

THE WESTERN PRAGMATISM PHILOSOPHY BASED ON KALÂM JADÎD'S PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

This article examines the philosophy of Western pragmatism since pragmatism is considered to be a real threat to human civilisation. It happens because pragmatism, as a philosophy, makes empirical facts and usefulness as the basis of everything. Thus, it fosters a sceptical attitude towards everything, doing things based on certain benefits, and ignoring norms as well as religious values. This study is a literature study since it examines various sources (books and scientific articles) analysed with a socio-historical approach with Kalâm jadîd science as the basis. The study focuses on the critical analysis on the concepts of knowledge, truth, morals and religion of the philosophy of pragmatism. This study shows that the concept of the philosophy of pragmatism is extremely contrary to Islamic values and teachings. Firstly, pragmatism has its own concept of truth, where empiricism and coherence of ideas and reality determine the value of a truth. Secondly, knowledge will be considered relevant as a scientific discipline if it is able to have a direct impact on and value or benefits for human life. Thirdly, religion and morals are realised as actions done according to human will.

Artikel ini mengkaji lebih dalam filsafat pragmatism Barat dikarenakan filsafat pragmatism dianggap telah menjadi ancaman

nyata peradaban manusia. Sebab filsafat pragmatism menjadikan fakta empiris dan kebermanfaatannya sebagai dasar segalanya, sehingga menumbuhkan sikap skeptis terhadap segala sesuatu, bertindak sesuai dengan kepentingan yang menguntungkan dan mengabaikan nilai norma dan agama. Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian kepustakaan karena mengkaji berbagai sumber (buku dan artikel ilmiah) yang dianalisis dengan pendekatan sosio historis dengan landasan ilmu kalâm jadid . Penelitian berfokus pada analisis kritis terhadap konsep pengetahuan, kebenaran, moral dan agama filsafat pragmatisme. Studi ini menunjukkan bahwa konsep filsafat pragmatisme sangat bertentangan dengan nilai dan ajaran Islam. Pertama, pragmatisme memiliki konsep kebenarannya sendiri, dimana empirisme dan koherensi ide serta realitas menjadi penentu nilai sebuah kebenaran. Kedua, pengetahuan akan dianggap relevan sebagai disiplin keilmuan jika ia mampu memberikan dampak langsung dan memunculkan nilai guna dalam kehidupan manusia. Ketiga, agama dan moral diwujudkan sebagai sebuah tindakan sesuai kehendak manusia.

Keywords: western pragmatism philosophy; kalâm jadid; perspective

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Introduction

Westernization has become a real threat to human civilization (Merican 2021, 99). Syed Naquib Al-attas and Ismail Raji al-faruqi have realized it (Yusuf 2012, 51). The advances in technology and knowledge offered by the West possess values and perspectives, which then changed human mindset (Zarkasyi 2008, 3). This can be proven by the presence of various western scientific disciplines that are inseparable from the influence of their secular point of view, which is definitely contrary to Islamic values (Harris 2022, 128). The Western people continue to bring a variety of Western views that are extremely contrary to Islamic teachings, one of which is pragmatism.

Pragmatism is a threat to human values (Tafsir 2013, 217). It can be proven through the key philosophical concepts of pragmatism regarding knowledge, truth, morality and religion; all of which are only

measured through empirical facts of usefulness (Leary 2009, 7). It stimulates a skeptical attitude towards everything that ultimately forces humans to act in accordance with their interests (Muslih 2019, 217). Yet, in the religious life as well as the moral of life, pragmatism also brings changes and alter humans' perspective. Religion and morality are now only considered good if they are able to bring benefits and values (Ruetenik 2018, 10-11); otherwise, religion and morality are just dogma without clear direction. Hence, pragmatism considers truth as a work that has good and real impacts on human life if it is implemented (Berlin et al. 2005, 727). This then requires a criticism on the philosophy of pragmatism.

