

THE QURANIC COSMOLOGICAL ARGUMENT IN ISLAMIC INTELLECTUAL HISTORY: FAKHR AL-DĪN AL-RĀZĪ ON THE CREATION OF HEAVENS IN VERSE 1 OF SURAH AL-AN‘ĀM

Mohd Saiful Aqil Naim Saful Amin* , Wan Adli Wan Ramli**
& Syed Mohammad Hilmi Syed Abdul Rahman***

Abstract

This study examines the Quranic cosmological argument as articulated by the classical Ash‘arite theologian and exegete, Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 606 AH), in his commentary on the first verse of Sūrah al-An‘ām. In an intellectual climate dominated by secular and materialistic worldviews, which posit a purposeless, self-contained universe, this research posits that al-Rāzī’s exegesis offers a sophisticated philosophical rebuttal. The paper delineates how al-Rāzī extrapolates a comprehensive metaphysical architecture from the verse, employing linguistic analysis, geometric analogy, and a rigorous tenfold argument from contingency (*dalīl al-inkān*) to demonstrate that every aspect of the cosmos, from its macroscopic structure to its fundamental motions, is contingent and thus necessitates a transcendent, voluntary Creator (*al-Fā‘il al-Mukhtār*). The core of al-Rāzī’s method is shown to be grounded in the Ash‘arite doctrine of occasionalism, which posits God as the sole and direct cause of all events. The study concludes by arguing that this classical framework is not a historical artifact but a vital intellectual tool for deconstructing the metaphysical assumptions of modern atheism, particularly Darwinian and New Atheist claims, and for providing a coherent, theocentric paradigm that reconciles divine sovereignty with a rational understanding of the natural world.

Keywords: *Cosmological Argument, Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, Islamic Cosmology, New Atheism, Sūrah al-An‘ām*

Introduction

In the prevailing intellectual climate, an atheistic cosmology posits a universe of profound silence, a cold, mechanistic expanse born of chance, devoid of intrinsic purpose, and silent on questions of transcendence. This worldview, a product of the secularization of knowledge, reduces the cosmos to a mere concatenation of material processes, stripping it of any higher meaning or intelligible message. It is within this context of metaphysical desolation that the need for a coherent and revelatory counter-narrative becomes most urgent. Against this void, the Holy Qur’an emerges not as a mere sacred text, but as a definitive discourse of cosmic revelation.¹ It presents the universe itself as a vast, coherent

* Mohd Saiful Aqil Naim Saful Amin. Department of Usuluddin and Da’wah, Academy of Islamic Studies, Universiti Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Email: mohdsaifalsiddiqi01@gmail.com

** Wan Adli Wan Ramli (PhD) (Corresponding author). Department of Usuluddin and Da’wah, Academy of Islamic Studies, Universiti Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Email: wanaadli@um.edu.my

*** Syed Mohammad Hilmi Syed Abdul Rahman (PhD). Department of Usuluddin and Da’wah, Academy of Islamic Studies, Universiti Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Email: smhilmi@um.edu.my

¹ Amir, Selamat Bin, Mohd Murshidi Mohd Noor, and Ahmad Bazli Ahmad Hilmi. "Scientific Assimilation In The Interpretation Of The Qur’an: An Approach To Zaghlūl El-Najjār’s Work Entit Led “Tafsīr Al-Ayah

tapestry of discernible signs (*āyāt*), where every celestial body, natural law, and nuanced existence points to a reality beyond its own contingent nature.² The Qur'an thus re-sacralizes the cosmos, framing it as the ultimate proof text for a Necessary, All-Wise Creator. Its foundational assertion, "He created the heavens and the earth," is both a theological axiom and a philosophical starting point that challenges the core of materialist assumptions.

Scholarly inquiry into classical Islamic cosmology has predominantly been preoccupied with establishing a genealogical or conciliatory relationship with modern scientific paradigms. As Seyyed Hossein Nasr contends, this external focus has largely eclipsed the more fundamental project of elucidating the integral worldview from which these sciences originally emanated. He posits that the cosmological doctrines of the Islamic civilization were inextricably bound to its governing metaphysical, religious, and philosophical principles, a symbiosis as profound as the one that existed between modern science and the secularism of 16th-17th century Europe.³ The contemporary Muslim world, however, must now confront the formidable challenge posed by these modern sciences, which are the fruit of a radically alien conception of reality, a conception that Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas would definitively characterize as a "secular worldview."

This epistemological juxtaposition necessitates a deliberate intellectual response. Nasr warns that failure to consciously articulate an authentic Islamic conception of the cosmos will inevitably lead to a perilous dichotomy, born from a superficial and merely apologetic "harmony" between irreconcilable perspectives. Such a simplistic reconciliation, which Nasr implicitly laments, engenders a profound cognitive dissonance and dilemma, a believer may inhabit a sacred space designed to reflect a God-centered universe, only to then engage with a scientific curriculum predicated on a purposeless, materialistic cosmology. This spiritual and intellectual schism threatens to relegate faith and reason to separate, non-communicating spheres, forcing the individual into a precarious existence of "double-truth."

The crux of the issue, as explicated by al-Attas, is fundamentally ontological. He traces the ascendancy of empiricism and scientism in 17th-century Europe as the genesis of an existential crisis within the Western psyche, a process he terms "secularization".⁴ This paradigm shift reconfigured the cosmos into a mere, atheistic vessel, devoid of inherent purpose or divine intelligibility. From this desacralized cosmology branches a plethora of doctrines, such as Darwinian evolution in its metaphysical extrapolations, which are often weaponized to contest core Islamic tenets. Consequently, the paramount task for Muslim intellectuals is not merely to adopt the findings of modern science, but to critically evaluate them through the universal criteria of an Islamic worldview, thereby resisting the assimilation of an alien epistemology that jeopardizes the very foundations of Islamic thought.

