THE MUSLIM SCHOLARS' ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE 'FRUIT' OF HELLENISM: A HISTORICAL SURVEY OF THE MUSLIM LITERATURES AGAINST FALSAFA, MANTIQ AND KALAM

Abstrak:

Kontak kebudayaan Peradaban Yunani dengan kebudayaan lain telah melahirkan tradisi intelektual yang sering diidentifikasi dengan tradisi Hellenisme. Dikenal dengan daya tariknya, tradisi Hellenisme ini telah 'menggoda' banyak tokoh sarjana Muslim untuk menterjemahkan, meringkas dan memberikan komentar terhadap warisan intelektual Yunani. Kegiatan intelektual Muslim ini melahirkan apa yang disebut oleh Nurcholish Madjid (1997:24) dengan 'buah' Hellenisme, neo-platonisme (falsafa), neo-skolastisisme (kalam), dan neo-aristotelianisme (mantiq).

Di samping banyak yang 'terpukau' dengan, dan mengadopsi, produk hellenisme ini, tidak sedikit yang menolak, mengecam dan mengkritik produk tersebut. Sejarah menyaksikan banyaknya literatur yang terinspirasi oleh, dan mengecam, produk hellenisme ini.

Penulis dalam makalah ini memberikan ulasan historis terhadap sejumlah literatur yang menggambarkan sikap resisten dan kritis terhadap falsafah, mantiq dan kalam, tiga produk intelektual hellenisme. Kajian ini menjelaskan bahwa oposisi Muslim terhadap tradisi Hellenistik ini begitu gencar dan agresif sehingga di setiap period sejarah dapat ditemukan literatur yang ditulis untuk mengecamnya.

Key Words: *Historical Survey, Falsafa, Mantiq, Kalam, Muslim's Opposition*

I. Introduction

The opposition against falsafa, mantiq, and kalam will be dealt with individually due to following obvious reasons. *First*, Muslims have different attitudes toward this 'fruit' of Hellenism. Some of them were opposed to falsafa, but receptive to scholastic kalam and Aristotle's logic, while others were theologians who were opposed to falsafa and mantiq. Some of them, such as al-Gazali and Ibn Hazm, adopted Aristotle's logic and regarded it as an instrument to gain the truth but rejected some

thesis of the philosophers, which could lead Muslims to heresy. *Secondly*, those who opposed against falsafa, mantiq and kalam at once, condemned the scholars who adopted 'foreign sciences'. To this criteria belongs the autodafè of some theological works of al-Gazali, i.e. *ihya Ulum al-Din*, and works by Ibn Hazm.

II. Muslim Opposition to the 'Fruit' of Hellenism, i.e. Falsafa, Mantiq and Kalam

A. Muslim Opposition to Falsafa

The earliest Muslim opposition to falsafa, Van Koningsveld suggests, occurred during the last part of the second century of Hijra when the abhorrence to "the books of infidels" increased among the fore runners of the Jurists such as al-Awza'i (d. 159/774), Malik b. Anas (d. 178/795) and al-Shafi'i (d. 203/820).¹ Their oppositon, Van Koningsveld suggests, was related to their exhortation of the destruction of the "ancient books" which contain the "ancient sciences" among which are mantiq and falsafa. In sum, he says that the unfavourable attitude of some of the early authorities in Islam toward falsafa was closely connected to their opposition against things Greek, which was specifically reflected in their "suspicion and overt enmity" toward the "Books of the Infidels" (the Books of the Greeks).²

The opposition against falsafa by the Muslims not only occurred in the East of the Muslim World, but also in the West. This can be clearly seen in the fact, according to Van Koningsveld, that books of falsafa were burnt. Al-Mansur b. Abi Amir (d. 392/1002) was said to have ordered the people to take out all the books of falsafa and logic from the library and ordered them to incinerate them.³

However, the systematic refutation against falsafa took place in the latest part of fifth century of Hijra, when "the greatest figure in the history of the Islamic reaction to Neo-platonism."⁴ al-Gazali (d. 505/1111), composed *Tahafut al-Falasifa*. In that celebrated work, he, according to Fakhry, 'enumerates sixteen metaphysical and four physical propositions that have an obvious religious relevance and against which

the unguarded believers must be warned.' Of these propositions, three are obnoxious, and consequently those who uphold them deserve the charge of irreligion (*kufr*). Those three obnoxious theses are: the eternity of the world, the negation of God's knowledge of the particulars, and the denial of the resurrection of the body.⁵

When comparing al-Gazali's attitude toward philosophers with that of Ibn al-Salah, Griffel suggests that al-Gazali's harsh judgment on the philosophers was reflected by his legal opinion saying that the philosophers are apostates who might be killed on the ground of their apostasy. Whereas Ibn al-Salah, Griffel suggests, maintains that the philosophers should be given two choices: either they be killed or be forced to revert to Islam.⁶

Falsafa was also subjected to the opposition of an Andalusian traveler and writer who was born at Valencia in 540/1145 and died in Alexandria on 27 Sha'ban 614/29 November 1217, Abu 'l-Hasan Muhammad b. Jubayr al-Kinani.⁷ His opposition is well reflected, according to Tritton, by his harsh judgment on the philosophers, as can be read in the following verses:

A sect has come forth in our age, a bane to it, [saying]
In religion follow only the creed of Ibn Sina or Abu Nasr⁸
Danger to Islam from a sect which busies minds with folly;
It has cast the true religion behind its back and claims to possess
wisdom and falsafa.⁹