The authors have found out that studies discussing the philosophy of pragmatism have been carried out many times. Some of them are related to the implementation of pragmatism in education (Hambali et al 2020; Wasitohadi 2012) and the working of pragmatism in the world of education (Yuliantoro 2018). Based on the substance, the two studies only focus on the role and impact of the philosophy of pragmatism in the educational process. Furthermore, related to the thinking of pragmatism (Kalumbang 2018), politics (Hadinatha 2018), as well as humanism issues and the concept of utility (Thaib 2018), it is clear that these articles only describe the thinking of the figures in pragmatism in political and humanism styles. Meanwhile, the study of criticism of the concept of pragmatism has not been widely carried out. One related article found is the one written by Holinger, who criticizes pragmatism through the lens of American society phenomena (Hollinger 1980). However, no study related to criticism on the philosophy of pragmatism through the perspective of Kalâm Jadîd science has been found. Thus, it has to be stated and becomes a new subject, which is different from the existing article.

This article is expected to be a new insight related to the philosophy of pragmatism which is greatly affected by Western values and views that are counterproductive to Islamic teachings. It was started with the problem of the concept of knowledge, truth, morality and religion in the philosophy of pragmatism, as seen from the perspective of Kalâm Jadîd science.

Research Method

To achieve the objectives of this study, qualitative method is used (Tobroni 2003, 21). The type of this study is a library study because it examines various sources, both books and scientific articles, which are analyzed using a socio-historical approach based on Kalâm Jadid science. This approach is chosen since this article examines the thoughts and concepts that are used to affect the society in general and Muslims in particular in the past. The sources used consist of primary sources related to the philosophy of pragmatism written by William James. Those are *Pragmatism: A New Name for Some Old Ways of Thinking*, *The Will to Believe and Other Essays in Popular Philosophy*, *Pragmatism*, *John Dewey's The Child and the Curriculum: The School and Society*, *The Demons of William James*, *William James on The Self and Personality* and secondary data from related scientific journals (Hadinatha 2018; James 1907; Dewey 1908; Kalumbang 2018; Misak 2001).

The collected data were then critically analyzed through the socio-historical approach of the perspective of Kalâm Jadid science to gain a comprehensive understanding. It begins with a socio-historical analysis of the philosophy of pragmatism through the process of generating the philosophy of pragmatism key concepts affecting Western civilization a lot and became the mindset of the Western society. Furthermore, the argumentation of this key concept is analyzed critically with the perspective of Kalâm Jadid science in order to bring up values that are contrary to Islamic teachings and endanger the aqîdah of Islam and human civilization.

Results and Discussion

The Concepts of the Philosophy of Pragmatism

Etymologically, the word Pragmatism is derived from the Greek *Pragma*, which means action (James 1922, 30). This word is the root of the terms called *practice* and *practical* (Terry 2022, 50). Then, pragmatism is interpreted as a new method of thinking. Meanwhile, based on its terminology, pragmatism is "the quality of dealing with a problem in a sensible way that suits the conditions that really exist" (*Dictionary Cambridge Org* n.d.). It is the quality of dealing with the problem in a way that makes sense and is in accordance with the fact

of the right circumstances occurred. Pragmatism is also interpreted as a reasonable and logical way of doing things or of thinking about problems (Capps 2014, 126-132). It is based on facts that occur rather than on ideas and theories.

Pragmatism is an ideology that emerged and developed in America. Henry Steele Commager wrote that pragmatism became an ideology that has a strong influence on the American nation in 1950. It even almost becomes the official philosophy of the American nation (Hollinger 1980, 90). Pragmatism is a practical exigencies of American life and becomes the basis of American life at that time until today (Hollinger 1980, 91). The idea of pragmatism first emerged and became one of the schools of Philosophy after Mr. Charles Pierce wrote an article entitled "*How to Make Our Ideas Clear*" in 1879 (James 1922, 46). Pierce wrote:

"Our beliefs are really rules for action, said that, the develop a thought's meaning, we need only determine what conduct it is fitted to produce, that conduct is for us its sole significance. We need to only consider what conceivable effect of a practical kind the object may involve what sensations we are to expect from it and what reactions we must prepare" (James 1922, 46-47).