Al-Kawnīyah Fī Al-Qur'ān Al-Karīm". *Al-Bayan: Journal of Qur'an and Hadith Studies* 10, no. 2 (2012): 53-54.

² Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Azīm*, ed. Hikmat Bashir, (Saudi Arabia: 1431 AH.), 2:30.

³ Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *An Introduction to Islamic Cosmological Doctrines*, (Great Britain: Thames and Hudson Ltd, 1978.), xxii.

⁴ Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, *Islam and Secularism*, (Kuala Lumpur: International Institute of Islamic Thought And Civilization, 1993.), 1-2.

For this reason, we strongly believe that there is a significant urgency to deeply study our cosmology heritages that we inherit it from our scholars and to extrapolate its hidden jewels that we desperately need it now more than ever. Selamat Amir also urges for the research on developing scientific studies of the Quran as it is necessary to establish epistemology of thought in human civilization.⁵

Among those heritages are the works of the prominent Ash'arite theologian, Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d.606 AH). He was undoubtedly a prominent figure of kalam and tafsir from the Ash'arī-Shafī'ī school of thought in the 6th/7th century AH⁶, which his skills in the fields of kalam and philosophy were inherited from his two main teachers, namely: a) Diyā al-Dīn 'Umar al-Khaṭīb al-Rāzī (his own father)⁷ and also b) Majd al-Dīn al-Jīlī, who was also the teacher of the founder of the Ishrāqiyyah school of Islamic philosophy⁸, al-Shaykh al-Maqtūl Shihāb al-Dīn Suhrawardī.⁹ These two teachers of al-Rāzī have a chain of transmission that connects them to the leader of the Sunnis, Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ash'arī.¹⁰ His teacher, Majd al-Dīn al-Jīlī was a disciple to the great prominent Ash'arite theologian, Abū Ḥamid Muḥammad bin Muḥammad al-Ghazālī (d.505 AH). Both of al-Ghazālī and al-Rāzī share the same expertise in two major domains of Islamic knowledge which are Islamic theology and Islamic Jurisprudence, and both of them are happen to be an Ash'arite in theology and a Shafī'ite in jurisprudence.¹¹ Therefore, it can be concluded that al-Razi's thinking is generally based on the Ash'arite theological methodology and has a very comprehensive logical reasoning, which is proven to be practically useful in understanding rational theology correctly.¹²

In an intellectual landscape increasingly shaped by a secular and often materialistic scientific worldview, the classical Islamic intellectual tradition offers profound resources for a rigorous philosophical response. The foundational cosmological claims of the Qur'an, particularly its definitive assertion of a created, purposeful cosmos, present a direct challenge to the atheistic premise of a self-subsisting, accidental universe. To navigate this contemporary discourse, however, requires moving beyond a superficial reading of scripture and engaging with the deep, logical structures embedded within the Islamic exegetical tradition. It is here that the work of Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, a master of theology and philosophy, becomes critically important, providing a methodological template for deriving a sophisticated natural theology from the Qur'anic text.

⁵ Amir, Selamat, Muhamad Alihanafiah Norasid, and Ahmad Bazli Ahmad Hilmi. "Scientific Studies of the Qur'an in the Contemporary Era: An Analysis of Concept, History, and Methodology." *Journal of Islamic Thought and Civilization* 13, no. 1 (2023): 190.

⁶ Yaḥyā Rabī', *al-Imām Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī wa Makānatuh al- 'Ilmiyyah*, (Kaherah: Dār al-Imām al-Rāzī, 2022.), 10.

⁷ Al-Subkī, 'Abd al-Wahhāb b. Taqiyy al-Dīn, *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi'iyyah al-Kubrā*, ed. Maḥmūd al-Ṭanāhī dan 'Abd al-Fattāḥ, (n.p.: Hajr li al-Ṭibā'ah wa al-Nashr wa al-Tawzī', 1413 AH.), 8:82.

⁸ He also authored several logic treatises such as *al-Lāmi' fi al-Shakl al-Rābi'*. Refer Frank Griffel, *The Formation of Post-Classical Philosophy in Islam*, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2021.), 241.

⁹ Al-Ḥanbalī, 'Abd al-Ḥayy bin Aḥmad, *Sharadhāt al-Dhahab fi Akhbār min Dhahab*, ed. Maḥmūd al-Arnā'ūt, (Beirut: Dār Ibn Kathīr, 1986.), 6:477.

¹⁰ Mohd Saiful Aqil Naim Saful Amin, *Hujah Ilmu Kalam: Pembelaan Ilmu Kalam Oleh Imam Fakhr al-Din al-Razi Menerusi Tafsir Mafatih al-Ghayb*, (Kuala Lumpur: Rawdah al-Hikmah, 2025.),

¹¹ Ramli, Rakinah. 2025. "The Nature of Al-Ghazali's Concept of Knowledge and Its Relation to 'Negara Zikir' in Brunei Darussalam". *Al-Muqaddimah: Online Journal of Islamic History and Civilization* 13 (1):51.

¹² Amin, Mohd Saiful Aqil Naim Saful, and Syed Mohammad Hilmi Syed Abdul Rahman. "Pengaruh Ilmu Mantik Terhadap Polemik Kalimah al-Tawhid: Satu Kajian Terhadap Khatimah al-Saâ€™ adah.[The Influence Of Logic On The Polemic Of Kalimah Al-Tawhid: A Study On Khatimah Al-Saâ€™™ adah]." *Jurnal Islam dan Masyarakat Kontemporari* 24, no. 2 (2023): 82.