Falsafa was also encountered with systematic political opposition in the first part of 7th/13th century. According to Hartmann, measures against philosophers, philosophical literatures and those who were occupied by the dangerous books have been taken by the 34th Abbasid Caliph, al-Nasir li 'l-Din Allah (d. 1225) who was well known for being a traditionist and a mujtahid. During his rule and certainly based on his approval, the celebrated individuals who were occupied by falsafa were subjected to denunciation, libraries in which were philosophical literatures were burnt,¹⁰ and 'dangerous' books were incinerated.¹¹ Likewise, during his reign, the prominent scholars who were secretly occupied by falsafa lose their job and dignity.¹² The very measures were

taken by al-Nasir, according to Hartmann, out of his conviction that inner disintegration of Islamic society would not be caused by nothing but by the danger of the philosophers and their followers.¹³

Falsafa was also subjected to the opposition by 'one of the most important Sufis in Sunni Islam,' the Shafi'ite Abu Hafs Umar al-Suhrawardi (d. 632/1234) who was well-known for his condemnation of the Panteist Ibn Arabi for the latter's establishing connection between *tasawwuf* and elements of Greek falsafa. *Rashf al-Nasa'ih al-Imaniyya wa Kashf al-Fada'ih al-Yunaniyya*, according to Hartmann, is a polemical work composed by al-Suhrawardi to refute 'the arguments of the apologetic-dialectical theology (*kalam*), Islamic philosophy (falsafa) and its ancient origins.'¹⁴ This work was dedicated, according to Hartmann, to the caliph al-Nasir, 'whom al-Suhrawardi quotes as an authority of *Hadith*.'¹⁵ His opposition to falsafa was not limited by the fact that he composed *al-Rashf*, but he even, according to Hartmann, sink ten volumes of *Kitab al-Shifa'* of Ibn Sina into the water, as can be read in his words: "I have sunk those books [viz. *Kitab al-Shifa'*] with the help of God."¹⁶

One hundred fifty years after al-Gazali (d. 505/1111), the most knowledgeable person of his time in *Tafsir*, Tradition and Jurisprudence, Ibn al-Salah (d. 643/1254) issued *fatwas* in which he not only warned the people about the dangers of falsafa and logic, but also asserts his prohibition of people from being occupied by studying works by Ibn Sina who was well-known as one of the prominent authorized commentators of Aristotelian writings as well as from using peripatetical concepts, such as, *burhan* and *hadd*.¹⁷

In sum, the opposition against falsafa not only took a form of condemning the philosophers and incineration of philosophical literatures but was also reflected by the emergence of the *madaris*, 'colleges' which are regarded as the learning centers for training legal scholars and as well as institutes with formalized curricula in which falsafa and *kalam* were excluded.¹⁸

In the light of afore-mentioned argument, one could say that if these institutions were established to facilitate the dissemination of

orthodoxy and barricade the 'infiltration' of Greek learning, among which is falsafa, the opposition against falsafa could have taken place as soon as these orthodox institutions were founded.

The institutions which Makdisi suggests to have excluded the 'foreign sciences' from their curricula were embodied by 'the formation of the personal schools of law in the second half of the second century; in the proliferation of *masjids* for the study of law in the third and fourth centuries,' by the 'subsequent development and proliferation of the *madrasa*' in the fourth and fifth centuries, and by 'significant development of other conservative institutions, such as the *dar al-hadith*, in the sixth century.'¹⁹

In her identification of the decline of the scientific studies at the latest of the 13th century with the Muslims' unfavourable attitude toward falsafa, Brentjes also associates the decline with four more factors, which also implicitly reflects the opposition against falsafa: (1) that there was 'dichotomy between the ancient 'rational' sciences and the religious and legal disciplines', (2) 'the marginal relevance of the ancient sciences for the central concerns of the Muslim world'; (3) the rejection of innovation as a positive value for the Muslim society and the insistence on social practice based on authoritative learning;' and (4) that falsafa is replaced by 'the canon of religious duties as the ideal of salvation.'²⁰

B. The Opposition against Mantiq

Goldziher in his '*Stellung*',²¹ suggests that the opposition against logic by the Muslim has been started by a scholar as early as Ja'far al-Sadiq (d. 148/ 764), the seventh *imam* of the Shi'ite *Ithna 'Ashariyya* (d.148/764), to whom the words are ascribed: "People will occupy themselves with logic until they even question the belief in God. If you hear something of that kind, say: 'there is no god except the unique One; there is nothing like unto Him.'"²²

Logic was also subject to opposition by the eponym of Shafi'ite legal school, al-Shafi'i (d. 203/820) whom al-Suyuti quoted as having said that the ignorance of the people and their controversies are only caused

by their leaving the language of the Arabs and their inclination to the language of Aristotle.²³ In al-Shafi'i's opinion, the neglect of the people of the language of the Arabs and their inclination to the language of Aristotle brought about the emergence of the dispute on the createdness of the Koran, the negation of the divine vision and other innovations.²⁴

