



History of Islamic Philosophy

Home Page: hpi.aletaha

Ale-Taha Institute of Higher Education

Online ISSN: 2981-2097

A Plan for the Future Islamic Philosophy

Mahdi Abbaszadeh¹

1. Full Professor in Research Institute for Islamic Culture and Thought.

E-mail: mehr_1777@yahoo.com

Article Info

Article type:
Research Article

Article history:

Received 26 December
2024

Received in revised form
27 January 2025

Accepted 26 February
2025

Published online 21
March 2025

Keywords:

*Islamic philosophy,
problem-solving,
interdisciplinary,
methodology, new
science.*

ABSTRACT

For several centuries, Islamic philosophy has been in a state of "isolation," meaning it has lost its contemporaneity; it neither solves "problem" nor, at the very least, actively and seriously engages with contemporary issues. This paper, while addressing the nature, possibility, and realization of Islamic philosophy; the achievements of Islamic philosophy; and the historical evolution of Islamic philosophy (in early, late, and contemporary periods), distinguishes three types of Islamic philosophy: Islamic philosophy as a concept; Islamic philosophy as an actualized phenomenon (Peripatetic, Illuminationist, Sadrian, and Neo-Sadrian); and the future Islamic philosophy. The future Islamic philosophy is an ideal one, could emerge later, contingent on certain conditions and prerequisites, such as addressing contemporary issues, particularly socio-cultural and practical issues. It seems that the survival of Islamic philosophy and its avoidance of becoming merely historical -in contrast to the idea of the "end of Islamic philosophy"- depends on this. Since the ideal Islamic philosophy is one that solves problem, this naturally requires problem-oriented philosophical research. Thus, highlighting the importance of problem-oriented research; the nature of a problem; and the differences between a problem, subject, question, and difficulty, the paper will propose the most important and central strategies that could actualize the future or ideal Islamic philosophy. These strategies include: philosophical attention to new sciences and technologies; considering the fourth wave in philosophy; engaging with "Philosophy of"; adopting concrete approaches in philosophy; conducting interdisciplinary researches in philosophy; and employing new methods in philosophy.

Cite this article: Abbaszadeh, M (2025). A Plan for the Future Islamic Philosophy, *History of Islamic Philosophy*,4 (1), 29-59.



<https://doi.org/10.22034/hpi.2025.496030.1125>

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.22034/hpi.2025.496030.1125>

Introduction

For several centuries, Islamic philosophy has been in a state of isolation. By "isolation," we do not mean that Islamic philosophy has made no progress and remained entirely stagnant, but rather that it has lost its contemporaneity; because it neither solves "problem" nor, at the very least, actively engages with contemporary issues, and perhaps does not pay sufficient attention to them at all.

It seems that the emergence of a new philosophical movement or school, but in a fundamental way, the survival of a philosophy and its non-going down in history, depends on its contemporaneity and engagement with current issues.

A brief overview of the historical evolution of Islamic philosophy, as will be mentioned later, reveals that it has taken three to five centuries for a new philosophical movement or school (Peripatetic, Illuminationist, Sadrian, and Neo-Sadrian) to emerge in the Islamic world, which is not a short time. Apart from the fact that some researchers believe the historical progression of Islamic philosophy from the Peripatetic philosophy to the Neo-Sadrian school is a "regressive" process (although some philosophers strongly disagree with this point), it is undeniable that over the past four centuries, Sadrian philosophy has had complete dominance among philosophers; because the Neo-Sadrian school cannot be considered an independent Islamic philosophy, but rather it can be defined under the Sadrian movement (Hikmat Muta'aliya). This points mainly pertains to the status of Islamic philosophy in Iran, but the condition of Islamic philosophy does not appear better in other Islamic countries.

It is clear that the aforementioned four movements or schools emerged due to the engagement of previous Muslim philosophers with the current issues of their own time and place. Therefore, it is essential to examine why Islamic philosophy, "here" and "now", does not have a proper and defined engagement with new issues. Is the problem inherent in this philosophy, or in Muslim philosophers, or in the special conditions and difficulties of Muslim societies, or in all of these? This is an important

question.

However, the present paper does not aim to answer the above question. Instead, the main question of this paper is: What strategies should Islamic philosophy adopt to address contemporary issues or at least engage with them properly?

To answer this question, and as a preliminary step, we will first discuss topics such as the nature, possibility, and realization of Islamic philosophy; its achievements; and its historical evolution (early, late, and contemporary Islamic philosophies). Then, we will distinguish three types of Islamic philosophy (Islamic philosophy as a concept, Islamic philosophy as an actualized phenomenon, and the future or ideal Islamic philosophy). Then, while presenting a discussion about a problem (the importance of philosophical and problem-oriented research, some characteristics of a problem, and the difference between a problem, subject, question, and difficulty), finally, we will propose the most important and central strategies to actualize the future or ideal Islamic philosophy -a philosophy that will engage with contemporary issues.

Section One: Nature, Possibility, and Realization; Achievements; and Historical Evolution of Islamic Philosophy

It is essential to initially take a brief look at three important topics: the nature, possibility, and realization of Islamic philosophy; the achievements of Islamic philosophy; and the historical evolution of Islamic philosophy.

A. Nature, Possibility, and Realization of Islamic Philosophy

One of the most fundamental questions regarding Islamic philosophy is: What is Islamic philosophy? Specifically, what does the adjective "Islamic" mean in this context? Contemporary scholars have presented various and diverse viewpoints on this matter (for a brief summary of these views, see Khosrowpanah, 2005, pp. 97-108).

In summary, Islamic philosophy can be described as a philosophy developed, articulated, and investigated by Muslim philosophers. Its

"Islamic" nature is defined by its alignment with Islamic principles or its use of these principles to expand and enrich the philosophy (Abedi Shahrudi, 1995, p. 5).

If Islamic philosophy is correctly understood as being influenced by Islam to the extent that it would take a different form if developed in a context other than Islam, and not incorrectly understood as replacing the content of prophetic revelation with philosophical reasoning, it is both possible and actualized in reality (Oboudiat, 2003, p. 41).