This article will argue that al-Rāzī's commentary on the inaugural verse of *Sūrah al-An'ām* is not merely a historical curiosity, but an indispensable intellectual tool for deconstructing the metaphysical assumptions of modern scientism. Before we embark on a detailed analysis of his exegesis, it is essential to appreciate its potential to address two core tenets of the secular cosmic view: the denial of a transcendent cause and the rejection of inherent purpose in the universe. Al-Rāzī's systematic approach promises to equip the contemporary believer with a framework to critically evaluate the unstated philosophical commitments of modern cosmology and to articulate a coherent, theocentric alternative grounded in both revelation and demonstrative reason. This study also will only focus on his understanding of the creation of heavens based on the first verse from *Sūrah al-An'ām* and how he constructed a Quranic cosmological argument for the existence of Allah from it.

A Brief Contextual Introduction to *Sūrah Al-An'ām*

Sūrah al-An'ām is universally recognized by exegetes as a cornerstone of the Qur'an's Meccan revelations, delivered as a comprehensive unit to fundamentally establish the doctrine of Tawḥīd. Its very revelation, as narrated by Ibn 'Abbās and cited in Ibn Kathīr's exegesis, was an event of immense cosmological significance, descending at once accompanied by seventy thousand angels, a testament to its profound gravity. As a quintessentially Makiyyah *sūrah*, its discourse is strategically directed toward a polytheistic audience, necessitating a foundational emphasis on Allah's omnipotence, His perfection, and His absolute Oneness as demonstrated through the universal evidence of creation.¹³ This contextual imperative is linguistically encoded, as noted by scholars like Badr al-Dīn al-Zarkashī (d.794 AH), in its recurring address, "O humanity" (*Yā Ayyuhā al-Nās*), a hallmark of Meccan verses that summon all of humankind to recognize their Creator.¹⁴

The structural genius of *Sūrah al-An'ām* further reinforces its central theme. This chapter contains precisely 165 verses, beginning with a verse that praises Allah as the sole Creator of the heavens and the earth, of darkness and light, and concluding with a verse that affirms Allah as the One who has established humanity as successors upon the earth. A mere consideration of its opening and closing verses reveals that the chapter provides a comprehensive map of the human worldview within this vast, expanding cosmos. Comprising 165 verses, its narrative arc is meticulously framed by a profound cosmological argument. It commences with the definitive declaration of Allah as the sole creator of the heavens, the earth, darkness, and light, and culminates in the affirmation of humanity's entrusted role as successors (*khalā'if*) upon the earth. This deliberate framing transforms the *sūrah* into more than a collection of injunctions; it presents a complete Islamic worldview, situating human existence and responsibility within the context of a deliberately created and purposefully ordered cosmos. The chapter itself is a map, guiding the believer from the recognition of Divine Lordship over the universe to an understanding of their own purpose within it.

This coherence is not confined to the *sūrah* itself but is a manifestation of the Qur'an's inimitable literary and thematic miracle, known as the '*Tanāsub al-Suwar wa*

¹³ Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Aẓīm*, 3:519-520.

¹⁴ Al-Zarkashī, Badr al-Dīn Muḥammad bin 'Abdullāh, *al-Burhān fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān*, ed. Muhammad Abu al-Fadl, (Beirut: Dār al-Ma'rifah, 1957.), 1:187.

al-Āyāt’ (the harmony between chapters and verses). As Burhān al-Dīn al-Biqā‘ī (d.885 AH) demonstrates in his exegesis, *Sūrah al-An‘ām* plays a pivotal role in the Qur’an’s serial argument. Its primary aim is to furnish decisive proof of God’s perfect omnipotence and His divine attributes, particularly His power to create, sustain, and annihilate creation. This function is not isolated. It is a direct and logical continuation of the preceding *Sūrah al-Mā‘idah*.¹⁵ This harmony is not only shown between chapters and verses but also between words and nouns such as the pairing between the name of Allah "al-Ghafūr" and several particular names of Him such as "al-Ḥalīm", "al-Wadūd" and "al-Raḥīm". This pairing holds secret wisdoms which only revealed to those who meditate their soul on understanding the Word of Allah.

Therefore, *Sūrah al-An‘ām* serves a dual polemical purpose. It acts as the evidentiary foundation for the abstract principle of God’s Oneness established earlier, providing the tangible, cosmological proofs from the natural world. Simultaneously, it functions as a decisive intellectual to systematically deconstruct polytheism (*shirk*). By demonstrating that the cosmos in its entirety is a created and subservient entity, it negates any possibility of divinity residing within any part of creation, thereby refuting the core belief of the mushrikūn and inviting humanity to worship none but the one, true Creator.

Fakhr Al-Dīn Al-Rāzī on the Creation of Heavens In Verse 1 of Sūrah Al-An‘ām

This sūrah is replete with decisive proofs affirming Divine Oneness, while simultaneously deconstructing the tenets and practices of Arab polytheism. It is for this reason that Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī contends that the chapter itself stands as a testament to the profound importance of the science of creed and theology (‘ilm al-uṣūl). Specifically, in the first verse, Allah declares:

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَجَعَلَ الظُّلُمَاتِ وَالنُّورَ
ثُمَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِرَبِّهِمْ يَعْدِلُونَ

Trans: *All praise is for Allah Who created the heavens and the earth and made darkness and light. Yet the disbelievers set up equals to their Lord in worship.*

