



Epistemic Approach on Al-Faruqi's Method of Intellectual Reformation

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Abstract

Reformation of Islamic thought has been the major objective of the contemporary Muslim scholarship. It aims at reviving the fundamentals of Islamic thought and renewing the basic concepts of the Islamic worldview. Although the basic problem of the Ummah is defined as "epistemological", i.e., related to knowledge and intellectual stagnation, however the major challenge that has been facing the contemporary Muslim reformers is centered upon lacking the practical methods and effective mechanisms for intellectual reformation. A careful study of al-Faruqi's thought may inspire some methodological hints and epistemological mechanisms to deal with such a complex problem. The main objective of this paper is to examine the above presupposition and to formulate methodological guidelines to understand how al-Faruqi's epistemology can contribute to deal with this matter. Al-Faruqi establishes his epistemology on thorough identification of two sets of principles for understanding the world: first, the theoretical principles which constitute the foundation of human knowledge; and second, principles of values which are related especially to morality, i.e., human conduct and action. This paper analyzes and highlights both types of principles, to uncover the integrated method of al-Faruqi's epistemology. The fundamentals of Islamic epistemology and method of intellectual reformation in al-Faruqi's epistemology are presented. The theoretical method of analytical discussion is adopted in the article.

Keywords: *Epistemology, Research Spirit, Intellectual Reformation, Actualizing Divine Will, Moral Responsibility, Method of Inquiry, Al-Faruqi.*

Abstrak

Reformasi pemikiran Islam telah menjadi objektif utama keserjanaan keilmuan Muslim kontemporari. Ia bertujuan untuk menghidupkan kembali asas pemikiran Islam dan memperbaharui konsep asas pandangan dunia Islam. Walaupun masalah utama umat Islam didefinisikan sebagai "epistemologi", iaitu berkaitan dengan pengetahuan dan intelektual yang tidak berkembang, namun cabaran utama yang dihadapi oleh para Muslim kontemporari tertumpu pada kekurangan kaedah praktikal dan mekanisme yang efektif untuk reformasi intelektual. Kajian teliti terhadap pemikiran al-Faruqi dapat menginspirasi beberapa petunjuk dan mekanisme metodologi bagi menangani masalah yang begitu rumit. Objektif utama kertas penyelidikan ini adalah untuk mengkaji andaian tersebut dan merumuskan garis panduan metodologi untuk memahami bagaimana epistemologi al-Faruqi dapat menyumbang untuk mengatasi permasalahan tersebut. Al-Faruqi membangunkan epistemologinya dengan pengenalan dua set prinsip untuk memahami dunia: pertama,

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prinsip teori yang menjadi asas pengetahuan manusia; dan kedua: prinsip nilai yang berkaitan terutama dengan moral, agama, dan budaya. Kertas penyelidikan ini menganalisis dan menekankan kedua-dua jenis ini untuk mendedahkan kaedah bersepadu epistemologi al-Faruqi. Asas epistemologi Islam dan kaedah reformasi intelektual dalam

epistemologi al-Faruqi telah debentangkan. Kaedah teori perbincangan analitikal telah diserapkan ke dalam artikel.

Kata kunci: Epistemologi, Semangat Penyelidikan, Reformasi Intelektual, Menerapkan Kehendak Ilahi, Tanggungjawab Moral, Kaedah Pertanyaan, Al-Faruqi.

Introduction

How the accumulative thought of the contemporary Muslim intellectuals can be benefited for reformation endeavor is an important question of this paper. Reformation and reviving the dynamic spirit of Islamic thought is increasingly becoming necessary in the global Muslim community today for many reasons. This noble goal has been the major objective of modern Muslim intellectuals across the last few centuries. The endeavor for intellectual reformation aims at reviving the basic elements of Islamic thought and renewing the fundamental concepts of the Islamic worldview for a meaningful life¹. With regard to this endeavor, al-Faruqi's epistemology, in fact, represents and culminates the legacy of reviving the religious thought, initiated by Imam al-Ghazali in his renowned work "*Ihya` Ulum al-Din*", and al-Shatibi's reflections in his "*al-Muafaqat*", through Iqbal's creative insights in his "*Reconstruction of Religious Thought*", and down to the 'reformists' efforts for 'modernization' in the twentieth century, such as al-Kawakibi, al-Afghani, Shakib Arsalan, and Muhammad Abdu.