The influence of philosophy by Islam can be examined from various perspectives. For example, Islamic philosophy is based on the principle of monotheism, which is the fundamental principle of Islam; methodologically, it is based on rationalism, and an emphasis on reason being one of the most important emphases in the Quran and Hadith; in terms of topics or, more precisely, issues, many of its issues are derived from or developed with reference to religion (such as the soul, resurrection, divine attributes, revelation, and inspiration); and in terms of outcomes and findings, it is often observed that Islamic philosophers adhere to religious beliefs, such as Ibn Sina's affirmation of "bodily resurrection" despite its non-demonstrability by rational means from his perspective (Abbaszadeh, 2019a, p. 16).

Based on the above points, it can be concluded that if philosophy were formed in a non-Islamic context and not influenced by it, it would certainly take a different form, given that the beliefs of other religions sometimes differ from those of Islam. However, this definitive influence of Islamic philosophy by Islam should not be understood as replacing the content of prophetic revelation with philosophical reasoning; as this would eliminate the essence of philosophical thought in the Islamic world, which is "rationality" (meaning the use of rational arguments in examining and solving issues) (Abbaszadeh, 2019a, p. 16).

B. Achievements of Islamic Philosophy

Some contemporary scholars have categorized the achievements of Islamic philosophy into four areas (Motahhari, 1994b, pp. 225-226):

1. Issues that remained almost in their Greek form, with minimal or no modifications or enhancements by Islamic philosophers, and the form of the issues did not significantly change;
2. Issues that Islamic philosophers completed, by strengthening their foundations and providing more substantial justifications for them, whether by changing the form of the arguments or adding new arguments;
3. Issues that were ambiguous in Greece but were clarified by Islamic philosophers, resulting in different forms of these issues;
4. Issues that had no precedent in Greece and were entirely new, even in terms of their names and titles.

Some examples of philosophical issues in these four categories are as follows:

"From the first category... most issues of logic, the ten Aristotelian categories, the four causes, the Aristotelian divisions of sciences, and the divisions of the faculties of the soul can be named... but in the second category: this part is extensive [and for example]... issues such as the impossibility of an infinite regress, the immateriality of the soul, the proof of Necessary Existence, the unity of Necessary Existence, the impossibility of the emanation of the many from the One, the unity of the intelligent and intelligible, and the substantiality of the species forms can be named... but in the third category, the relation between motion and cause, the relationship between God and the world, the well-known issue of Platonic Forms, and the issue of being "pure being" (Sirf al-wujud) of Necessary Existence can be named... issues that should be counted in this [third] category include... the explanation of types of priority, types of created-ness (Al-Huduth), types of necessity and possibility, and types of unity and multiplicity. But in the fourth category, which includes issues introduced for the first time in the Islamic world, these issues are numerous and more valuable and significant. These issues include major topics of existence, such as the primacy of existence (Asalat al-wujud), the unity of existence, mental existence, negative judgments of existence,

as well as the issue of creation (al-Ijad), the criterion for a thing's need for a cause, the principle of the simple reality (Basit al-Haghighah), substantial motion, the immateriality of the animal soul and the human soul at the level of imagination, considerations of quiddity, the judgments of nothingness especially the impossibility of the return of the nothing, secondary intelligibles, the principle of possibility of the nobler (Imkan al-Ashraf), the simple detailed knowledge of Necessary Existence, the possibility though preparedness (Al-Imkan al-Isteadadi), being a dimension of the time, agents by compulsion (Faeliah bi-Taskhir), the corporeal created-ness of the soul, bodily resurrection, the unity of the soul and body, the mode of composition of matter and form whether conjunctive or unitive, the analysis of the real connection of effect to cause, unity in multiplicity of the soul and its faculties..." (Motahhari, 1994b, pp. 226-229).

It should be noted that in most cases of the first category, although the form of the issues did not undergo significant changes, but many Muslim philosophers have occasionally provided other minor views (different from the findings of Greek philosophers) under these same issues. The examples of the second, third, and fourth categories are also far more numerous than the mentioned instances. As Seyyed Mohammad Hossein Tabatabai claims, all the philosophical discussions and issues transferred from Greece did not exceed "two hundred" items, and Islamic philosophers increased this to "seven hundred" discussions and issues (see: Rashad, 1998, p. 57).

C. The Historical Evolution of Islamic Philosophy

The history of Islamic philosophy can be divided into three distinct periods: early Islamic philosophy, late Islamic philosophy, and contemporary Islamic philosophy.

1. Early Islamic Philosophy

Early Islamic philosophy itself can be subdivided into two smaller periods: The Peripatetic (Masha'i) philosophy and the Illuminationist (Ishraqi) philosophy.

In the first period, which began in the 9th century CE (3rd century AH), philosophers meditate predominantly in the Aristotelian tradition, known as Masha'i. They utilized Neoplatonic interpretations of Aristotle's texts, aiming to advance philosophy with Islamic teachings. The primary method in the Masha'i tradition was rational argumentation and demonstration, which positioned these early Peripatetic philosophers as rationalists. Philosophers such as Al-Kindi, Al-Razi, Al-Farabi, the "Brethren of Purity" (Ikhwan al-Safa), Ibn Sina, Nasir al-Din al-Tusi (to some extent), Ibn Bajja, Ibn Tufayl, and Ibn Rushd belong to this period.

The early Peripatetic philosophers skillfully blended Greek-Alexandrian philosophical achievements with Islamic teachings. Relying on their strong thinking and genius, they founded a firm philosophical system, influencing both the Eastern and Western worlds (Rashad, 1998, p. 56).

The second period, starting in the 12th century CE (6th century AH), saw the emergence of Illuminationist philosophers. These thinkers sought to address the shortcomings of early Peripatetic philosophy by drawing on the ideas of some Greek philosophers, particularly Plato and the Neoplatonists, as well as ancient Persian wisdom, and the views of Babylonian, Egyptian, Indian, and Chinese peoples, ultimately combining these with the methods of mystics and Sufis. They believed the correct philosophical method was a combination of rational argumentation and heart intuition (=illumination), although they considered heart intuition superior to rational argumentation.