The opposition against logic was not a monopoly of a certain denomination, i.e. Sunnite traditionalist and that of a certain profession, i.e. jurists. Logic was also opposed by some members of the Mu'tazilite theological school. The Mu'tazilite poet and thinker Abu 'l-Abbas al-Nashi' al-Akbar, known as Ibn al-Shirshir (d. 293/905), for instance, was the first who refuted logic. Likewise, the Shi'ite thinker Hasan b. Musa al-Nawbakhti (d. ca. 310/922), the author of *Kitab al-Ara' wa 'l-Diyanat* and *al-Radd ala Ahl al-Mantiq*, which is no longer extant, was another scholar mentioned by Hallaq as a fervent opponent of logic. The grammarian Abu Sa'id al-Sirafi (d. 368/979) was cited as the one who launched an attack against the philosopher-logician Matta b. Yunus (d. 328/940).²⁵

In Muslim Spain, the incineration was not only afflicted on the books on logic but also on the books belonging to those who were occupied by studying logic. This is clearly reflected by the fact that in 453/1059-1060, according to Griffel, the writings of Ibn Hazm were burnt.²⁶

In the first half of eighth century of Hijra, the vehement attack against mantiq was found in the personality of 'Hanbalite theologian and Juristconsult,' Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawziyya (d. 751/1351). According to Laoust, Ibn al-Qayyim was born at Damascus on 7 Safar 691/29 January 1292 and died there in 751/1350. His father was the Superintendent of the Jawziyya Madrasa, which 'served as a court of law for the Hanbali *Qadi al-qudat* of Damascus.'²⁷ His criticism against logic can be clearly read in several pages of his *Miftah Dar al-Sa'ada*. In this celebrated work of his, he, for instance, tell us a number of points: Greek logic bears lie and falsehood; it leads sounds mind astray and corrupts one's disposition; it is not based on well-ordered principles and foundations;

rather, it is built on an unsteady brink. He then continued saying that logic is like *fata morgana* which perplexes the thirsty man wandering for water on the dessert. Being guided by his subjective perception when seeking water, he finds nothing but deprivation. At last, Ibn al-Qayyim says, he repents lamenting the loss of his age. Concluding his verses, Ibn al-Qayyim exhorts people not to be acquainted with it and says that being ignorant of it is better.²⁸

C. The Opposition against Kalam

The earliest opposition against “philosophical kalam” by Muslims was embodied in a form of scholastic movement, “a movement of schools, guild schools of legal science,” which was prepared by the efforts of two leaders, al-Shafi’i (d. 203/820) and Ahmad b. Hanbal (d. 245/855), whose influence against *kalam* remained throughout Muslim history. This movement was brought into existence, according to Makdisi, by the movement of juridical kalam against the kalam of *kalam*, in which *al-Risala* was composed by al-Shafi’i as its religious manifesto.²⁹ Like al-Shafi’i, the first champion of the traditionalists whose “career signaled the first triumph over rationalism and whose life was imbued with a deep sense of submission to the Koran, the Word of God, the *hadith* and the deeds of the Prophet,” Ahmad b. Hanbal with his resistance against the Great Inquisition marked the second defeat of Rationalism.³⁰

The traditionalist triumph over Rationalism does not end up with Ahmad b. Hanbal, it continues through two other landmarks, the defection of al-Ash’ari (d. ca. 324/935) from Mu’tazilism to Hanbalism and the promulgation of the Traditionalist creed³¹ by the Caliph al-Qadir (381-422/991-1031).³² The rise of legal studies and institutions such as Mosque-Inn and Madrasa, in which they were taught and in which *kalam* and *falsafa* were not admitted as a part of the curriculum,³³ is associated by Makdisi with the effort by the Traditionalists in their respective “guilds of law,” the rise of which was the effect of the rise of such institutions, to preserve their dominance over the Rationalists. Although,

in the passage of time, the Traditionalist institutions, Makdisi suggests, were not immune of Rationalist infiltration as reflected in the fact that the Ash'arite movement, in search of a home, infiltrated into the Shafi'ite school like the Mu'tazilite into the Hanafite,³⁴ the Traditionalists had succeeded in their attempt to exclude the Rationalists from their institutions.³⁵

The defeat of the Mu'tazilites in the political arena, on the other hand, forced them to make use of *usul al-fiqh* as an intellectual vehicle to maintain their rational influence with which they have brought some of the problems of philosophical kalam and legal falsafa into it. The character of *usul al-fiqh* changed from purely traditionalist, in the sense that al-Shafi'i does not treat a single problem of *kalam*, to rationalist, in the sense that it deals with philosophico-theological problems. *Usul al-fiqh*, which was founded by al-Shafi'i to be against *kalam*, acquired authors whom al-Shafi'i himself had previously called 'the Partisans of Words', *Mutakallimun*.³⁶ The intellectual effort of the Rationalist camp, Makdisi suggests, gained their success. This was clearly reflected in the fact that many eminent scholars of Shafi'ite or Hanbalite juridical denomination have dealt with the inroads made by other sciences into the field of *usul al-fiqh*.³⁷

The result of such infiltration brought about the phenomenon by which a Sunni Muslim, a member of a Rationalist movement, could also become a member of a Sunni guild of law. Setting examples, Makdisi then enumerates a number of scholars who were knowledgeable of the 'foreign sciences', the Shafi'ite al-Gazali (d. 505/1111) with Ash'arite theological tendency with his introduction of Aristotle's logic into *usul al-fiqh*, Sayf al-Din al-Amidi (d. 631/1233) who was being sacked from his chair of law of the Aziziyya Madrasa for teaching falsafa and philosophical kalam, and Ibn Aqil whose *al-Wadih fi Usul al-Fiqh* was receptive to a Rationalist instrument of methodology, dialectic.³⁸