This verse starts by affirming that Allah alone is the ultimate and deserving recipient of all praise (*al-Ḥamd*). In his exegesis, Al-Rāzī systematically delineates the profound rationale behind this exclusivity, anchoring it in a metaphysical framework of divine causality. Firstly, he argues that any good deed performed by a person is initiated by an internal impulse or intention (*dā‘iyah*). Since this very intention is a creation of Allah, the primary agency for the action is, in reality, traceable back to the Divine. Consequently, Allah is the true originator of the deed and thus inherently deserves the praise for it. Secondly, Al-Rāzī posits that Allah is the sole agent capable of actualizing any tangible benefit (*jalb al-manfa‘ah*) and of providing true protection from harm (*daf‘ al-maḍarrah*) within the created order. As the ultimate cause of all positive outcomes and the ultimate shield against adversity, praise is rightfully directed to Him as the effective source of all good. Thirdly, the theologian presents a foundational existential argument: the very

¹⁵ Al-Biqā‘ī, Ibrāhīm bin ‘Umar, *Naẓm al-Durar fī Tanāsub al-Āyāt wa al-Suwar*, ed. Muhammad ‘Abd al-Mu‘id, (Cairo: Dār al-Kitāb al-Islāmī, 1984.), 7:1-2.

capacity to experience or enjoy any privilege is contingent upon the preconditions of existence, life, and capability.¹⁶ Given that our being, our vitality, our health, and our faculties are sustained endowments from Allah from birth until death, every instance of perceived good is, in essence, a manifestation of His continuous grace (*ni'mah*). Therefore, when one contemplates the wisdom (*hikmah*) embedded within creation and the boundless expanse of Divine favor, it becomes evident that the reasons for praising Allah are as limitless as a shoreless ocean.

Al-Rāzī, in his exegesis of this verse, further extrapolates a comprehensive metaphysical architecture of the cosmos. He defines the universe (*al-'ālam*) as all that is other than God, categorically divided into composite bodies (*ajsām*) and non-composite, transcendent beings (*arwāḥ* or *mufāriqāt*). This totality is further stratified into the celestial (*falakiyyah*) and the terrestrial (*'unṣūriyyah*). The celestial hierarchy descends in a majestic cascade from the supreme, transcendent realities, the Throne (*al-'Arsh*), the Footstool (*al-Kursī*), the Preserved Tablet (*al-Lawḥ*), and the Pen (*al-Qalam*), through intermediary realms such as the Carpet (*al-Raḥraf*), the Frequented House (*al-Bayt al-Ma'mūr*), and the Lote Tree of the Utmost Boundary (*Sidrat al-Muntahā*). It then proceeds through the levels of the heavens, down to the spheres of the planets and stars, ultimately culminating in our terrestrial world with its minerals, flora, fauna, and seas. This physical cosmos, however, is but one dimension. It is coupled with its corresponding spiritual realm (*'ālam al-arwāḥ*). This entire mega-structure, from the highest, most subtle spirit to the lowest, densest element, constitutes creation. Every single facet of it is a manifest sign (*āyah*) and a definitive proof of God's flawless creative power and His absolute omnipotence. It is only by understanding this vast, ordered hierarchy of existence that one begins to perceive an atom of the profound meaning encapsulated in the phrase, "All praise is due to Allah¹⁷." The true depth of His divinity is, indeed, a shoreless ocean. For this particular reason, Kaoru Aoyagi insists that al-Rāzī's cosmology is also influenced in some sense by al-Ghazālī's mysticism.¹⁸

Beyond the hierarchical layers of the cosmos, al-Rāzī dedicates significant exegetical attention to the profound semantic and philosophical implications embedded in the verse's specific phrasing. He anticipates and systematically addresses potential inquiries a critical mind might raise, transforming the verse's structure into a proof of its own divine origin. A primary question concerns the syntactic precedence of the heavens over the earth. Al-Rāzī resolves this by introducing a powerful geometric analogy: the relationship between the heavens and the earth is akin to that of a circle and its center. The existence of a circle logically necessitates the existence of a center point; however, the existence of a mere point does not, in itself, dictate a specific circle, as it could serve as the center for an infinite number of potential circles. In this ontological dependency, the heavens (the circle) hold logical priority over the earth (the center). Their mention first is, therefore, not arbitrary but reflects a fundamental metaphysical and causal primacy.

A second, more nuanced question arises regarding the grammatical number: why is the word for "heavens" (*al-samāwāt*) in the plural, while "the earth" (*al-arḍ*) is

¹⁶ Al-Rāzī, Muḥammad bin 'Umar, *al-Tafsīr al-Kabīr*, (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā' al-Turāth al-'Arabī, 1420 AH.), 12:472.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Aoyagi, Kaoru. "Spiritual Beings in Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī's Cosmology, with Special Reference to His Interpretation of the Mi 'rāj." *Orient* 41 (2006): 161.

singular? Al-Rāzī's explanation is rooted in the principles of active and passive agency. He posits that the heavens function as the active agent (*fā'il*), while the earth acts as the receptive, passive subject (*qābil*). Empirical observation of the natural order (*al-'ādah*) confirms a multitude of celestial phenomena, the sun's path creating the four seasons, the moon's orbit governing tides, the stars aiding navigation, exert diverse and distinct influences upon the earth. The plural form "heavens" elegantly denotes this variety of celestial actions and effects. Conversely, the earth, as the unified recipient of these multifarious influences, is fittingly mentioned in the singular, emphasizing its singular role as the comprehensive locus of celestial impact.¹⁹

Through this meticulous linguistic and philosophical analysis, al-Rāzī demonstrates that the heavens are not merely a backdrop but a primary proof of God's mighty power, intricately woven into the fabric of terrestrial existence. This understanding finds its ultimate theological grounding in the Ash'arite doctrine of occasionalism. This framework posits that there is no inherent, causal power in created entities; rather, Allah is the sole and direct creator of every single effect and conjunction of events. Therefore, every instance of a season changing, a tide rising, or a plant growing in response to celestial cycles is, in reality, a discrete act of divine power. It is a continuous, created sequence that reminds humanity that the cosmos is not an atheistic, self-running mechanism. It is a theistic universe, utterly dependent at every moment on a Creator who governs it with perfect wisdom and order, compelling the discerning observer to recognize the constant presence of the Divine in the very laws of nature.