The founder of Illuminationist philosophy was Suhrawardi (Shaykh al-Ishraq). He critiqued early Peripatetic philosophy and established his own philosophical system based on the principle of "illumination." Through this principle, Suhrawardi replaced philosophical and epistemological notions based on "essence" (conceptual and acquired knowledge) with those based on "light" (intuitive and presentational knowledge), introducing new judgments and thus creating an innovative philosophical system (Abbaszadeh, 2019b, p. 18).

Suhrawardi's followers, especially Shams al-Din al-Shahrazuri and Qutb al-Din al-Shirazi, continued his path. Other philosophers such as Nasir al-Din al-Tusi (in some respects), Jalal al-Din Dawani, Ghiyath al-Din Mansur Dashtaki, Mir Damad (and his Yamani Wisdom), Mir Fendereski, Mohsen Fayz Kashani, and Abdul-Razzaq Lahiji, among others, were also generally considered "Illuminationist" in the broad sense, as they believed in combining rational argumentation and heart intuition in philosophy (Abbaszadeh, 2019b, pp. 20-21).

2. Late Islamic Philosophy

Late Islamic philosophy, which began in the 17th century CE (11th century AH), marks the era of Mulla Sadra and the Sadrian philosophers. Mulla Sadra, by integrating the views of early Peripatetic philosophers, Illuminationists, mystics, theologians, and also the transmitted discussions in the Quran and Hadith, created an independent philosophy known as "Transcendent Philosophy" (Hikmat al-Muta'aliyah). This philosophy was further developed by Sadrian philosophers, especially Hadi Sabzavari and others.

Mulla Sadra's influence from Greek, Peripatetic, Illuminationist philosophers, and mystics is evident. However, this influence should not be understood in a negative or passive sense:

"Sadr al-Muta'alliheen thoroughly assimilated what had been received from ancient Greek philosophers, especially Plato and Aristotle, and what great Islamic philosophers such as Al-Farabi, Ibn Sina, and Suhrawardi had explained or added themselves, along with what great mystics had found through their mystical insight, and he reestablished a new foundation on solid and unshakable principles. He made philosophical issues as demonstrative as mathematical principles, where each issue is derived and inferred from another, thus rescuing philosophy from the dispersion of argumentative methods" (Motahhari, 1994a, p. 30).

Mulla Sadra's philosophy is, from a philosophical perspective, the culmination of two significant currents: Peripatetic and Illuminationist. The Peripatetic tradition is attributed to Aristotle, while the

Illuminationist tradition is attributed to Plato. When these two currents reached the Islamic world, they became more extensive and profound; the Peripatetic tradition was especially pursued by Al-Farabi and Ibn Sina, and the Illuminationist tradition by Suhrawardi (Shaykh al-Ishraq). Numerous discussions and branches were added to the existing findings. Mulla Sadra stands at the end of these two currents. Thus, "Mulla Sadra's philosophy, besides being original and unprecedented in some respects, is the result of the efforts of great researchers over eight hundred years, each of whom contributed to the advancement of philosophy" (Motahhari, 1994a, pp. 30-31). He also incorporated mysticism and transmitted discussions (Quran and Hadith) into philosophy. For him, "the goal is to attain knowledge and certainty resulting from knowledge, and by placing the sayings of the Imams as a middle term, knowledge and certainty are achieved; this coordination of demonstration, intuition, and the Quran, or in other words, reason, intuition, and transmission (al-naghl), is one of the innovations of ... Sadr al-Muta'alliheen" (Javadi Amoli, 2005, p. 8).

3. Contemporary Islamic Philosophy

Contemporary Islamic philosophy, which began in the 20th century CE (14th century AH), primarily took shape as the "Neo-Sadrian Philosophy".

This philosophical movement, leveraging Mulla Sadra's Transcendent Philosophy (Hikmat al-Muta'aliyah), emerged as a response to Marxist materialism and atheistic trends in Western philosophy. It began with the works of Sayyed Mohammad Hossein Tabataba'i and his student Morteza Motahhari, and was continued by others such as Abdollah Javadi Amoli.

"If we call the revival and reconstruction of a philosophical and intellectual school [Transcendent Philosophy], corresponding to the sciences and challenges of the era, while preserving its fundamental principles and elements, as its renovation, we are entitled to name the new philosophical movement in Iran as 'Neo-Sadrian School' (Rashad, 1998, p. 60).

In reality, Neo-Sadrian philosophy can be considered contemporary

Islamic philosophy that has focused on explaining, interpreting, and developing philosophical views in the trajectory and horizon of Mulla Sadra's Transcendent Philosophy. Although defined under Sadrian philosophy and adopting the same method of Transcendent Philosophy, Neo-Sadrian philosophy has offered independent views, which can be regarded as a distinct school or philosophical discourse (Abbaszadeh, 2019b, p. 17).

Neo-Sadrian philosophy has managed to transform existing philosophy in three aspects: form and structure, method, and content. In terms of formal transformation, there is a shift in the structure and arrangement of philosophical discussions; instead of beginning with ontology, the focus starts with epistemology and the problem of human perceptions. Methodologically, Neo-Sadrian philosophy emphasizes avoiding the mixing of rational argument and heart intuition while acknowledging the unity of the paths and destinations of "rational argument, intuition, and Quran"; it also emphasizes the genealogy and historical evolution of philosophical issues, and the comparative study of issues between Islamic philosophy and Western philosophies, or among various schools of Islamic philosophy. Content-wise, it includes modernizing philosophy by discarding old natural sciences and focusing on new physics; providing new interpretations of some issues such as proofs for God's existence; theorizing about the conventional perceptions (Al-Idrakat al-I'tibariah) and paying attention to "Philosophy of" like philosophy of mind, philosophy of religion, philosophy of ethics, and philosophy of law; multiplying arguments in some philosophical principles and issues like the refutation of circularity and infinite regress; and expanding discussions introduced in new philosophies like motion, time, causality, and more (Rashad, 1998, pp. 61-62).

Section Two: Three Types of Islamic Philosophy

Islamic philosophy can be conceptualized in three ways: Islamic philosophy as a concept, Islamic philosophy as an actualized reality, and

future (ideal) Islamic philosophy. It is crucial to distinguish between these three types, especially the second and third types.