Kalam was also subject to the opposition of a *mujaddid* of the third Islamic century, "the supreme universal historian and the Qur'an commentator of the first three or four centuries of Islam,"³⁹ Abu Ja'far

Muhammad b. Jarir al-Tabari who was born in Amul, the principal capital city of Tabaristan at the end of 224 or the beginning of 225/841 and died in 310/923.⁴⁰ Al-Tabari was an independent *mujtahid*, who studied jurisprudence under the guidance of al-Shafi'i and then under that of al-Ja'farani and al-Rabi' al-Muradi.⁴¹

That al-Tabari was a fervent critic of the *Mutakallimun* is confirmed by Gilliot. In his study of the influence of theological views on al-Tabari's linguistic approach in his exegesis, Gilliot suggests that despite the usage of certain arguments and methods of *kalam* in his exegesis,⁴² al-Tabari shares the ideas upheld by other traditionalists, such as Ahmad b. Hanbal, al-Bukhari, al-Darimi, etc.⁴³ His being fervent critic of the *Mutakallimun* was also represented by the fact that al-Tabari composed some works in which he attempted to attack the people who strictly upheld qadarite theological views as well as the Jahmites.⁴⁴ In his *Sarih al-Sunna*, for instance, al-Tabari condemns the discussion on the createdness of the Koran, saying: "Not a single saying in that respect is allowed for us to express except his saying: If we do not have a leader in [the discussion on the createdness of the Koran], we look for another person with whom [we are] pleased and satisfied. He is the leader to whom one adheres (*al-imam al-muttaba*). The discussion on the name: whether it stands for a thing or for nothing is one of the recent stupidities about which not a single tradition to be followed was transmitted. Neither has an opinion from an *imam* been transmitted. Thus, being occupied by [such a discussion] is a disgrace, whereas, being silent of it is a grace."⁴⁵

In the first half of the fourth century, a Shafi'ite judge and the author of many monographs on Tradition such as *al-Arba'un al-Ajuriyya*, *al-Shari'a fi 'l-Sunna*, *Akhlāq al-Ulama*,⁴⁶ Abu Bakr Muhammad b. al-Husayn al-Àjurri composed *al-Shari'a* in which he expresses his hostile attitude toward *kalam* and all kind of speculative argumentations. Al-Ajurri was a prominent Shafi'ite jurist who composed several important works⁴⁷ and whose authority is, according to Isma'il, extensively cited by more than fifteen biographers.⁴⁸ Al-Ajurri's opposition against *kalam* can

be clearly read in his remarks on the heretics: "Anyone who upholds Tradition is admonished to abandon all the heretics including the Kharijites, Qadarites, Murji'ites, Jahmites, Mu'tazilites, Rafidites, Nasibites"⁴⁹ and anyone whom the leading scholars of the Muslims identify with an author of a misleading innovation. One is not admonished to talk to him, to greet him, to befriend him, to pray behind him, to give [his daughter] to him in marriage, to get married with him, to accompany him, to deal with him, to argue with him and to debate with him. One is rather to humiliate him. If you meet him on a street, take another road if it is possible."⁵⁰

Bagdad of the fourth century of Hijra also witnesses the opposition against *kalam* by a prominent Shafi'ite scholar, Abu Ahmad b. Muhammad al-Khattabi (d. 388/988), the author of *al-Gunya an al-Kalam*. Al-Khattabi was a leading scholar in the field of jurisprudence, language, who was, according to Günther, a Shafi'ite traditionalist, whose one of his prominent disciples was the Shafi'ite Abu Hamid al-Isfara'ini (d. 406/1015-6), the teacher of al-Gazali.⁵¹

According to Günther, *al-Gunya* was composed by al-Khattabi to anathemize *kalam*.⁵² This can be clearly read in the latter's remarks: "You have established your own opinion, my brother,"⁵³ may God protect you in a fair manner. You have [also] portrayed your attitude to us with respect to the heretical views of the *Mutakallimun*, to the occupation of those who are involved in vain discourse with [those heretical views], to the tendency of some followers of the *Sunna* towards them and their being deceived by them. [You are also well-informed of] their pretension that *kalam* is a protection for tradition..."⁵⁴

In the first half of the fifth century of Hijra, the opposition against *kalam* was markedly represented by two prominent scholars: First, 'an important sufi Hagiographer and Kur'an commentator,' Abu Abd al-Rahman al-Sulami who was the author of *al-Radd ala Ahl al-Kalam*, and secondly, al-Khatib al-Bagdadi (d. 463/1071), the author of *Sharaf Ashab al-Hadith*. Al-Sulami was born in Nisabur in 325/937 or 330/942 and died in the same city in 412/1021. He received a teaching certificate