Belief is a rule for doing something, and it can be developed by taking actions that are in accordance with what one wants to result from it. Thus, humans only need to think about things that can be imagined, and feel the sensation that triggers humans to react appropriately to their thoughts (deVries 2018, 10).

This tradition of pragmatic thinking was then developed by William James and John Dewey. James, in his book entitled *Pragmatism: A New Name for Some Old Ways of Thinking*, writes that pragmatism is a method that traces the logical consequences of each idea or respective practical consequences (James 1922, 32; Kaushik & Walsh 2019, 6), thereby placing the impact of reality on the determinants of every action.

James also explains that pragmatism, in addition to being a method, is also a theory of truth, a genetic theory of what is meant by truth (Kaushik & Walsh 2019, 3). Pragmatism has the nature of the

empiricist attitude in assessing the truth (Maddalena et al 2019, 1). Therefore, human experience becomes a factual reality that shows the truth for the philosophy of pragmatism (Booth 2007, 228; James 1922, 30). Then, the explanation was developed by Dewey. She felt inspired by what James had written, by re-stating what James had said in his writing.

"According to Mr. James, is a temper of mind, an attitude; it is also a theory of the nature of ideas and truth; and, finally, it is a theory about reality. It is pragmatism as a method which is emphasized, I take it, in the subtitle, "a new name for some old ways of thinking" (Dewey 1908, 86).

Pragmatism is a view of reality and truth. The empirical truth is based on a fact-finding method where sensory experience as a truth detector ultimately leads to the satisfaction of the statement that truth is what gives satisfaction (Capps 2014, 126). Thus, it can be concluded that pragmatism is not only a measure of belief as stated by James, but is also an indicator of truth.

If it is examined more deeply, it can be concluded that pragmatism is a characteristic of Western civilization. This is revealed through the arguments of the figures such as James and Dewey. This character is expected to be transformed as a universal view. This argument was not made without any basis. It is relevant to the description of Vibha Kaushik and Christine A. Walsh who want to make pragmatism a paradigm that has implications for the scope of social work (Kaushik & Walsh 2019, 2). Then, critical work is needed to read the concept of pragmatism as an effort to deeply explore the current Westernization of civilization.

Kalâm Jadîd

In the substantial term, Kalâm Jadîd science is not much different from the Kalâm Qadîm science. The basis of Kalâm Jadîd science is the material of kalâm qadîm. The word "jadîd" itself means a move that represents a move from classical *mutakallim* language to a new contemporary language covering all fields of both art and civilization (al-Rifâ'î 2016, 43). Basically, Kalâm qadîm is the source of

kalâm jadîd but involving different objects in the form of challenges created by Western thought such as philosophy, secularization, democracy, feminism, LGBT and others (Hasib et al. 2023, 117). It means that the discussion of kalâm jadîd cannot be separated from kalâm qadîm because if it simplified, kalâm jadîd is an extension and innovation of Muslims in the field of Kalâm science in responding to and fortifying the people's aqîdah from the challenges occurred in the modern era.

Kalâm Jadîd science began to emerge as a term in the late 19th century AD until the early 20th century. The emergence of Kalâm Jadîd science indicates an effort to revive the study of Kalâm science that aims to increase the faith of the people, recall *uṣūl al-dîn* and provides an advice to keep nurturing and defending it, and revive the *ghîrah* of Islamic thought from the degradation and hegemony of heretical thoughts and *dhalim* (unjust) power (Rifâ'î 2016, 45). Such efforts were initiated by several figures such as Jamâluddîn al-Afghânî, Muḥammad Abduh, Abdurrahmân al-Kaukabî, Shiblî Nu'mânî, Ṭâhir Haddâd, Badiuzzaman Sa'id al-Nûrsî and others. The first figure who put the term kalâm jadîd in a literature was Shiblî Nu 'mânî. He wrote his book to reject all forms of *shubhat* that occurred at that time and support shari'a as the basis for the development of civilization (Rifâ'î 2016, 45-46).