The distinctive feature of the Islamic reformation endeavor across the history, is its dynamic spirit that emanates from the holy Qur'an, source of knowledge and virtues, that has been revealed as guidance to all mankind across the space and time². The holy Qur'an shifts human attention toward nature and invites his intellect to investigate the dynamic processes of the natural phenomena based on the relevant methods of inquiry for truth discovery.

Although the reformation endeavor in Islamic thought is generated by the revealed sources, i.e. the holy Qur'an and Sunnah, the Muslim intellectuals have taken different viewpoints in identifying the main cause of the miserable situation of the Ummah. They also adopted different methods for solution³. The problem of the Ummah, according to al-Faruqi, is mainly '*epistemological*', in the sense that it closely related to the method of inquiry and interaction with the natural phenomena. He thought that both the existing methods of inquiry are incapable to deal with the problem. *Firstly*, the classical method of early

Muslim `ulama that is based on juridical law of Islam (*halal & haram*); and *secondly*, the secular method of modern science that is based on observation and empirical test. Knowledge inquiry, according to the Islamic thought, is essential because it is the main cause of understanding the world properly and also the main source of formation of faith in God. Therefore, lack of knowledge leads, not only to misinterpretation of the world, but also to formation of a false worldview which has critical consequences on meaning and purpose of human life. The entire Faruqi's reformation endeavor is centered upon the two points above. His approach identifies the key concepts and provides ideas and mechanisms of reformation in Islamic thought.

This paper aims to investigate the above two hypotheses of al-Faruqi's epistemology in two basic parts. The first part presents fundamentals of Islamic epistemology in faruqi's thought; while the second part focuses on method of intellectual reformation in al-Faruqi's epistemology. The research method adopted in this article is theoretical and analytic in nature.

1. Fundamentals of Islamic Epistemology in al-Faruqi's Thought

Epistemology or the theory of knowledge is mainly concerned with the nature of human knowledge: its sources, methods, and objectives of knowledge inquiry. Facts and values, reason and faith are, therefore, the related subjects to epistemology which aims to establish the foundation of truth and formation of justified belief. Integration of facts and values, or knowledge and virtue is essential for constructing the proper path for realization of the final purpose of human life on earth, i.e. fulfilling the Divine plan on earth through application of commandments of Allah (SWT).

1.1. The Nature of Human Knowledge

Unlike secular philosophy, the Islamic epistemology holds that human knowledge is granted by God in the

same manner that natural world is created. Thus, human intellect can attain the truth of the world, at different levels and degrees, either through the revealed knowledge or by systematic investigation in the natural and human phenomena. The development of genuine research method that verifies the truth of human knowledge is, therefore, essential in the process of acquiring knowledge. Based on scientific method of verification, Islamic epistemology was able to separate causes of the natural processes from spirits, ghosts, and all that against the systematic inquiry of knowledge such as superstitious beliefs. Unity of God, according to Islamic epistemology, means unity of source of truth and possibility of organized and systematic inquiry of knowledge; in the sense that only God can be the primary and ultimate cause of things. This is tantamount to elimination of any other initiative power in nature beside God, such as magic, spirits, and arbitrary interference into the processes of nature.

Islamic epistemology also protects the scientific enterprise from total secularization which hinders scientists to see the creative power of God as displayed by processes of the created world. According to al-Faruqi, Islamic epistemology gathers all aspects of causality and returns them to God, rather than to mere force of nature⁴. The causal forces operative in any event or object are organized by the absolute and immutable law of God, known in Islamic thought as '*Sunnatullah*', which relates things to each other and make the continuous change in the natural phenomena. The laws of nature are the inimitable patterns of God, in the sense that God operates all aspects of the natural phenomena through causal relations and other methods that might be unknown to the mankind⁵. The consistency of causation is precisely what makes its discovery and examination is possible through scientific research. Science is nothing other than the research for such repeated causation and other reasonable patterns in nature. This *Tawhidic* epistemology inspires and inculcates the idea of possibility of systematic investigation in the natural and human phenomena, which is the first condition of scientific research. Al-Faruqi note that, based on these rational grounds, it was possible for the first time in the history of religious thought that natural sciences have grown and flourished based on

the Islamic epistemology and supervision of the Tawhidic worldview⁶.