The Quranic Cosmological Proof For the Existence of God

Based on this verse, Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī identifies its primary objective as establishing definitive proof for the existence of the Creator. The core of his exegesis presents what is recognized in Ash'arite theology as the argument from contingency (*dalīl al-jawāz* or *dalīl al-imbān*), a foundational proof for God's existence.²⁰ This argument posits that the entire cosmic structure -the heavens and the earth- is contingent in its essence. Its existence, along with its specific measurements, precise dimensions, particular characteristics, and defining attributes, does not reside within itself. None of these features are necessary; they could logically have been otherwise. Therefore, their actualization in this specific, intricate arrangement necessarily demands a determining, transcendent cause: a Sovereign Creator endowed with free will (*al-fā'il al-mukhtār*).²¹

¹⁹ Al-Rāzī, *al-Tafsīr al-Kabīr*, 12:477.

²⁰ Ayman Shihadeh, *The Existence of God*, in "The Cambridge Companion To Classical Islamic Theology", ed. Tim Winter, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008.), 213.

²¹ Al-Rāzī, Muḥammad bin 'Umar, *al-Khalq wa al-Ba'th*, ed. Ḥusnī Ṭarghūt dan Arkān Bāyasāl, (Amman: Maktabah al-Ghānim, 2024.), 73, CF with al-Rāzī, Muḥammad bin 'Umar, *al-Mabāḥith al-Mashriqiyyah fī 'Ilm al-Ilāhiyyāt wa al-Ṭabī'iyyāt*, ed. Muḥammad al-Mu'tašim, (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Arabī, 1990.), 2:468, al-Rāzī, Muḥammad bin. 'Umar, *al-Maṭālib al-'Āliyyah min al-'Ilm al-Ilahī*, ed. Aḥmad Ḥijāzī al-Saqā, (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-'Arabī, 1407.), 1:54 and al-Rāzī, Muḥammad bin 'Umar, *Ma'ālim Uṣūl al-Dīn*, ed. Nizār Ḥammādī, (Beirut: Dār al-Ḍiyā', 2012.), 49-50.

10 Arguments For The Existence of God From Verse 1 Of Sūrah Al-An‘ām

Al-Rāzī systematically substantiates this foundational premise through a rigorous logical framework comprising ten distinct arguments. These proofs demonstrate the contingent nature of every aspect of the cosmos, from its macroscopic structure to its most fundamental motions. The ten arguments are as follows:

First: Every specific celestial sphere is confined to a specific magnitude, while it is possible for the magnitude it possesses to be greater or lesser.

Second: Every celestial sphere has a magnitude composed of parts. The part that is inside could possibly have been outside, and vice versa. Therefore, the placement of each part in its specific location is a contingent matter.

Third: Motion and rest are both possible for all bodies, as evidenced by the fact that corporeal nature is one. The necessary concomitants of things that are one are also one. Therefore, if rest and motion are valid for some bodies, they must be valid for all of them. Thus, the specification of a celestial body with motion to the exclusion of rest is a specification by a contingent matter.

Fourth: For every motion, it is possible for it to occur faster or slower than it actually does. Therefore, the specification of that particular motion with that specific degree of speed and slowness is a specification by a contingent matter.

Fifth: For every motion that occurs directed towards a specific direction, it is possible for it to occur directed towards all other directions. Therefore, its specification to occur in that particular manner is a specification by a contingent matter.

Sixth: For every celestial sphere, there exists another body either above it or below it, and its occurrence contrary to that order was possible. This is evidenced by the fact that since bodies are equal in their corporeal nature, whatever is valid for some of them is valid for all of them. Therefore, its specification to that particular position and order is a contingent matter.

Seventh: Every motion of a celestial sphere has a beginning, because the existence of a motion without a beginning is impossible. This is because the reality of motion is a transition from one state to another, and this transition necessitates that it is preceded by something else. A "first beginningless thing" contradicts being preceded by another, and combining the two is impossible. It is thus established that every motion has a beginning, and the specification of the inception of its occurrence to that specific moment, and not before or after, is a specification by a contingent matter.

Eighth: Since bodies are equal in their essential reality, the qualification of some of them as celestial and others as elemental, and not the reverse, is a specification by a contingent matter.

Ninth: Their motions are the act of a voluntary agent. Whenever this is the case, the motion has a beginning. The proof for this first premise is that if the effector upon them was an agent by necessity of its essence, the perpetuity of that cause would necessitate the perpetuity of its effects. This would necessitate the perpetuity of every single one of

the constituent parts of this motion. Since that is impossible, it is established that the effector upon them is not an agent by necessity of its essence, but rather a voluntary agent. If that is the case, that agent must be pre-existent to these motions, and this necessitates that they have a beginning.

Tenth: It has been established by proof that there exists an infinite void outside the world. The evidence for this is that we know with certainty that if we were to imagine ourselves standing at the edge of the highest celestial sphere, we would distinguish between the direction in front of us and the direction behind us. The affirmation of this distinction is known with certainty. If this is the case, it is established that there exists an infinite void outside the world. And if this is the case, then the occurrence of this world in this specific location wherein it occurred, and not in other locations, is a contingent matter.²²

Thus, through these ten arguments, it is established that the bodies of the heavens and the earth are distinct through attributes and states, and it would be rationally possible for their opposites and counterparts to occur. Therefore, this specific determination must not occur without a preferential agent and an ordainer. Otherwise, one side of a possibility would be preferred over the other without a preferential agent, and that is impossible.