A. Islamic Philosophy as a Concept

Islamic philosophy as a concept refers to the various interpretations that philosophers have of "Islamic philosophy." Each philosopher or philosophical movement or school may have a particular understanding or definition of Islamic philosophy based on their perspective. A science or discipline can be defined based on its subject matter, method, purpose, function, utility and so forth. Accordingly, Islamic philosophy as a discipline can also be defined in various ways, including its subject matter, method, purpose, function, utility and more.

Earlier, we briefly addressed the nature of Islamic philosophy and the "Islamic" attribute in this descriptive compound, as well as the possibility and conditions for realizing this philosophy, noting that views in this area are diverse and varied. Studying and reviewing these views may take us away from the main goal of this writing.

B. Islamic Philosophy as an Actualized Reality

Islamic philosophy as an actualized reality or the existing and realized Islamic philosophy refers to Islamic philosophy as it has practically existed and manifested throughout history.

Previously, we reviewed the historical evolution of Islamic philosophy, including three periods: early Islamic philosophy (Peripatetic and Illuminationist traditions), late Islamic philosophy (Sadrian tradition), and contemporary Islamic philosophy (Neo-Sadrian school).

A brief glance at the historical trajectory of Islamic philosophy reveals that it has taken at least about three centuries for a new philosophical tradition or school to emerge in the Islamic world (with the exception that it took about five centuries for Sadrian philosophy or Transcendent Philosophy to develop):

- Peripatetic Philosophy: from the 9th century CE (3rd century AH);
- Illuminationist Philosophy: from the 12th century CE (6th century AH);

- Sadrian Philosophy (Transcendent Philosophy): from the 17th century CE (11th century AH);
- Neo-Sadrian School: from the 20th century CE (14th century AH).

Despite the fact that "three or five centuries of waiting" for the emergence of a new philosophical tradition or school in the Islamic world is not a short period, some researchers have considered the evolution of Islamic philosophy as a "regressive" trajectory due to its gradual departure from pure Peripatetic rationalism, inclination towards illumination, amalgamation with mysticism and theology, and ultimately gaining a transmitted flavor (Quran and Hadith):

"This philosophy [Islamic philosophy] became a coherent system with Ibn Sina. What Ibn Sina did, which should have been the first step of this movement, in practice became the last step. After him, nothing was added to the content of philosophy. What Suhrawardi and then Sadr al-Muta'alliheen did was nothing but mixing philosophy with Sufism, which is an irrational school. Of course, in this regard, Suhrawardi's work is not very significant; but Mulla Sadra's work is so serious that it can be said that with his efforts, theoretical mysticism triumphed over Peripatetic philosophy" (Yathribi, 2009, p. 170).

However, some philosophers consider the evolution of Islamic philosophy as "progressive" due to the gradual and increasing enhancement of its "Islamic" aspect, which is a fundamental and essential element in Islamic philosophy:

"Before Transcendent Philosophy, a division of religious sciences was applied based on the method used to discover the will of God the Almighty: if we understood the will of God through intuition, it was called mysticism; if through reason, it was called philosophy; and if through transmission, it was called jurisprudence and Hadith. However, Transcendent Philosophy expanded the epistemic method and, in addition to reason, also utilized intuition and transmission ... For the philosopher, transmission can also issue fatwas; just as reason can issue fatwas in jurisprudence. The criterion is to attain certainty, and if transmission is

definitive from the aspects of validity of source, context of issuance, and implication, according to Mulla Sadra, it can serve as a middle term ... Philosophy from its inception has had a religious origin ... Islamic philosophers have made divine philosophy an epistemological source of Islam ... Islam, in the sense of "Indeed, the religion in the sight of Allah is Islam," means that which originates from the eternal knowledge and will of God the Almighty" (Javadi Amoli, 2005, pp. 7-9).

What is particularly noteworthy here is the dominance of the Sadrian tradition among contemporary philosophers and the lack of fundamental philosophical innovation and theorization over the past four centuries:

"In the realm of philosophy, for 400 years we have insisted on one philosophical school [the Sadrian philosophy] and have merely subsisted on the leftovers of the rich table of ... Sadr al-Muta'alliheen Shirazi, and during this period, instead of any movement and transformation, innovation and theorization, we have only engaged in marginal commentary and expanding upon what the prominent philosophers of this period had produced" (Rashad, 2000, p. 22).

In reality, over the past four centuries, there has been no fundamental philosophical innovation and theorization, and thus no independent philosophy has emerged, because the Neo-Sadrian philosophy cannot be considered an independent Islamic philosophy but is rather definable as a school or philosophical discourse under the Sadrian philosophy (although there have been some minor and limited philosophical innovations, which should not be overlooked).

The above discussion mainly pertains to the state of Islamic philosophy in Iran, but in other Islamic countries, the situation of Islamic philosophy is not very favorable either. In these countries -especially after scholars and researchers became acquainted with Western philosophy- the primary focus shifted towards describing and explaining Western philosophy and its findings, and less attention was given to advancing Islamic philosophy. What practically happened was limited to the critical edition of Islamic philosophical texts, commentary and interpretation of

these texts, translation of these texts, and finally, the critique of some philosophical views, rather than fundamental innovation and theorization to the extent of creating an independent and new Islamic philosophy.

C. Future (Ideal) Islamic Philosophy

By "future Islamic philosophy", we mean the ideal Islamic philosophy that may emerge later. The present writing is primarily concerned with this third type, which is a type of Islamic philosophy that will solve "problem" or at least have a well-defined and proper engagement with contemporary issues, and such a philosophy naturally has conditions and prerequisites that must be considered to witness its realization in the future. Therefore, in this type of Islamic philosophy, we need a "future-oriented" approach.

Some believe that the task and preoccupation of philosophy is not to address issues; rather, the role of philosophy is higher than to lower itself to specific and minor issues. Philosophy ultimately responds to the questions or inquiries of humans, which are sometimes posed out of mere curiosity, and one of the benefits of philosophy is satisfying this curiosity. Others argue that philosophy's task is not even to answer questions; as answers philosophy provides are not definitive, and definitive and certain responses to philosophical questions would signify the "end of philosophy." Instead, philosophy's fundamental role is to pose questions (see Dadbeh, 1997, Introduction: pp. c-d and p. 59).