1.2. Sources of Knowledge

According to the Islamic epistemology, God is the ultimate source of knowledge and of truth. He is Omnipotent and Omniscience. The absolute knowledge of God, as creator of everything, has been transferred partially to his creatures, especially to mankind through two channels: (i) revelation, and (ii) natural processes (law of nature). All mankind are endowed with reason and faculties of knowledge, by which they are capable of understanding the will of God as well as understanding the natural processes. The former, i.e., understanding will of God, establishes foundations of moral values; while the later provides principles of scientific research. Understanding the will of God can be by either or both of the following two methods: (i) when Divine will is expressed in words, directly by God to man through revelation (do this, don't do that= *Amr & Nahi*); or (ii) when Divine will is deducible through careful observation of created world, the natural and human phenomena⁷.

Nature functions, according to al-Faruqi, based on patterns and orders which are understandable by human intellect. Therefore, the entire universe and cosmos are functioning in order, not in chaos as claimed by some of modern approaches. Al-Faruqi notes that cosmic orders are patterns under which we discern objects as substances, qualities, relations, and events. It is the consistency and unity of cosmic order that enables us to recognize the substance of the world as things and the repetition of events as causal relation. Without cosmic order neither things nor events as causes and consequences would be the same⁸. The point of reference in man is the faculty of understanding. As organ and repository of knowledge, human understanding includes all the gnoseological functions of memory, imagination, reasoning, observation, intuition, and apprehension⁹.

1.3. The Method of Inquiry

The research methodology is discussed by modern studies as a matter of philosophy of science, not epistemology. However, there is no considerable difference between the two cases. The method of modern science is entirely based on observation and

experiment that are supported by verified evidences measureable by empirical means. Islamic epistemology encourages this empirical method, as evidently indicated by many Qur`anic verses which call human intellect to investigate and examine the natural phenomena for religious purposes. But reflection and reasoning also play an important role in Islamic epistemology to contemplate and understand both physical and the metaphysical worlds, besides the revelation. Therefore, Islam as a religion does not contradict with the method of scientific research, it rather adopts both the empirical and rational approaches and integrates them with revelation in the process of knowledge inquiry. Accordingly, Muslim scholars have discussed the complex issues, such as the physical miracles, as up-normal patterns of Divine laws, alongside with normal approaches of knowledge inquiry. The secular approach totally ignores or removes the concept and role of Divine patterns in the process of knowledge inquiry. Due to this empirical approach, understanding the metaphysical world is entirely out of modern science scope. Information provided by Divine revelation are disregarded, equally with superstition and black magic!

1.4. Purpose of Knowledge Inquiry

Development of material aspects of human community is the main objective of modern science and technology. With due consideration to satisfying the material needs, the final objective of seeking knowledge in Islamic epistemology is to actualize the Divine will and to explain the ultimate purpose of human life. Knowledge and ethics are the only two means and mechanisms for actualizing the Divine will. According to al-Faruqi, 'Nature' actualizes the Divine will or Divine plan automatically, out of design, to serve the purpose of its creation. Thus, the world, according to the Islamic epistemology, is not created in vain or in sport. Also, it is not a work of mere chance, but created in perfect condition to serve this specific purpose. Thus, everything that exists does so in a measure proper to it and fulfills a certain universal purpose. The world is indeed a 'cosmos', i.e., an orderly creation that functions in accordance to systems not in 'chaos'. In it, there is the will of God which always needs to be realized. According to al-Faruqi, patterns of God in the universe, the natural phenomenon, are fulfilled with the necessity of the

natural law. They are innate in the very nature of things. No creature acts or exists in a way other than that which the Creator has ordained for it.

Unlike nature, mankind, according to al-Faruqi, has a chance to fulfill the will of God by choice to establish his ethical responsibility¹⁰. By mastering knowledge and moral values, mankind will be able to realize the Divine plan and enjoy a meaningful life together with developing all human aspects: material, spiritual, rational, and social. Enjoying such a meaningful life, mankind would be more eager to the absolute world in afterlife. That is the ultimate purpose of knowledge inquiry in Islamic epistemology.

1.5. The Method of Realizing the Divine Plan

Knowledge and moral values are together constituting the method that is necessary to realize the Divine will and His plan on earth. Accordingly, knowledge and moral values in Islamic epistemology are indispensable. Al-Faruqi elucidates that, man's responsibility is to realize the Divine plan in the created world through making changes in it, based on guidance of revelation. He emphasizes that, since everything was created for a purpose, realization of that purpose is the most valuable act and it must be possible to be realized in this world of space and time. Otherwise, action of man on the created world would lose its meaning and significance. Without possibility of realizing the Divine plan in this world, which is known in Islamic tradition as "Taklif", the moral obligation of man falls without meaning. Therefore, realization of the absolute Divine purpose of creation must be possible in history, that is within this world of knowledge and values, before the Day of Judgment¹¹.