Quranic Cosmological Argument Against Modern Atheism

Based on the rigorous logical framework of Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, the Darwinian and New Atheist worldview²³, which posits a self-contained, purposeless universe governed by blind material processes, can be systematically refuted.²⁴ Al-Rāzī's first principles demonstrate that the cosmos is fundamentally contingent in its very structure, a reality that modern cosmology only reinforces. The specific magnitudes, orbits, and physical constants of celestial bodies- each one finely tuned to permit a life-sustaining universe- are not necessary. As al-Rāzī argues, any planet or star could logically have had a different mass, velocity, or position. The Darwinian narrative of life emerging from a blind cosmic lottery²⁵ ignores this foundational metaphysical problem: a universe capable of hosting life is itself an immense contingency, pointing not to chance, but to a determining will that selected these specific parameters from an infinite set of possibilities.

Furthermore, al-Rāzī's analysis of motion and agency dismantles the core mechanistic assumption of New Atheism. He establishes that the movement of celestial

²² Al-Rāzī, *al-Tafsīr al-Kabīr*,

²³ In the late 20th century, a new wave of movement against religion emerged from the "New Atheism" movement, spearheaded by four principal figures: Sam Harris, Daniel Dennett, Christopher Hitchens, and Richard Dawkins. As noted by scholar Amarnath Amarasingam, these authors launched a successful series of provocative, anti-theistic bestsellers. Their significant cultural influence was further demonstrated through dedicated conferences and widespread public debates with journalists and academics. Refer Amarnath Amarasingam, *Introduction: What is the New Atheism?*, in "Religion and the New Atheism: A Critical Appraisal", ed. Amarnath Amarasingam, (Leiden: Brill, 2010.), 1.

²⁴ It is also adopted by several notable atheist physicists such as Stephen Hawking. Refer Stephen Hawking and Leonard Mlodinow, *The Grand Design*, (New York: Bantam Books, 2010.), 7-8 and Prayogo, Tonny Ilham. "Ateisme dalam Perspektif Barat dan Timur." *Kalimah: Jurnal Studi Agama dan Pemikiran Islam*, 17, no. 1 (2019): 106-107.

²⁵ This notion supported by a theory named "The Natural Selection", which Richard Dawkins argues is the best explanation of the emergence of life without invoking God as its designer. Refer Charles Darwin, *The Origin of Species*, (London: Collector's Library, 2004.), 94-100 and Richard Dawkins, *The God Delusion*, (London: Bantam Press, 2006.), 114-116.

bodies -and by extension, all causal processes in nature- is not self-necessitating but is the act of a voluntary agent. The New Atheist worldview treats the chain of cause and effect, from the orbit of a planet to the process of natural selection, as a closed system of brute fact.²⁶ However, al-Rāzī demonstrates that motion itself is contingent; it had a beginning, its direction and speed are not logically necessary, and its very existence requires a pre-existing, uncaused cause. This means the entire temporal cascade of cosmic and biological evolution, which Darwinism takes as its starting point, is itself an effect that demands an external, transcendent cause, a "First Mover" who is a voluntary agent, not an impersonal law.²⁷

The problem of specified complexity, central to both the cosmic and biological realms, finds its ultimate resolution in al-Rāzī's concept of the "preferential agent" (*murjijih*). He argues that when one specific state is actualized from a near-infinite set of equally possible alternatives, be it the precise physical laws of the universe or the information-rich code of DNA, it cannot occur without a determinant. The Darwinian mechanism of random mutation and natural selection is offered as this determinant. Yet, this only pushes the problem back a step, as the laws of physics and chemistry that permit such a process are themselves part of the same contingent order. Al-Rāzī's logic reveals that a "preference" without a "preferrer" is a metaphysical absurdity.²⁸ The breathtaking specificity of the cosmos and life within it is not evidence of chance, but of a conscious, intelligent Determiner.

Moreover, al-Rāzī's argument from the homogeneity of corporeal nature delivers a profound blow to materialistic reductionism. He states that all bodies share a single corporeal nature, and therefore the capacities of motion and rest are universally applicable. If some bodies (e.g. on Earth) are observed to be inert and subject to external forces, while others (e.g. living cells) exhibit breathtakingly coordinated, teleological activity, this cannot be a mere emergent property of mindless matter. The New Atheist must assert a fundamental, unbridgeable gap between the inert and the living, the mindless and the mindful, without a sufficient cause. Al-Rāzī's principle insists that such a radical disparity in behavior and capacity, arising from an essentially uniform base, is impossible without the ongoing, volitional action of a Creator who specifies these distinct modes of being.

In conclusion, the worldview of Darwinian Atheism and New Atheism, for all its scientific pretension, is built upon a philosophically naive foundation that ignores the fundamental questions of contingency, volition, and specification. It mistakes the created

²⁶ Dawkins, *The God Delusion*, 114-116.

²⁷ Al-Rāzī insists that the argument is built from two premises, namely i) this world is originated and ii) every thing that is originated must have an Originator that renews it. The proof for the second premise is that every thing that is originated must be possible and every thing that is possible has a Creator that creates it. The proof that every thing that is originated must be possible is that every thing that is originated must come from nothing. After that, it comes into existence. Every contingent being accepts the probability of existing and non-existing. Since the ratio of its probability of existing and non-existing is the same, a logical mind cannot accept one of the probabilities occurred unless there is a Chooser which is a necessary being to choose it. Since this world has been found to exist, there must be a Creator which is a necessary being to choose and create it. That is God as the Creator of this world. Refer Al-Rāzī, *Muḥammad bin 'Umar, Muḥaṣṣal Afkār al-Mutaqaddimīn wa al-Muta'akhkhirīn min al-'Ulamā' wa al-Ḥukamā' wa al-Mutakallimīn*, (Cairo: Maktabah al-Kuliyyāt al-Azhariyyah, n.d.), 137.