These views and beliefs contain some valid points; however, confining philosophy to its "ivory tower", isolating it from solving individual and social-cultural issues, and limiting it to satisfying curiosity and similar matters, do not seem entirely justified. While we acknowledge that Islamic philosophy should not be "entirely" and "completely" reduced to contemporary issues, including purely practical and social-cultural issues (the primary function of Islamic philosophy is to discuss the existence in the absolute sense and address broad and general topics such as God, human, and the universe), it is also necessary to recognize that if Islamic philosophy aims to be relevant in the world and have significant

contributions to offer, it must engage seriously with contemporary issues and define its relationships with them.

The reality is that contemporary Islamic philosophy has not had significant engagement with current issues and has not solved many problems, or if it has engaged and solved some issues, it has not been noticed globally. Meanwhile, the existing and realized Islamic philosophy possesses considerable potential and capacity for solving issues that have not yet been actualized, and we are still distant from the ideal situation; thus, we do not have a significant presence in addressing contemporary issues worldwide. One important indication of the absence of Islamic philosophy in the global context is that there are not many traces of Islamic philosophy in the contemporary philosophical works and books, whereas if we had serious and updated philosophical findings, it is likely that philosophers worldwide would refer to us.

Therefore, we must move towards future or ideal Islamic philosophy, and it seems that the survival of Islamic philosophy and its continuation - against the idea of the "end of Islamic philosophy", which posits that this philosophy has exhausted all its possibilities and has no new potential, thus has effectively ended- depends on this endeavor. We are currently distant from this situation, and reducing or eliminating this distance requires substantial intellectual and philosophical effort.

Examining the trajectory of philosophy in the West, perhaps reveals a different facet of philosophical endeavor. Westerners have brought philosophy into the realms of "culture," "society," and even "practical issues", achieving insights that are not strictly scientific. For some time now, culture, politics, economics, law, ethics, management, and other areas in the Western world have been structured based on philosophical approaches. The issues and problems faced by individuals and communities in the West are presented to philosophy and philosophical thought, receiving responses that align with philosophical work and activity.

Can we not have similar expectations from Islamic philosophy? It

seems that such expectations cannot be met by the existing and actualized Islamic philosophy, but they may be met by the future Islamic philosophy. Perhaps only in this way can we once again witness the presence and prominence of Islamic philosophy in the world.

Section Three: A Discussion on the "Problem"

It has been asserted that Islamic philosophy must address contemporary issues or appropriately engage with them to maintain its presence and relevance in the world. Naturally, this can be achieved through problem-oriented philosophical researches. But why is problem-oriented research significant? What are the fundamental characteristics of a problem? Moreover, how does a problem differ from a subject, a question, or a difficulty? In the following, we will attempt to answer these questions.

A. The Importance of Problem-Oriented Research

1. Research is not limited to a purely theoretical and abstract study of a topic or subject but has a fundamental relationship with solving problems. Various issues in cultural, social, ethical, political, economic, legal, managerial, urban, industrial, technological, and other fields are resolved through research. Therefore, if we aim to achieve scientific and effective solutions to fundamental problems, there is no alternative but to pursue these solutions through research.
2. Philosophy (as the theoretical basis for science, industry, and technology) and philosophical research (as a means of expanding and deepening philosophy) can play a unique role in addressing the cultural and social dimensions of various problems at both individual and social levels.
3. Research must possess certain characteristics to competently solve problems. One of the most important characteristics is "problem-orientation", which involves correctly and accurately identifying the problem and structuring the research accordingly.
4. In Islamic countries today, philosophical research is more

"subject-oriented" rather than "problem-oriented." Universities, research institutes, and faculty members typically select topics based on their expertise, interests, or perceived importance, directing philosophical research towards these topics. However, most of these studies do not address fundamental problems effectively.

B. Some Characteristics of Problem

1. A problem, in the precise sense, is an issue that has not yet been answered or has not received a satisfactory answer. A problem that has already been solved adequately and does not require updating is not a genuine subject of research (engaging with such issues reduces research to compilation, composition, collection, and similar activities).
2. Problem-orientation is necessary in all types of research, whether theoretical (fundamental research), strategic (strategic research), or practical (applied research). Each type of research requires appropriate problem identification.
3. Research should not involve "problem-making". A problem is something that exists potentially or actually and must be "discovered" and researched.
4. Problems arise at two levels: sometimes at the level of the "knowledge structure" of a discipline, which must be addressed individually to cover the entire structure of knowledge, much like completing pieces of a puzzle. Other times, problems arise at the "individual-society" level, which scholars then turn into research problems. The first level is a priori, while the second level is a posteriori. The first level is logical and sometimes abstract, while the second level is objective and concrete. Both levels are valuable and noteworthy, although it is essential to distinguish between them and consider the specific research requirements of each, such as research priority, importance, urgency, scheduling, and so on.
5. Problems should not be addressed solely through "single-

discipline" research. Contemporary issues are often complex and multifaceted, requiring "interdisciplinary" research.

6. The research methodology and the specific method appropriate for solving a problem will change depending on the nature of the problem. To effectively solve each type of problem, a suitable and specific method must be employed.

C. Differences Between Problem, Subject, Question, and Difficulty

One of the fundamental problems in philosophical research is the claim of problem-orientation while confusing problems with subjects, questions, or difficulties. Therefore, it seems necessary to clarify the differences between these terms to some extent:

Differences Between Problem and Subject

1. A problem is solved, whereas a subject is addressed. These two approaches naturally have different requirements. Solving a problem is the goal of real research, while addressing a subject is the goal of ceremonial research.
2. A subject is sometimes a broad title that either encompasses various problems or does not pertain to problems (in the true sense) at all. In the first case, the subject needs to be broken down into different problems, and research should focus on a specific problem or several related problems. In the second case, the research is not problem-oriented at all.
3. Research focused on a subject is usually easier than research focused on a problem, as a problem has newer, more serious, more targeted, finer, and sometimes more complex dimensions compared to a subject.
4. A subject might not necessarily engage the researcher's mind, whereas a problem (in the precise sense) is always associated with mental concern and engagement.
5. However, a subject can sometimes be "challenging" (issue). Such a subject is capable of being transformed into several problems through the process of problematization and then researched

accordingly.