Essentially, what the scholars did as the implementation form of Kalâm Jadîd science, had been practiced by al-Ghazâlî and Fachr al-Dîn al-Râzî. Both Imam al-Ghazâlî and al-Râzî both did what had not previously been practiced by the *mutakallimîn* in affirming the *aqîdah* and rejecting the *shubhat* (Dom 2011, 133). Al-Ghazâlî starts it by delivering his arguments in a book entitled *Tahâfut al-Falâsifah*. He delivers the arguments naqlî and aqlî which he finally referred to as *mujaddid* (reformer) because of his contribution in reforming the way of dealing with Greek philosophy (Hasib et al. 2023, 116). In line with kalâm jadîd declared by Shiblî Nu'mânî, other scholars agreed that modern challenges are no longer incarnated in the thought concerning sects regarding aqîdah but rather on the thought of deviant ideology covering issues of science, perspective, philosophy, secular and atheist lifestyle (Hasib et al. 2023, 117).

Thus, Kalâm Jadîd science is very relevant to be used as a critical approach to the philosophy of Pragmatism. It is known that the philosophy of pragmatism is the result of Western society's thinking, which certainly contains secularism and atheism that have been a part of the Western civilization's perspective. Therefore, critical reading through kalâm jadîd is indispensable in order to maintain aqîdah and reject heresy.

Philosophical Problems of Pragmatism

Pragmatism is the Western nation's, especially America's, way of life (Klein 2021, 1; Hollinger 1980, 89-91). This is a general movement, or school of philosophy believing that the truth of a proposition does not have an absolute position (Burbules 2003, 3), but it depends on its value or practical usefulness (Blackburn 2016, 213). This view makes the real impact arising from a theory becomes a standard of truth and morality in life (Blackburn 2016, 213). James and Dewey became the central figures of the teachings of pragmatism which later succeeded in transforming this concept into one that assesses truth and belief. Pragmatism has an empirical-epistemological view as a basis in determining attitudes before carrying out an act of empiricists as a rule (Capps 2014, 127). It then affects the understanding of the religious and moral concepts of life, which are only judged based on their practical usefulness.

The understanding of religious and moral concepts of life in the philosophy of Pragmatism should not be separated from the key concepts of this movement. The authors determine four key concepts, which then become the basis of the perspective of pragmatism. Those are the concept of knowledge, the concept of the truth, the concepts of religion and the concepts of morality of the philosophy of pragmatism.

The first concept, the concept of knowledge in the Philosophy of Pragmatism, focuses on the epistemology that leads to knowledge. Dewey stated:

"epistemology in which it was argued that certain knowledge "must relate to that which has antecedent existence or essential being" (Burbules 2003, 19; Piacente 2023, 8).

Pragmatism only recognizes knowledge if it is related to something that has a form of existence or can be proven by empirical facts. Knowledge is acquired through experimental means since the knowledge produced through empirical experiments is the true knowledge (Kaushik & Walsh 2019, 4). Dewey provides an example of physicists who continue to do experiment based on initial ideas and hypotheses which are then deliberately implemented to produce knowledge (Burbules 2003, 74). Knowledge is considered true if it is true ideas that we can assimilate, validate, corroborate and verify (Burbules 2003, 15). Pragmatism is also called “radical empiricism” because it only uses experience as a guide for scientific investigation (deVries 2018, 8). At this stage, the validity of a belief is recognized if it has practical consequences on humans, which can also be referred to as the one that if its works it's true (Kalumbang 2018, 257).

Regarding the second concept, the perspective of pragmatism on knowledge greatly impacts the concept of truth in this movement. Pragmatism emerged as a proponent of empiricists who believed that truth was a reality or fact. James explained that truth means, as a matter of course, agreement, correspondence, of idea and fact (Kaushik & Walsh 2019, 3). Truth is a fact involving ideas and facts that definitely agree or correspond to each other. Truth is only an abstract thing and has no difference unless it expresses a fact (deVries 2018, 7).

Furthermore, pragmatism only measures truth in terms of human satisfaction. Any truth is an idea that will bring prosperity and satisfaction. In the thesis, Dewey elaborates that truth is what gives satisfaction (Hollinger 1980, 94); truth is something that gives satisfaction, which is temporal (Burbules 2003, 50). Pragmatism considers a truth to be non-universal because truth or beliefs can be changed depending on its context (Ruetenik 2018, 31).