²⁸ Thus, this argument is absurd because every claim that implies a logical impossibility to occur is also impossible to occur (*mā addā ilā al-muḥāl fahuwa muḥāl*).

order, the contingent, the caused, and the specified, for the ultimate reality²⁹. Al-Rāzī's classical arguments, far from being obsolete, provide a timeless logical architecture that exposes the metaphysical poverty of materialism. They compel the conclusion that the cosmos and the life within it are not a grand accident, but the deliberate and ongoing act of a transcendent, all-powerful, and intelligent God, to whom all praise is ultimately due.

Conclusion

As a concluding remark, Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī's exegesis of the first verse of *Sūrah al-An 'ām* provides a formidable intellectual edifice for a Quranic cosmological argument. His systematic analysis moves beyond mere allegory, excavating profound logical and metaphysical proofs from the scripture's precise language and the observed structure of the cosmos. By deconstructing the heavens and the earth into a hierarchy of contingent beings, each with specific, non-necessary attributes of size, motion, and position, al-Rāzī constructs an irrefutable case for a transcendent, voluntary Agent. The tenfold argument from contingency (*dalīl al-imbkān*) demonstrates that the universe, in its entirety, is a determined reality, whose existence and intricate order point ineluctably to a Preferential Will (*al-murajjih*) that selected its form from an infinity of possibilities.

This classical framework possesses a striking and urgent relevance in the modern intellectual arena. Al-Rāzī's rigorous logic directly confronts the metaphysical foundations of Darwinian and New Atheist worldviews, which mistake the created order for ultimate reality. His arguments expose the philosophical naivety of attributing the cosmos's breathtaking specificity to chance or impersonal laws, revealing that such explanations merely beg the question. The Quranic cosmology, as articulated by al-Rāzī, offers a coherent theocentric paradigm that resists the reductionism of scientism, healing the dangerous dichotomy between faith and reason. It reaffirms that the cosmos is not a silent, mechanistic void but a speaking universe, a vast tapestry of divine signs (*āyāt*) that bears witness to its Creator at every moment through the principle of occasionalism.

In summation, this study affirms that the Islamic intellectual heritage, embodied in the works of scholars like al-Rāzī, is not a relic of the past but a vital resource for the present. It provides the necessary "universal criteria" to critically engage with modern sciences and philosophies, allowing for the integration of empirical knowledge without succumbing to an alien epistemology. By returning to this sophisticated tradition, contemporary Muslim thought can confidently articulate a holistic worldview where the heavens and the earth, revelation and reason, unite in a singular, profound testimony: *Al-Ḥamdu lillāhi Rabb al- 'Ālamīn*, All praise is due to Allah, the Lord of all the worlds.

²⁹ Muṣṭafā Ṣabrī Efendi (d. 1374 H) argues that science is only able to observe what happens and what does not happen. However, it does not reach the level of necessity and impossibility of something happening. Thus, using scientific arguments that cannot provide a law of must or impossibility to invalidate the existence of God for this world that is upheld by logical arguments that prove the necessity of His existence is an epistemic error in argumentation. Refer Muṣṭafā Ṣabrī Efendi, *Mawqif al- 'Aql wa al- 'Ilm wa al- 'Ālam min Rabb al- 'Ālamīn wa 'Ibadih al-Mursalīn*, (Beirut: Maktabah al- 'Aṣriyyah, 2018.), 4:31-32.