Difference Between problem and Question

1. A problem requires resolution through research, whereas a question needs to be answered by consulting knowledge sources or references. These two necessitate different approaches and processes.
2. A problem is a sociological concept that arises from awareness and knowledge, often affecting scientists at the level of knowledge or the individual-society level. In contrast, a question may be a psychological concept stemming merely from curiosity or ignorance.
3. A problem generally has a collective identity, engaging a group of people, whereas a question typically has an individual identity, arising in the mind of one person.
4. In some disciplines, the distinction between a problem and a question is not always clear. Such disciplines are not always problem-oriented but can be question-oriented, like philosophy. However, it is believed that even in these disciplines, including philosophy, being problem-oriented takes precedence.

Difference Between Problem and difficulty

1. A problem is solved, while a difficulty is resolved. These two entail different requirements. In research, a problem is solved to resolve its corresponding difficulties.
2. A problem is inherently researchable, but a difficulty only becomes researchable when it is problematized and become a problem within the realm of knowledge and by scholars.
3. A problem is discussed within the scope of knowledge, while a difficulty exists at the individual-society, governance, and other levels.
4. A problem is subjective, forming in the minds of scholars, whereas a difficulty is objective, existing within individuals and human societies.

Section Four: Strategies for Realizing the Future (Ideal) Islamic Philosophy

In the following sections, we will discuss some strategies that could potentially create capacities for Islamic philosophy to solve problems or address contemporary issues.

It is noteworthy that the strategies for the growth, updating, and renewal of Islamic philosophy are more extensive than those mentioned here, and addressing all of them is beyond the scope of this text. Therefore, we will focus only on the most important and central strategies that seem to enable the realization of the future of Islamic philosophy. These strategies include:

- philosophical attention to new sciences and technologies;
- considering the fourth wave in philosophy;
- engaging with "Philosophy of";
- adopting concrete approaches in philosophy;
- conducting interdisciplinary researches in philosophy;
- employing new methods in philosophy.

A. Philosophical Attention to New Sciences and Technologies

Early Islamic philosophy engaged with the physics and astronomy of its time, particularly Ptolemaic cosmology, leading to beliefs in celestial spheres and a system of universal intellects and souls.¹ These beliefs were later disproved by scientific advancements, and thus, it is natural not to

1. The existence of the celestial spheres is a logical conclusion drawn by ancient philosophers from the assumption of the seven planets. The existence of these seven planets is, in turn, one of the established premises of the Ptolemaic cosmology. Based on this, the ancients posited nine spheres (seven spheres for the seven planets, one sphere for the fixed stars, and an additional empty sphere called the "sphere of spheres"). Similarly, the belief in the existence of celestial souls is also derived from theological findings based on ancient natural sciences and astronomy, which considered circular motion -distinct from the linear motion characteristic of terrestrial bodies- as the most perfect form of motion. This type of motion could not possibly originate from inanimate and unconscious matter; rather, it presupposed the existence of a living, self-aware soul. Consequently, the existence of the nine spheres necessitated the assumption of nine celestial souls, and accordingly, nine intellects were considered as the cause of these souls. Additionally, there was one more intellect, known as the tenth intellect or the agent intellect, which functions as the Giver of Forms and bestows souls upon earthly beings, including the rational human soul (Abbaszadeh, 2019b, p. 263).

expect Islamic philosophy to insist on such outdated beliefs:

"The transformations in empirical sciences are such that they are no longer comparable to the natural sciences of Aristotle and Ibn Sina. Therefore, issues designed based on ancient natural data lose their validity, such as the ten intellects, heavenly souls, the connection of the created to the uncreated based on celestial motions and particular and universal imaginations of heavenly souls, the voluntary nature of the motion of all bodies that have a circular motion, matter and form based on the non-composition of the body from parts, and so on" (Yathribi, 2009, p. 170).

However, a significant concern is that in late Islamic philosophy, the principle of engaging with new empirical sciences was forgotten and has not been pursued seriously and methodically in contemporary Islamic philosophy.

Based on the above points, it seems necessary for Islamic philosophy to pay attention to new empirical sciences and technologies and the philosophical issues they generate, particularly fields like physics (especially Quantum physics), astrophysics, biology, biotechnology, etc. This is a crucial strategy for updating and maintaining the relevance of Islamic philosophy globally, facilitating the realization of a future or ideal Islamic philosophy.

B. Considering the Fourth Wave in Philosophy

Throughout history, philosophy has experienced four major waves or trends (not to imply that other trends have not existed, but rather that the dominant discourse or paradigm has largely been influenced by these four). These four trends are:

- Ontology;
- Epistemology;
- Logical-Linguistic Studies;
- Philosophy of Cognitive Sciences.¹

1. It might be possible to predict the likely nature of the fifth wave or trend in global philosophy through precise future studies.

1. Ontological Trend

The first trend is the dominance of ontological discussions in philosophy. From the inception of classical philosophy in ancient Greece, encompassing pre-Socratic philosophers to Plato, Aristotle, and Neo-Platonic philosophers, followed by medieval philosophers, scholastics, and both early, late and some contemporary Islamic philosophers, the primary concern of philosophers was engaging with ontological and metaphysical issues. This is not to suggest that classical philosophers did not address topics such as knowledge, ethics, art, politics, etc., but rather that their main preoccupation was with the concept of "existence" and particularly "existent".

2. Epistemological Trend

The second trend is the dominance of epistemological discussions in philosophy. From Descartes, Locke, and Hume to Kant and then into the twentieth century, epistemology became a serious topic of philosophical inquiry. With Descartes, human was considered as knowing subjects facing the world and things as the object of knowledge that needed to be understood. With Kant, philosophy focused on studying the a priori conditions of human understanding and knowledge, determining its limitations. This trend reached its peak with the emergence of twentieth-century Western epistemologists, reducing philosophy to epistemology. These philosophers argued that one must first investigate what human can know and the boundaries of his/her knowledge before discussing existence and existent if the capacity for such knowledge is determined to be sufficient.