2. The Method of Intellectual Reformation in Faruqi's Epistemology

The question of epistemology, or theory of knowledge, is central in al-Faruqi's thought. The significant role played by al-Faruqi's philosophy, however, found in its methodological dimension that precisely integrates the modern and classical approaches in a single method for reformation and revival of Islamic thought. Recognized as pioneer of "Islamization and integration of Knowledge" and authority on comparative religions, the late professor

Isma`il Raji al-Faruqi (1921-1986) was one of the distinguished Muslim philosophers of the modern era. He possessed vast spectrum of knowledge and great experience with deep insights on contemporary matters which enabled him for thorough mastery of various disciplines. He excelled in many fields of knowledge, especially in religious history, philosophy, ethics, epistemology, and impacts of modern Western civilization on Islamic thought. He also made considerable efforts to create harmony, peace, and tolerance among the societies of global religions¹².

The study of al-Faruqi's thought, in fact, provides insightful hints, relevant ideas, key concepts, and mechanisms to deal properly with the epistemological problems of Islamic thought. He made a considerable effort to identify the cause problem of the Ummah and sincerely investigated for solution. His renowned book "*Tawhid: Its Applications in Thought and Action*" might be regarded as the most dedicated work and the most relevant to be studied for his epistemology. In fact, al-Faruqi himself considered this book as the groundwork for reformation projects of Islamic thought. He hoped that this book could provide guidelines for Muslim youth for genuine self-reformation. Indicating to the main objective of the book, al-Faruqi said: "It is Islam's vision of reality that this book seeks to present for the instruction of Muslim youth". He added, "the relevance of Islam to the various fields of human thought and activity is here analyzed and elaborated with the hope of its becoming the groundwork for reformative programmes in each of these fields."¹³

Al-Faruqi dedicated his time and efforts for reconstruction of the Islamic thought in the modern Muslim communities. Epistemological reformation is the basic method adopted by al-Faruqi to revive the Islamic thought. He deeply believed that rediscovery of the dynamic role of Islamic worldview (*tawhidic worldview*) as inspiring source of ideas and knowledge inquiry is essential for reformation and successful recovery of Islamic thought. He emphasized that there is no genuine research and development without inspiring spirit¹⁴. Besides creating research spirit which is based on Islamic worldview, al-Faruqi considers the study and

understanding of Islamic epistemology, development of research method, and integration of reason and revelation are necessary for intellectual reformation. In fact, there are various methodological guidelines that can be derived and benefited from al-Faruqi's thought, especially from the above-mentioned book, for intellectual reformation. Some of such guidelines are summarized in the proceeding sections.

2.1. Unity of God (*Tawhid*) as Foundation of Islamic Epistemology

Al-Faruqi establishes his epistemological thought on tawhidic vision of the world. He holds that, the affirmation of the absolute unity of God, tawhid, is the affirmation of the unity of truth. As absolute source of knowledge, unity of God means unity of sources of truth, unity of knowledge, and unity of the purpose. God is the Creator of man and nature from where man derives his knowledge. The subject of knowledge is the patterns of nature which are the work and law of God in His created world. God knows reality of all things since He is their author; and equally He is the source of revelation, the direct knowledge that is sent down to mankind. Through these two channels of inquiry, i.e. nature and revelation, God endowed man with the basic sources of knowledge that are related to His absolute and universal knowledge¹⁵.

On the other hand, tawhid from the epistemological perspective means unity of laws, systems, and orders that rule nature and mankind. All are reflection of the absolute law of God in the universe (*Sunnatullah*). Al-Faruqi holds that, to witness there is no God but God, means He alone is the Creator who gives to everything its being, measure, and guidance (Qur'an, 20:50, 87:2-3). It also means God is the ultimate cause of everything and event, He is the first and the last in the universe, and He alone determines the time of deactivating the natural laws that would lead to the total destruction and rebuilding of the world on new patterns of laws (Qur'an, 57:3)¹⁶.