REFERENCES

- Al-Biqā'ī, Ibrāhīm bin 'Umar. *Naẓm al-Durar fī Tanāsub al-Āyāt wa al-Suwar*. Ed. Muhammad 'Abd al-Mu'id. Cairo: Dār al-Kitāb al-Islāmī, 1984.
- Al-Ḥanbalī, 'Abd al-Ḥayy bin Aḥmad. *Sharadhāt al-Dhahab fī Akhbār min Dhahab*. Ed. Maḥmūd al-Arnā'ūt. Beirut: Dār Ibn Kathīr, 1986.
- Al-Rāzī, Muḥammad b. 'Umar. *Al-Maṭālib al-Āliyah min al-'Ilm al-Ilahī*. Taḥqīq Aḥmad Ḥijāzī al-Saqā. Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-'Arabī, 1407.
- Al-Rāzī, Muḥammad bin 'Umar. *Al-Khalq wa al-Ba'th*. Ed. Ḥusnī Ṭarghūt dan Arkān Bāyasāl. Amman: Maktabah al-Ghānim, 2024.
- Al-Rāzī, Muḥammad bin 'Umar. *Al-Mabāḥith al-Mashriqiyyah fī 'Ilm al-Ilāhiyyāt wa al-Ṭabī'īyyāt*. Ed. Muḥammad al-Mu'taṣim. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Arabī, 1990.
- Al-Rāzī, Muḥammad bin 'Umar. *Ma'ālim Uṣūl al-Dīn*. Ed. Nizār Ḥammādī. Beirut: Dār al-Ḍiyā', 2012.
- Al-Rāzī, Muḥammad bin 'Umar. *Al-Tafsīr al-Kabīr*. Beirut: Dār Iḥyā' al-Turāth al-'Arabī, 1420.
- Al-Rāzī, Muḥammad bin 'Umar, *Muḥaṣṣal Afkār al-Mutaqaddimīn wa al-Mutakakhirīn min al-Ḥukamā' wa al-Mutakallimīn*. Ed. Ṭaha 'Abd al-Ra'ūf. Cairo: Maktabah al-Kulliyāt al-Azhariyyah, n.d.
- Al-Rāzī, Muḥammad bin 'Umar. *Al-Mabāḥith al-Mashriqiyyah fī 'Ilm al-Ilāhiyyāt*. Ed. Muḥammad Mu'taṣim. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Arabī, 1990.
- Al-Subkī, 'Abd al-Wahhāb bin Taqīyy al-Dīn. *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi'īyyah al-Kubrā*. Ed. Maḥmūd al-Ṭanāḥī dan 'Abd al-Fattāh. N.p.: Hajr li al-Ṭibā'ah wa al-Nashr wa al-Tawzī', 1413.
- Al-Zarkashī, Badr al-Dīn Muḥammad bin 'Abdullāh. *Al-Burhān fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān*, ed. Muhammad Abu al-Fadl. Beirut: Dār al-Ma'rifah, 1957.
- Amarnath Amarasingam. *Introduction: What is the New Atheism?*, in "Religion and the New Atheism: A Critical Appraisal". Ed. Anarnath Amarasingam. Leiden: Brill, 2010.
- Amin, Mohd Saiful Aqil Naim Saful, and Syed Mohammad Hilmi Syed Abdul Rahman. "Pengaruh Ilmu Mantik Terhadap Polemik Kalimah al-Tawhid: Satu Kajian Terhadap Khatimah al-Saâ€™ adah.[The Influence Of Logic On The Polemic Of Kalimah Al-Tawhid: A Study On Khatimah Al-Saâ€™™ adah]." *Jurnal Islam dan Masyarakat Kontemporari* 24, no. 2 (2023): 73-83.
- Amir, Selamat Bin, Mohd Murshidi Mohd Noor, and Ahmad Bazli Ahmad Hilmi. "Scientific Assimilation In The Interpretation Of The Qur'ān: An Approach To Zaghlūl El-Najjār's Work Entit Led "Tafsīr Al-Ayah Al-Kawnīyyah Fī Al-Qur'ān Al-Karīm"." *Al-Bayan: Journal of Qur'an and Hadith Studies* 10, no. 2 (2012): 49-67.
- Amir, Selamat, Muhamad Alihanafiah Norasid, and Ahmad Bazli Ahmad Hilmi. "Scientific Studies of the Qur'ān in the Contemporary Era: An Analysis of Concept, History, and Methodology." *Journal of Islamic Thought and Civilization* 13, no. 1 (2023): 188-202.
- Aoyagi, Kaoru, *Spiritual Beings in Fakh al-Dīn al-Rāzī s Cosmology, with Special Reference to His Interpretation of the Mi rāj*. Orient 41 (2006): 145-161
- Ayman Shihadeh, *The Existence of God*, in "The Cambridge Companion To Classical Islamic Theology". Ed. Tim Winter. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008.
- Charles Darwin. *The Origin of Species*. London: Collector's Library, 2004.
- Frank Griffel. *The Formation of Post-Classical Philosophy in Islam*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2021.

- Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Azīm*, Ed. Hikmat Bashir. Saudi Arabia: 1431 AH.
- LP Fitzgerald. *Creation in al-Tafsīr al-Kabīr of Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī*. Doctorate thesis: Australian National University, 1992.
- Ma'ālīm Sālim Yūnus. *Al-Madrasah al-Kalāmiyyah al-Ash'ariyyah: Bayn al-Naz'ah al-'Aqliyyah wa al-Marji'iyah al-Naṣṣiyyah*. Beirut: Dār al-Rayyāhīn, 2017.
- Mohd Saiful Aqil Naim Saful Amin. *Hujah Ilmu Kalam Dalam Al-Quran: Pembelaan Imam Fakhr al-Din al-Razi Terhadap Ilmu Kalam Berdasarkan Tafsir Mafatih al-Ghayb*. Kuala Lumpur: Rawdah al-Hikmah, 2025.
- Muṣṭafā Ṣabrī Efendi. *Mawqif al-'Aql wa al-'Ilm wa al-'Ālam min Rabb al-'Ālamīn wa 'Ibadih al-Mursalīn*. Beirut: Maktabah al-'Aṣriyyah, 2018.
- Prayogo, Tonny Ilham. "Ateisme dalam Perspektif Barat dan Timur." *Kalimah: Jurnal Studi Agama dan Pemikiran Islam*, 17, no. 1 (2019): 106-107.
- Ramli, Rakinah. 2025. "The Nature of Al-Ghazali's Concept of Knowledge and Its Relation to 'Negara Zikir' in Brunei Darussalam". *Al-Muqaddimah: Online Journal of Islamic History and Civilization* 13 (1):50-62. <https://doi.org/10.22452/muqaddimah.vol13no1.4>.
- Richard Dawkins. *The God Delusion*. London: Bantam Press, 2006.
- Seyyed Hossein Nasr. *An Introduction to Islamic Cosmological Doctrines*. Great Britain: Thames and Hudson Ltd, 1978.
- Stephen Hawking and Leonard Mlodinow. *The Grand Design*, New York: Bantam Books, 2010.
- Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas. *Islam and Secularism*. Kuala Lumpur: International Institute of Islamic Thought And Civilization, 1993.
- Yaḥyā Rabī'. *Al-Imām Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī wa Makānatuh al-'Ilmiyyah*. Cairo: Dār al-Imām al-Rāzī, 2022.