from the Hanafite Abu Sahl al-Su'luki (d. 296-369/909-80) and some time, after the sufi cloak, from the shafi'ite Abu 'l-Qasim al-Nasrabadhi (d. 367/977-8).⁵⁵ Abu Bakr Ahmad b. Ali b. Thabit b. Ahmad b. Mahdi al-Shafi'i, well-known as al-Khatib al-Bagdadi, was born in Bagdad in 392/1002. He was one of the leading scholars in the field of Tradition, jurisprudence and *usul al-fiqh*. He was referred to as an authority in *hadith* because of his profound erudition in this field. His works on *hadith* is said to have made him the great critical systematiser of *hadith* methodology.⁵⁶ His vehement opposition against *kalam* can be clearly read in several pages of *Sharaf Ashab al-Hadith* in which he condemns theologians. He, for instance, identifies some characteristics of the authors of innovation and personal opinions: (1) That they scorned the adherents of the *Sunan* and *Athar*, refused to study the laws contained in the Koran, left aside the arguments derived from clear verses of the Koran and neglected the *Sunna*; (2) That they legislated in matters of religion by making use of their personal opinions; (3) the young among them are greedy of words of love,⁵⁷ while the old are fascinated by *kalam* and debate;⁵⁸ (4) they have made their religion subject to disputations;⁵⁹ (5) that they are the enemies of the Tradition;⁶⁰ (6) that they seek [religious] truth with the help of *kalam*.⁶¹

While in the second half of the fifth century, the history of Muslim Spain witnesses the opposition against *kalam* by the greatest traditionist in the Magrib, a Qadi of Lissabon and Santarem during the reign of al-Muzaffar, Abu 'Umar Yusuf b. 'Abd al-Barr al-Namari. Al-Namari was born in Cordoba on 24 Rabi II 368/30 November 978 and studied under the supervision of Abu 'Umar Ahmad b. 'Abd al-Malik b. Hashim in Cordoba and died on 29 Rabi' II 463/3 February 1071.⁶² His work composed to condemn *kalam* is *Jami Bayan al-'Ilm wa Fadlih* in which he expresses his abhorrence toward debate and argumentation. He also condemns people's speculation about matters of belief in God based on personal opinion and analogy without a textual foundation.⁶³

The first half of the fifth century witnesses the opposition against *kalam* by the Shafi'ite *Hafiz* and jurist who was given a certificate of

jurisprudence by the Shafi'ite Abu Hamid al-Isfara'ini, a teacher of al-Gazali, Abu 'l-Qasim Hibat Allah b. al-Hasan b. Mansur al-Tabari al-Lalaka'i, who was born in Tabaristan and died in Bagdad in *Ramadan* 418/1028. His work, *Sharh Usul I'tiqad Ahl al-Sunna*, is said to have exercised very important influence on what he calls 'Salafi school' (*al-madhab al-salafi*). This work, he argues, constitutes a significant reference that shed lights to the knowledge of the religious doctrines (*aqa'id*) of the scholars from among the Pious Ancestors.⁶⁴ His criticism of *kalam* can be read in his quotation of Kharim b. Hayyan's⁶⁵ remark: "An author of *kalam* finds himself one of two positions: If he is negligent in it, he is defeated [by his opponent]; but if he is deeply rooted in it, he sins."⁶⁶

The opposition against *kalam* of the second half of the fifth century of Islam was reflected by the composition of *Dhamm al-Kalam* by al-Harawi, a professor in Nizamiyya College, who was awarded the title of *Shaykh al-Islam*, due to his prominent position in the Hanbalite school,⁶⁷ who died in Herat on 22nd of Dhu 'l-Hijja 481/8th of March 1088.⁶⁸ *Dhamm al-Kalam*, itself according to Beaucueil, was the fruit of al-Harawi's labour against the Ash'arites as well as the Mu'tazilites.⁶⁹ In his *Dhamm al-Kalam*, al-Harawi discusses the prohibition of making use of speculative arguments (*kalam*) by his predecessors from among the Pious Ancestors (*al-salaf al-Salib*), ranging from the Companions of the Prophet till his contemporaries (viz, his teachers) whom he classified into nine generations.

The first half of the sixth century of Hijra also witnesses the vehement attack against *kalam* by Abu Sa'd Abd al-Karim al-Marwazi al-Shafi'i, known as Ibn al-Sam'ani (d. 562/1166), born in Marw on 21 Shaban 506/10 February 1113, a scholar whose father was an authority in the field of Shafi'i law. Ibn al-Sam'ani was a prolific writer on the prophetic traditions and their transmission. He was the author of great biographical works on the Traditionist, *Kitab al-Ansab* and *Kitab al-Takhbir fi 'l-Mu'djam al-Kabir*. He seems to enjoy a high authority in the Shafi'ite circle, due to extensive reference to his authority by al-Subki in his *Tabaqat al-Shafi'iyya*.⁷⁰ *Al-Intisar li Ahl al-Hadith* is his literary

production that deals with the condemnation of *kalam* by his predecessors. In this work, Ibn al-Sam'ani emphasizes that *kalam* is prohibited due to not only that which has been claimed by their adversaries as mentioned above, i.e. the Companions and the Followers have not been occupied by it, but also because God has said: "Today I have perfected your religion for you..."⁷¹ If He [viz. God] has already perfected and completed it, they argue, a Muslim should believe in it and rely on it. Asserting their contention, they remark: "So, why does one need to refer to rational evidences and their propositions? God by His virtue makes it superfluous and unnecessary to him. He did not introduce [man] to an affair, due to which one is seized by ambiguity and vagueness, and which leads one to the destructions and troubles. Man strayed, perished and deviated only because of ideas and rational thoughts and his following the opinions of the past and the present. Man was safe only because of following the traditions of the Messengers and the leading scholars from among the early ancestors, who guide people to the right course."⁷² Re-emphasizing his hostile attitude to *kalam*, he then quotes the prayer of the Prophet: "O God, I ask your protection against knowledge which has no significance..."⁷³