Al-Faruqi, emphasizes that, affirming unity of God in free choice and conviction and with conscious understanding, realizes that all surroundings, whether things or events, and all that takes place in the natural, social, or psychic fields, are the action of God which

fulfills His will and His ultimate purpose. Al-Faruqi notes that once man observes God's commandments in every action and event and observes the Divine initiative in the created world he follows these initiatives because that is God's pattern and law. Based on God's commands, mankind should observe two main domains: *first*, to observe Divine initiative in nature is to do natural science, for Divine initiative in nature is nothing else than the immutable laws which God had endowed nature. *Second*, to observe the Divine initiative in human self or in human society is to pursue the humanities and the social sciences¹⁷. According to the modern philosophy of science, this constitutes the three basic classifications of science, i.e. natural sciences, social sciences, and humanities.

2.2. Actualization of Divine Will

The tawhidic worldview determines the way we understand the world and interprets its components and events. According to this view, there are only two orders of being: the Creator and creations. The latter, excluding the metaphysical creatures, is divided further, based on the purpose of being, into man and nature. Accordingly, the major components of Islamic worldview are three: *man*, *nature* and the *Creator*. Both parts of the created world, i.e., man and nature, are aiming at fulfilling the Will of their Creator and to actualize His ultimate purpose and plan in the context of space and time. The will of God and His ultimate purpose can be known and obtained from two sources: revelation and nature. The first is direct, based on commands and directives, and the second is indirect.

Man is the only creature that can actualize the will of God by personal will and consent, not necessarily, in the sense that he is free to accept or reject commands of God. Knowledge and ethics are the only two means for actualization of Divine will. Freedom of man in the process of actualizing Divine will is the foundation of the moral values. Al-Faruqi notes that the physical and psychic functions of man are integral to nature, and as such they obey the laws of God pertinent to them with the same necessity as all other natural creatures. But the spiritual functions, namely, understanding and moral action, all fall outside the realm of determined nature. They depend upon their subject and follow his determination.

Actualization of divine will by them is of qualitatively different value than necessary actualization by other creatures. Necessary fulfillment applies only to elemental or utilitarian values; therefore, free fulfillment applies to the moral values. However, the moral purposes of God, His commandment to man, do have a base in the physical world, and hence there is a utilitarian aspect to them. But this is not what gives them their distinctive quality, but that of being moral. It is precisely the commandments' aspect of being fulfillable in freedom, i.e., the possibility of being violated, that is what provides a special value to conducts, acts, or thoughts of man we ascribe as 'moral'¹⁸.

2.3. Building the Vision and Research Spirit

Human beings, unlike other creatures, are granted with faculties of knowledge inquiry. Having faculties of knowledge, according to the holy Qur'an, does not necessitate having knowledge¹⁹. Faculties of knowledge need vision to create curiosity and research spirit which inspires for investigation and examination of the natural world and human phenomena. With great insights, al-Faruqi holds that the real source of knowledge does not depend on material aspects, such as buildings and laboratories, but precisely on vision which creates the research spirit. He emphasizes that every developed nation has its own vision that inspires the process of learning. For instance, the Western education model rests ultimately on a vision that animated by strong will to realize its objectives. Buildings and offices, libraries, laboratories, classrooms and auditorial teaming with students and faculty, all such material aspects, according to al-Faruqi, are of little worth without a vision. However, Al-Faruqi, stresses that the nature of vision and research spirit cannot be copied, i.e. cannot be borrowed from other nations, but people can borrow only its material aspects and incidental parts, such as technologies and products. Hence, research spirit and scientific vision are always made locally within the culture. Al-Faruqi emphasizes this point that the spirit is precisely what cannot be copied from other nations or civilizations, but it rather generated by a vision of the own self, i.e. by the established worldview²⁰. The contemporary Muslim intellectuals need to be aware of this fact.

According to al-Faruqi, the insoluble problem of low standard in Muslim world institutions is a logical consequence of this lack of vision which creates research spirit. There is no genuine research for knowledge without curiosity and research spirit. Only by virtue of their vision, the early Muslim scientists and philosophers were able to learn and digest scientific legacy of ancient civilizations, such as Greece, Persian, and Indian, and rehabilitated it within the Islamic vision of knowledge and truth (Islamized)²¹

2.4. Integration of Reason and Revelation

According to al-Faruqi, rationalism does not mean priority of reason over revelation, but the rejection of any ultimate contradiction between the two (reason and revelation). Rationalism looks at the contradictory matters of these two sources of knowledge over and over again, assuming that there must be an aspect that had escaped consideration, which if taken into account, would remove the contradictory relation. Al-Faruqi observes that, rationalism also leads the reader of revelation, not the revelation itself, to another reading, which if considered would remove the apparent contradiction. Such referral to reason or understanding would have the effect of harmonizing, not revelation which stands above any manipulation by man, but the human interpretation or understanding of revelation. It makes human understanding of revelation agree with cumulative evidence uncovered by reason. The intelligent Muslim is a rationalist as he insists on unity of the two sources of truth, namely: revelation and reason²².