3. Logical-Linguistic Studies Trend

The third trend is the dominance of logical and linguistic studies in philosophy. The main claim of this trend was that many philosophical problems stem from the inadequacy and lack of clarity in the logic and language used by philosophers throughout history. Thus, before engaging in any philosophical endeavor, one must codify and establish appropriate and clear logic and language. This led to the emergence of analytical

philosophers and logical positivists in the twentieth century, who reduced philosophy to logical and linguistic discussions. Notably, continental philosophy and its schools, such as phenomenology, existentialism, structuralism, post-structuralism, critical theory and others also emerged in the twentieth century and should not be overlooked.

4. Philosophy of Cognitive Sciences Trend

The fourth trend, which philosophy currently resides in, is the dominance of philosophical discussions arising from cognitive sciences, sometime termed "philosophy of cognitive sciences". This branch of philosophy examines the philosophical issues and challenges that emerge from the scientific study of human cognition.

Cognitive sciences arose from significant scientific and technological advancements in the West, especially in neuroscience, computer science, and artificial intelligence, from the early twenty-first century. Cognitive sciences involve the study of the brain, mind, intelligence, and related processes. This field encompasses at least six disciplines and sciences: philosophy of mind, artificial intelligence, cognitive neuroscience, cognitive psychology, cognitive linguistics, and cognitive anthropology, with some also including computer science. Cognitive science issues include processes related to the brain, mind, and intelligence in human, such as thinking and reasoning, perception, consciousness, memory, attention, language, learning, decision-making, prediction, analysis, problem-solving, and more. Cognitive sciences are inherently interdisciplinary.

On one hand, many of the fundamental insights and concepts of cognitive sciences are derived from philosophy, particularly the philosophy of mind. On the other hand, cognitive science findings offer new approaches for philosophers to understand human cognition and its complex processes, potentially steering philosophy away from abstract thinking and pure theorization towards concrete thinking and practical application. Thus, in research, both cognitive sciences need philosophy, and philosophy needs cognitive sciences. This applies to the relationship

between Islamic philosophy and cognitive sciences despite their significant methodological, approach, and finding differences (Abbaszadeh, 2021, pp. 225-226).

It appears necessary for Islamic philosophy to pay attention to cognitive sciences and related topics, such as brain and neuroscience studies, mind and psychology, language, artificial intelligence, and more. Cyberspace is also closely linked to cognitive sciences, as it emerges from computer science and artificial intelligence; hence, Islamic philosophy must give special attention to related issues.

Early and late Islamic philosophy remained focused on ontology, and contemporary Islamic philosophy, in addition to ontology, has somewhat engaged with epistemological discussions. However, it has not pursued logical and linguistic discussions from a philosophical perspective as thoroughly as it should have and has not delved into the philosophy of cognitive sciences or the philosophical issues arising from cognitive sciences. Therefore, a strategy for realizing the future or ideal Islamic philosophy involves special attention to the fourth trend of philosophy and addressing the significant issues presented in this trend.

C. Engaging with "Philosophy of"

Another significant strategy for updating and making Islamic philosophy more relevant and practical and applied is to engage with "Philosophy of" (al-falsafah al-muzaf):

"The nature of philosophy as the 'science of sciences' (Ilm al-Ulum) enables the conversion of various subjects within Islamic philosophy into specialized branches, similar to what has been done in contemporary Western philosophies. The rationality of Islamic religious teachings, along with the intellectual richness and robustness of Islamic rational disciplines in terms of rational and epistemic perspectives on sciences and matters, among other reasons, establish the possibility of creating Islamic 'philosophies of'. ... It must be acknowledged that the world and humanity have changed and updated, and the sciences and disciplines derived from (and constructed upon) the propositions and teachings of ...

Islamic philosophy ... also need to be revisited and renewed to correspond with the emerging views and needs of the modern world" (Rashad, 2019).

"Philosophy of" can be defined as "philosophical reflection on various sciences and matters from an external perspective".¹ Such reflection, as the definition suggests, is necessarily conducted with a "philosophical approach," making it a branch of philosophy. It also examines any science or matter from a perspective "outside the realm of the subject and issues of that science or matter," rather than an internal perspective, making it a second-order knowledge (as opposed to first-order knowledge). "Philosophy of" is divided into two types: Philosophy of matters or categories, such as philosophy of politics, philosophy of language, philosophy of technology, philosophy of mind, etc., and Philosophy of sciences or disciplines, such as philosophy of medicine, philosophy of social sciences, philosophy of political sciences, philosophy of logic, etc. Western thinkers addressed "Philosophy of" centuries earlier than Islamic thinkers, thereby moving their philosophy from the realm of pure theory (abstractness) to the realm of practice and application (concreteness) (Abbaszadeh, 2019a, pp. 8-9).

If Islamic philosophy turns its attention to "Philosophy of", new discussions, such as the philosophy of technology, philosophy of media, philosophy of cyberspace, etc., with an Islamic approach will also emerge. This significant aspect is currently almost neglected in Islamic countries and could be a crucial strategy for realizing ideal Islamic philosophy in the future.

D. Adopting Concrete Approaches in Philosophy

Islamic philosophy, particularly in its early and late stages and even sometimes in contemporary times, has largely maintained an abstract approach. However, it seems necessary for this philosophy to also

1. Additionally, "philosophy of" is defined as "the rational and higher-order study of a particular science or scientific field, or a systematic-consideration matter (real or conventional, epistemic or non-epistemic), to attain universal judgments (overarching and specific) related to the subject matter" (Rashad, 2015, p. 27). Although this definition may appear somewhat complex and difficult to grasp, it generally meets the criteria for an accurate and robust definition.

consider concrete approaches to address the issues faced by individuals and societies today. The reality is that contemporary human problems are primarily not of an abstract nature but are cultural and social issues (at the societal level) and personal daily concerns and anxieties (at the individual level).