Kalam also became an object of opposition by an 'Almoravid Amḍr and the second sovereign of the Tashufinid dynasty, who ruled over the large part of the maghrib and of southern Spain from 500/1106 to 537/1143.⁷ This is apparently reflected by the fact that under the approval of 'Ali b. Yusuf b. Tashufin, the Fakihs have promulgated *autos-da-fé* and burned the *Ihya* of al-Gazali who was referred to as a theologian considered to have limited God's unlimited power of creation.⁷⁴ The incineration of al-Gazali's *Ihya* took place in the parvis of the Great Mosque of Cordoba in 503/1109.⁷⁵

The opposition against *kalam* in the first half of the seventh century of Hijra can also be clearly seen in the hostile attitude of the "celebrated doctor of the Hanbalite theologico-juridical school", Muwaffaq al-Din b. Qudama (d. 620/1224) toward *kalam*,⁷⁶ who composed *Tahrim al-Nazar fi Kutub Ahl al-Kalam* in which he, according

to Makdisi, not only condemned specifically Ibn Aqil, but also censured those who indulge in speculative *kalam*, i.e. those who apply allegorical interpretation of the revealed text with regard to the divine attributes.⁷⁷ Ibn Qudama, Makdisi argues, opposes all manner of speculation in matters of religious belief because such speculation is unorthodox.⁷⁸ According to Ibn Qudama, speculative *kalam* (*kalam*) was prohibited not only because of the fact that the pious ancestors did not practise it, but also due to its inherent danger, i.e. that speculative *kalam* leads to the use of allegorical interpretation (*ta'wil*) whose principal evil is that it leads to the practice of stripping God of the attributes which He attributed to Himself and of those which He did not.⁷⁹ Representing the Traditionalists i.e. in the defence of the Hanbalite school against the accusation of anthropomorphism, Ibn Qudama, Makdisi says, advocates the unreserved acceptance of the Koranic expressions and the traditions on the divine attribute as they stand and as they were handed down from the Prophet without attempting any interpretation. A rationale of Ibn Qudāma's advocating this principle is that only God knows their intended meaning. This principle is what distinguishes, according to Ibn Qudama, the pious believers, the followers of the pious ancestors, from the error-laden partisans of allegorical interpretation, the speculative theologians.⁸⁰

In the ninth century of Islam, *kalam* was also encountered with the condemnation of a great savant and an independent *mujtahid*⁸¹ of Zaidite denomination, Muhammad b. Ibrahim b. al-Wazir al-San'ani, well-known as Ibn al-Murtada al-Yamani (d. 840/1436),⁸² who composed *Tarjih Asalib al-Qur'an ala Asalib al-Yunan*⁸³ and *al-Rawd al-Basim fi Dhabb an Sunnat Abi al-Qawasim*,⁸⁴ in which he condemned *kalam* and the *Mutakallimun*. Ibn al-Wazir's criticism against *kalam* can be found in a number of statements, dealing with various contexts. When discussing the qualification of a *mujtahid* (an independent scholar who undertakes an *ijtihad*), Ibn al-Wazir, for instance, maintains that the most important one for a *mujtahid* is to avoid from being occupied by the questions of *kalam*. His censure on *kalam* is also found when he discusses the attitude of

some members of the *ahl al-bayt* against *kalam*. According to Ibn al-Wazir, Muhammad b. Mansur said that Abd Allah b. Musa - may God be pleased with him - used to hate *kalam* on what people speak about. If a man told him about one who speculates (*yatakallam*) on what people speak about, he will say: O my God, make us die in Islam and then he gets silent.⁸⁵

III. Conclusion

The cultural contact of Greek civilization with other cultural groups has brought about intellectual tradition which is typically identified as Hellenistic tradition which has its own intellectual characteristic. Well known for his fascination, this tradition has 'tempted' the most intelligent human resources of the Muslim world to translate, interpret and give commentaries, to these Hellenistic literatures, which lead to the emergence of the 'fruit' of Hellenism, neo-platonism (*falsafa*), neo-scholasticism (*kalam*), and neo-aristotelianism (*mantiq*).

The emergence of these Hellenistic traditions drew the unfavourable attitude from the Muslim scholars who perceived that Muslim intellectual tradition derived from the Qur'an and the Sunnah has sufficient epistemological tool for their search of truth. These scholars composed books, leaflet, fatwas, that lead to the emergence of anti-Hellenism literatures.

This study reveals that the opposition of the Muslim scholars to this tradition is so vehement and aggressive that we could find so much literatures that can be identified as anti-Hellenistic.

Endnotes:

¹Relying on *Ikhtilaf al-Fuqaha* by al-Tabari and *al-Mi'yar al-Mu'rib wa 'l-Jami' al-Mugrib* by al-Wansharisi Van Koningsveld, *op. cit.*, p. 350.

²Van Koningsveld, *op. cit.*, p. 350.

³Van Koningsveld, *op. cit.*, p. 354-5.

⁴Fakhry, *op. cit.*, p. 217.

⁵Fakhry, *op. cit.*, p. 223; See also Griffel, *op. cit.*, p. 269.

⁶Griffel, *op. cit.*, p. 357.

⁷Pellat, Ch., "Ibn Djubayr," EI2, III, 755.