Al-Faruqi considers reasoning as a general principle in Islamic epistemology. He holds that rationalism as methodological principle is constitutive of the essence of Islamic civilization. It consists of three rules or laws: (i) first, rejection of all that does not correspond with reality; (ii) second, denial of ultimate contradictories; (iii) third, openness to new and / or contrary evidence. Al-Faruqi elucidate the idea by emphasizing that the first rule protects the Muslim mind against mere opinion and speculation (*zann*), that is, against making any untested, unverified or unjustified claims to knowledge. The Qur'an declares that conjecture, speculations and unjustified claim are an instance of deceptive knowledge (Qur'an, 10:36). Therefore, the true

believer is defined as the person who claims nothing, but the truth. The second rule protects mind against simple contradiction on one side, and paradox on the other²³. The third rule, i.e., openness to new or contradictory evidence, protects mind against literalism, fanaticism, close-mindedness and stagnation of mind. Al-Faruqi observes that, this principle would incline man to intellectual humility and force him to submit that human knowledge is very limited, and to avoid denial of repeating the phrase 'Allah knows the best' "*Allahu a'lam*", which means that the truth is cannot be totally mastered by single person²⁴.

2.5. Redefinition of Man's Moral Responsibility

The Islamic epistemology emphasizes that development of human and natural environment is a moral responsibility of Man. Al-Faruqi explains that man, as subject of moral action, must be capable of changing: (i) himself, (ii) his fellow beings or society, and (iii) his natural environment, so as to actualize the Divine will, as reflected by His commandments. Therefore, the absolute Divine decree, as informed by the holy Qur'an, is that "*Allah will never change situation of any nation until they change themselves*" (Qur'an, 13:12). This Qur'anic verse, in fact, precisely identifies the problem and explains why reformation endeavor of Muslim intellectuals has been unsuccessful in many cases.

On the other hand, as object of moral action, man as well as society and environment all must be capable of receiving the efficacious action of man, the subject. This capacity is the converse of man's moral capacity for action as subject. Without it, man's capacity for moral action would be impossible and the purposive nature of the universe would collapse. Al-Faruqi insists that, if the created world has a purpose, nothing is meaningless in God's scheme. It must be malleable, transformable, capable of changing its substance, structure, conditions, and relations so as to embody or concretize the human pattern or action. This is true of all creation, including man's physical, psychic, and spiritual nature. The entire created world is capable of realizing the ought-to-be, the absolute will or pattern of God, in the space and time²⁵.

Al-Faruqi holds that if man stands under the obligation to change himself, his society, and his environment so as to conform to the Divine patterns and fulfill His plan; and if all that is object of his

action is malleable and capable of receiving his change, then it necessarily follows that man is responsible for his conducts and actions. Moral obligation is impossible without responsibility or reckoning of man. Judgment, or the consummation of responsibility, is necessary condition of moral obligation. It is immaterial whether reckoning takes place in space –time or at the end of it or both, but it must take place. To obey God, that is to realize His commandments and actualize His patterns, is to achieve great success (*falah*). On the other hand, to disobey God's commands leads to meaning-less life, suffering, unhappiness, and the agonies of failure²⁶.

3. Conclusion

This paper has presented al-Faruqi's epistemology in two basic parts. The first part summarizes the fundamentals of al-Faruqi's epistemology in five points, including meaning and sources of knowledge, method of inquiry, and the ultimate purpose of knowledge inquiry. The second part focuses on al-Faruqi's method for intellectual reformation. Besides unity of God as the foundation of Islamic epistemology, this part has discussed several points of al-Faruqi's strategy for intellectual reformation, the most important of which are (i) building the vision and research spirit; (ii) actualization of Divine will; and (iii) redefinition of man's moral responsibly, which focuses on realization of ultimate Divine plan on earth.