Islamic philosophy is similar to classical rationalist Western philosophies in this regard, which generally think abstractly. However, in the West, from the late nineteenth century and especially in the twentieth century, some continental philosophies, such as phenomenology and particularly existentialism, emerged that distanced themselves from classical, especially abstract, approaches and pursued concrete approaches relevant to contemporary human issues:

"This school or trend [existentialism] focuses on the individual not as a knowing subject possessing abstract general qualities, but more as an acting being, with feelings, lacking predetermined essence, and unique. Some existential philosophers seek to understand the existence and the meaning of it concretely through human analysis. Thus, existential philosophy often follows two paths: analyzing human and his/her qualities and discovering the meaning of existence; although, in this pursuit, they do not use speculative reason and metaphysical systems, but rather oppose them and suffice with concrete analysis and phenomenological description of matters" (Abbaszadeh, 2017, p. 14).

Islamic philosophy needs to distance itself somewhat from its traditional abstract approach and adopt a concrete approach to issues, which seems to be an important strategy for renewing and making this philosophy practical, ultimately achieving the future ideal Islamic philosophy.

E. Conducting Interdisciplinary Researches in Philosophy

Currently, the boundaries of different sciences are determined by "interdisciplinary" researches. Based on this, solving modern issues sometimes requires enlisting the collaboration of several other sciences and organizing interdisciplinary researches.

Interdisciplinarity in contemporary knowledge refers to the field of study and research in which issues are examined using the foundations and methods of several specialized sciences (Matin, 2013, pp. 111-119).

Interdisciplinarity has various types, among which three main types can be mentioned: cross-disciplinary, multi-disciplinary, and trans-disciplinary (Darzi, Faramarz Gharamaleki, & Pahlavan, 2013, pp. 74-76).

Attention should be given to interdisciplinary studies in Islamic philosophy and the interrelationship of this philosophy with contemporary matters and subjects. With such attention, studies like philosophy and technology, philosophy and civilization, philosophy and culture, philosophy and cyberspace, etc., will take shape with an Islamic approach.

Islamic philosophy has so far limited itself to single-discipline research. Therefore, an important strategy for realizing the future or ideal Islamic philosophy, which can have something significant to say in the modern world, is conducting interdisciplinary researches in philosophy.

F. Employing New Methods in Philosophy

Regarding the importance of methodology, it can be said that science is enriched by issues, and issues are presented in systematic studies and are analyzed and answered through "methodological" research (Faramarz Gharamaleki, 2001, p. 22).

Methodology is a theory about method. The historical trajectory of Islamic philosophy's methodology shows us that Peripatetic philosophy adopted the rational and demonstrative method; Illuminationist philosophy followed a composite method of rational and intuitive (=Illuminationist) method; Transcendent philosophy, in the general sense, is also Illuminationist because it utilizes both reason and intuition, although it sometimes adheres to the transmitted method. Therefore, in the history of Islamic philosophy (early, late, and contemporary), not many diverse methods are observed.

In contemporary Western philosophy, particularly since the twentieth

century, there has been a proliferation of methodologies and the application of new methods. Consequently, a variety of schools and philosophical perspectives have emerged. Western philosophy, depending on the issues it addresses, employs not only traditional philosophical methods but also methods such as dialectical, empirical and positivist, pragmatic, logical and linguistic analysis, genealogical, phenomenological, interpretive-hermeneutical, semantic, and more. For example, regarding the importance of logical-semantic analysis and the necessity of employing it in Islamic philosophy, one can state:

"Critiquing a theory, that is, the effort to evaluate and determine its value, depends on clarifying the concepts involved in that theory, which in turn depends on having a method for defining and clarifying concepts ... This method is produced by philosophers ... If we take analytic philosophy, one of the influential schools in our time, as a model, Islamic philosophy is very poor in this regard and needs serious work" (Alizadeh, 2010, p. 7).

Therefore, it seems necessary for Islamic philosophy to also pay attention to new methodologies and utilize up-to-date and effective methods in its research to address issues effectively. This, too, can be considered a fundamental strategy for the flourishing of this philosophy and the realization of a future or ideal Islamic philosophy.

Conclusion

In this paper, we first addressed topics such as the nature, possibility, and realization of Islamic philosophy; the achievements of this philosophy; and its historical evolution (early, late, and contemporary Islamic philosophies). Then, three types of Islamic philosophy (as a concept, as an actualized reality, and future or ideal) were differentiated. While discussing the "problem" (the importance of philosophical research and problem-orientation, some characteristics of the problem, and the difference between a problem, subject, question, and difficulty), the most important and central strategies for achieving the future or ideal Islamic

philosophy -a philosophy engaged with contemporary issues- were proposed and emphasized:

1. It is very important for Islamic philosophy to focus on empirical sciences and new technologies, and the philosophical issues that these sciences and technologies create, especially sciences and technologies such as physics, astrophysics, biology, biotechnology, artificial intelligence, etc.
2. Philosophy has gone through four major waves or trends: ontology, epistemology, logical-linguistic studies, and philosophy of cognitive sciences. The fourth trend, is a branch of philosophy, examines the philosophical issues and challenges arising from the scientific study of human cognition. It seems necessary for Islamic philosophy to pay special attention to this "fourth wave".
3. Another significant approach for modernizing and making Islamic philosophy more relevant and practical is to engage with "philosophy of". This can be defined as "philosophical reflection on various sciences and matters from an external perspective".
4. Islamic philosophy, particularly in its early and late stages and even sometimes in contemporary times, has largely maintained an abstract approach. However, it seems necessary for this philosophy to also consider concrete approaches, such as phenomenology and existentialism, to address individual and social contemporary issues.
5. Currently, the boundaries of different sciences are determined by "interdisciplinary researches". Solving modern issues sometimes requires enlisting the collaboration of Islamic philosophy and several other sciences and organizing interdisciplinary researches.
6. Islamic philosophy can benefit from new methodologies and utilize up-to-date and effective methods, such as genealogical, phenomenological, interpretive-hermeneutical, semantic, etc., in its researches to address issues.

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