⁸Abu Nasr Muhammad b. Muhammad b. Tarhan b. Awzalagh al-Farabi was referred to by Walzer as "one of the most outstanding and renowned Muslim philosophers, "the second teacher," the first being Aristotle. He died in 339/950. Walzer, R., "al-Farabi," EI2, II, 778-81.

⁹Tritton, A.S., *Materials on Muslim Education in the Middle Ages* (London: Luzac & C.O. Ltd, 1957), p. 172.

¹⁰One of the libraries burnt, according to Hartmann, for instance, Rukn al-Din b. Abd al-Wahhab b. Abd al-Qadir al-Jili's library in which were *Kitab al-Shifa'*, and *al-Najat* by Ibn Sina, the encyclopaedia of Ikhwan al-Safa' as well as any other literatures on falsafa, logic, astronomy and on niranjiyat as well as works on worshipping the stars. The autodafé took place on Friday 12 Safar 588/28 February 1192 in the terrace of the Mosque which was located nearby Caliphal Mosque. Hartmann, *op. cit.*, p. 257.

¹¹Hartmann, *op. cit.*, p. 255.

¹²Hartmann, *op. cit.*, p. 260.

¹³Hartmann, EI2, vii, p. 996.

¹⁴Ibidem.

¹⁵Hartmann, EI2, ix, p. 778.

¹⁶Hartmann, *op. cit.*, p. 255,

¹⁷Griffel, *op. cit.*, p. 354-8.

¹⁸Makdisi, in one or another way, discusses the opposition by the Muslims against falsafa in a number of works: Makdisi, G., *The Rise of Humanism in Classical Islam and the Christian West: With Special Reference to Scholasticism* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1990), p. 3; "Law and Traditionalism in the Institutions of Learning of Medieval Islam" in *Kalam and Law in Islam*, ed. G.E. von Grunebaum (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1971), p. 75-89; "The Non-Ash'arite Shafi'ism of Abu Hamid Ghazzali", in *Revue des Etudes Islamiques*, (Paris: Librairie Orientaliste Paul Geuthner, 1986) LIV, p. 239-257; "Ashari and the Asharites in Islamic Religious History" in *Studia Islamica* (G- P. Maisonneuve – Larose Paris), XVII & XVIII, 1962, p. 37-80 & 19-39; "The Juridical Kalam of Shafi'i: Origins and Significance of Usul al-Fiqh" in *Studia Islamica*, LIX, 1984, p. 5-48; "Law and Traditionalism in the Institutions of Learning of Medieval Islam" in *Kalam and Law in Islam*, ed. G.E. von Grunebaum (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1971, 1971), p. 75-89; "Hanbalite Islam," in Merlin L. Swartz (ed. and tran.), *Studies on Islam* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981), p. 216-274; *Ibn Qudama's Censure of Speculative Kalam: An Edition and Translation of*

Ibn Qudama's Tahrir al-Nazar fi Kutub Ahl al-Kalam (London: Luzac & Company Ltd., 1962), p. ix.

¹⁹Makdisi, *The Rise*, *op. cit.*, p. 282-3.

²⁰Brentjes, Sonja, "Orthodoxy", *Ancient Sciences, Power, and the Madrasa ("college") in Ayyubid and early Mamluk Damascus* (Max Planck Institute for the History of Science, preprint 77, Berlin, 1996), p. 3.

²¹Goldziher, I., "Die Stellung der alten Orthodoxie zu den antiken Wissenschaften," written in Berlin in 1916. This article is found in *Gesammelte Schriften* (1970) vol. V, p. 357-400. For this discussion, I rely on an English translation of Goldziher's article by Merlin L. Swartz, "The Attitude of Orthodox Islam toward the 'Ancient Sciences'" in *Studies on Islam* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981), p. 185-215.

²²Goldziher, *op. cit.*, p. 198.

²³SM, *op. cit.*, p. 48.

²⁴*Ibidem*.

²⁵See, Hallaq, W.B., *Ibn Taymiyya Against the Greek Logicians* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993) p. xlii-xlv.

²⁶Griffel, *op. cit.*, p. 378.

²⁷Laoust, H., EI2, VIII, p. 891-2

²⁸*Miftah*, *op. cit.*, p. 166-7.

²⁹Makdisi, G., *The Rise of Humanism in Classical Islam and the Christian West: With Special Reference to Scholasticism* (Edinburgh : Edinburgh University Press, 1990), p. 3.

³⁰Makdisi, *The Rise*, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

³¹The contents of this creed, according to Makdisi, was directed against the anthropomorphists, the Karramiya, the Shi'a, the Ash'ariyya and the Mu'tazila. *The Rise*, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

³²Makdisi, *The Rise*, *op. cit.*, p. 5-8; Griffel, *op. cit.*, p. 111.

³³Makdisi, G. "Law and Traditionalism in the Institutions of Learning of Medieval Islam" in *Kalam and Law in Islam*, ed. G.E. von Grunebaum (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1971, 1971), p. 75-89.

³⁴Makdisi, *The Rise*, *op. cit.*, p. 42.

³⁵Makdisi, *The Rise*, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

³⁶Makdisi, *The Rise*, *op. cit.*, p. 4-5.

³⁷Makdisi, *The Rise*, *op. cit.*, p. 4.

³⁸Makdisi, *The Rise*, *op. cit.*, p. 42-3.