Possessing the most viable ideology, that is the Tawhidic worldview which defines the Muslim Ummah as the nation of middle course "*Ummatan Wasatan*" (Qur'an, 2:143), the global Muslim community is regarded as the most capable to lead the way for mankind from the contemporary turbulence of global community. Claiming such an important task, Muslim intellectuals need to prove their capability and ability. The study of al-Faruqi's thought, specially his epistemology, has an intellectual value for such a great task, especially for the young Muslim intellectuals. It inspires the mind with relevant methodological approaches, new ideas, concepts and mechanisms to approach the same problem from different dimensions. However, deduction of insights and inspiring ideas from such a vast spectrum of knowledge, such as of al-Faruqi, might not be an easy task. Therefore, this paper has attempted to provide some hints and guidelines to approach al-Faruqi's epistemological endeavor, with

special focus on how it can be benefited for intellectual reformation.

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¹ The contemporary Muslim literature and scholarship contains a great deal of discussion on the issue of reformation, but mostly without epistemic analysis as adopted by al-Faruqi.

² Religion of Islam, as established on divine revelation is absolute, but as a human experience and practice within a certain context of space-time is relative, therefore the process of reformation and revivalism is necessary.

³ Al-Faruqi, perfectly describes the miserable situation of the Ummah as following: "Despite of the fact that it is the largest in number, the richest in land and resources, the greatest in legacy; and the only one possessing the most viable ideology, the ummah is very weak constituent of the world order. It is fragmented into an endless variety of states, divided against itself at loggerheads with other nations on all its frontiers, incapable of producing what it needs or consumes, of defending itself against its enemies." Al-Faruqi, Isma'il Raji (1992). *Tawhid: Its Applications for Thought and Life*. International Institute of Islamic Thought (Herndon, Virginia, USA)

⁴ Al-Faruqi, *ibid*, P 80.

⁵ Developments of modern science, especially Quantum Mechanics, have approved that scientists are unable to measure some processes of the natural world at atomic level, as well as the complex systems of the biological world. This does not mean that the world functions in chaos, but it rather means the world is more complex than it has been thought. In other words, mankind needs to develop new technologies and more relevant methods to understand the complex systems.

⁶ *Ibid*, P 80 -81.

⁷ *Ibid*, P 74.

⁸ This is part of causation which discussed by al-Ghazali with philosophers to prove that the process of cause and effect is not based on empirical evidences; the relationship between cause and effect is not necessary. Study some of these ideas in a book edited by Abdul Hamid Abu Sulayman, entitled *Islamization of Knowledge: General principals and Work Plan*. (International Institute of Islamic Thought, the second edition 1997-Herndon, Verginia- USA) P 36.

⁹ Isma'il Raji al-Faruqi & Lois Lamya` al-Faruqi (1986) *The Cultural Atlas of Islam* (Macmillan Publishing, New York - USA). P 74.

¹⁰ Al-Faruqi, P 74.

¹¹ Al-Faruqi (1992), p xv.

¹² Al-Faruqi was concerned with establishing some kind of unity or mutual understanding and cooperation among the Divine (Abrahamic) religions, i.e. Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Some of his efforts in this area are reflected by his "*Trialgue of the Abrahamic Faiths*" which based on papers presented by selected group of professors of the three

religions to the Islamic Studies Group of American Academy of Religions.

¹³ *Ibid*, 75-76.

¹⁴ Al-Faruqi (1988). *Islamization of Knowledge: Problem, Principles, and Prospective*, within "Islam: Source and Purpose of Knowledge", Proceedings of the second conference on Islamization of knowledge 1982, P 23-24.

¹⁵ Al-Faruqi, *ibid* P 79.

¹⁶ *Ibid*, P 80.

¹⁷ *Ibid*, P 80.

¹⁸ Al-Faruqi, P 74.

¹⁹ The holy Qur`an condemns those who do not use their faculties properly to gain knowledge. See for example (Qur`an, 7:179, 25:44).

²⁰ Al-Faruqi, Isma'il Raji (1988) *Islamization of Knowledge: Problem, Principles, and Prospective*, within "Islam: Source and Purpose of Knowledge", Proceedings of the second conference on Islamization of knowledge 1982, P 23-24.

²¹ Al-Faruqi, *Ibid*.

²² *Ibid*, P 79.

²³ Al-Faruqi (1986) *The Cultural Atlas of Islam*, P 77.

²⁴ Al-Faruqi, *ibid*, P 79.

²⁵ *Ibid*, 74, 75-76.

²⁶ *Ibid*, P 76.

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