³⁹See, Bosworth, C.E., "al-Tabari," in EI2, X, p. 11-15.

⁴⁰Al-Suyuti provides some biographical information about al-Tabari in his introductory remark on *Kitab Sarih al-Sunna*, SM, *op. cit.*, p. 133.

⁴¹SM, *op. cit.*, p. 133.

⁴²Claude Gilliot, *Exégèse, Langue et Théologie en Islam : l' Exégèse Coranique de Tabari* (Paris : Librairie Philosophique J. Vrin, 1990), p. 9, 14.

⁴³'Nous avons déjà vu que Tabari avait eu maille à partir avec des Ânbalites qui l'accusaient d'hérésie...' Gilliot, *op. cit.*, p. 208-210.

⁴⁴'Tabari s'en prend surtout aux groupes d'obédience qadarite.' Gilliot, *op. cit.*, p. 207.

⁴⁵SM, *op. cit.*, p. 136-7.

⁴⁶GAL, I, 164, S.I, 274.

⁴⁷GAL, I, 164, S.I, 274.

⁴⁸This is mentioned by the editor of al-Faqi, the editor of al-Shari'a. See the introduction of *al-Shari'a*, *op. cit.*, p. 6.

⁴⁹Van Ess says that according to the Isma'ilite Abu Hatim al-Razi, the Nasibites (*nawasib*) are nicknames for the Murji'ites. Van Ess, TG, vol. IV, p. 685, n. 15.

⁵⁰SM, *op. cit.*, p. 172.

⁵¹Günther, von Sebastian, 'Der šafi'itische Traditionalist Abu Sulaiman al-Khattabi und die Situation der religiösen Wissenschaften im 10. Jahrhundert,' in ZDMG, vol. 146, no. 1 (1996), p. 61-91; Referring to Brockelmann's GAL, Van Donzel, however, mentions twelve works by al-Khattabi, one of which was published, i.e. *Bayan I'jaz al-Qur'an* (Aligarh: 1953), ed. Abd al-Alim. See Van Donzel, et al, "al-Khattabi," in EI2, IV, p. 1131-2.

⁵²Günther, *op. cit.*, p. 74-80.

⁵³No information could be found, to whom this word "brother" refers.

⁵⁴SM, *op. cit.*, p. 138.

⁵⁵G. Böwering, EI2, IX, 812.

⁵⁶GAL, I, 329, S.I, 564; SM, *op. cit.*, p. 197; R. Sellheim, "al-Khatib al-Baghdadi," in EI2, IV, 1111-2.

⁵⁷This is rendered from the phrase in SA (p. 4) which reads "*fa 'l-hadath minhum manhum bi 'l-gazal...*" In SM, it reads "*fa 'l-hadath minhum mathum bi 'l-'adl...*" SM, *op. cit.*, p. 192.

⁵⁸SM, *op. cit.*, p. 192.

⁵⁹SM, *op. cit.*, p. 193.

⁶⁰SM, *op. cit.*, p. 194.

⁶¹Abu Yusuf is adduced as having said these words. SM, *op. cit.*, p. 194.

⁶²GAL, I, 368, S. I, 628.

⁶³SM, *op. cit.*, p. 182-8.

⁶⁴See the introduction of SU by his editor, Ahmad Sa'ad Hamdan, *op. cit.*, p.

7.

⁶⁵According to Caskel, Kharim b. Khayyan was "one of the earliest pietist of Islam and a forerunner of al-Hasan al-Basri. See, Caskel, W., "Abd al-Qays," in EI2, I, p. 72-4.

⁶⁶SM, *op. cit.*, p. 165.

⁶⁷GAL, I, p. 433, S.I, p. 773.

⁶⁸SM, *op. cit.*, p. 126.

⁶⁹Beaurecueil, EI2, I, 515.

⁷⁰Al-Subki, TS, IV, p. 21-26.

⁷¹Al-Ma'ida (V): 5a. Bell, I, p. 94.

⁷²SM, *op. cit.*, p. 211-2.

⁷³SM, *op. cit.*, p. 210.

⁷⁴Griffel, *op. cit.*, p. 364-5.

⁷⁵Lévi-Provençal, E., EI2, I, p. 389.

⁷⁶According to Makdisi, Ibn Qudama does not censure kalam as the knowledge of God, but rather that particular type of kalam which Ibn Qudama describes as theorizing without sufficient evidence. See, *Ibn Qudama's Censure of Speculative Kalam: An Edition and Translation of Ibn Qudama's Tahrir al-Nazar fi Kutub Ahl al-Kalam* (London: Luzac & Company Ltd., 1962), p. ix.

⁷⁷Makdisi, *Ibn Qudama*, *op. cit.*, p. lvi.

⁷⁸*Ibidem*.

⁷⁹Makdisi, *Ibn Qudama*, *op. cit.*, p. lvii.

⁸⁰Makdisi, *Ibn Qudama*, *op. cit.*, p. lviii.

⁸¹Ithar, *op. cit.*, p. 59.

⁸²GAL, S. II, p. 249.

⁸³This work is published twice: in Cairo by Idara Tiba'a al-Jam'iyya al-'Ilmiyya al-Azhariyya al-Misriyya in 1349/1931 and in Beirut by Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya in 1984.

⁸⁴This work is published in Damascus by Idarat al-Tiba'a al-Muniriyya.

⁸⁵Tarjih, *op. cit.*, p. 27.

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