Concerning the third one, the concept of religion in the Philosophy of Pragmatism, it is understood that knowledge and truth are empirical in pragmatism. Thus, these affect their understanding of religion and morality (Kaushik & Walsh 2019, 1). Western philosophers, such as Bertrand Russell (Berlin et al 2005, 726), also agreed with this. The pragmatism view on religion was initiated by James who wrote “religious pragmatism is based on a need to find something that saves us” in his book (Ruetenik 2018, 10).

James emphasizes that religion must consider pragmatic principles where we must find something that can save us. If religion is unable to provide salvation, then religion is useless.

"It would profit us little to study this second-hand religious life. We must make a search rather for the original experiences which were the pattern-setters to all this mass of suggested feelings and imitative conduct (Ruetenik 2018, 11).

Pragmatism does not consider religion as a belief, but only as a spiritual need or value. This spiritual belief cannot be forced because it is related to the impact it has (Berlin et al. 2005, 729). The concept of religion as a spiritual aspect can be acknowledged as important and true only if it has a psychological impact that is worldly happiness (Berlin et al. 2005, 729). However, if the belief does not have an impact on human happiness, then the belief ought to be abandoned (Zarkasyi 2022, 90). Ellen Kappy Suckiel explained that the measure of happiness proposed by James aims to judge beliefs and religions as individual-material happiness, which is sought out for the sake of world perfection (Ruetenik 2018, 44).

Related to the fourth concept, pragmatism views morality through naturalistic view in which the value of a truth is relative and experimental (Piacente 2023, 14). According to pragmatism, the existing moral values are all about relativity and nothing is universal. Morality and the value of goodness are speculative and subjective (Burbules 2003, 78). Dewey even wrote;

"that there are many different subjective worlds and truths, and no objective one, this seems to imply a situation of not only complete subjectivism, but a total relativism, since ultimately, everyone has his or her own truth" (Burbules 2003, 100).

Dewey elucidated that eventually everyone has their own truth. Morality must be tested through the consequences arising (Berlin et al. 2005, 735); this test will be the basis for judging whether the moral is right or wrong. If it benefits human, it is right; however, if it does not bring any benefit, it is wrong (Terry 2022, 60). Morality is only

interpreted as how beneficial it is to life, if it does not provide benefits at all, it is just a futile effort.

The morality of pragmatism focuses on the benefits it generates. The benefit desired by pragmatism is the worldly material benefits regardless of the way it is achieved since pragmatism justify all means (Wasitohadi 2012, 175). Profit or benefit must be a top priority in the implementation of morality. If it is not able to provide tangible benefits, it will be discarded and abandoned (Capps 2014, 142). A view that only focuses on the search for material benefits and profits ultimately shapes deviant human behavior that tends to be amoral. Human will act only on the basis of seeking material benefit and profit in any way without feeling burdened with the consequences caused by the way of obtaining it.

A Critical Review of the Philosophy of Pragmatism

Pragmatism born in the West is certainly full of the values of Western ideology and worldview that do not believe in God (Harris 2022, 161). As an example, the concepts and philosophical views of pragmatism related to knowledge, truth, religion and morality do not involve God and do not even mention God at all. These need to be criticized and discarded from the treasury of Islamic thought since, in Islam, all aspects of human life cannot be separated or eliminated from their relationship with Allah (Masturin et al. 2022, 218). In this case, the criticism is categorized into four criticisms on concepts both from Islam and outside Islam.

First, it is the criticism on the concept of knowledge. The concept of knowledge regarding pragmatism is a form of disbelief and denial of the existence of God. This opinion can be seen in James' view about epistemology in which it was argued that certain knowledge "must relate to that which has antecedent existence or essential being" (Burbules 2003, 19). Knowledge in pragmatism is only empirical knowledge whose existence can be witnessed; true ideas that we can assimilate, validate, corroborate and verify (Kaushik & Walsh 2019, 3).

True knowledge can be verified, assimilated and validated with facts. This kind of view implies that God does not exist since there is no form of existence. Further, God is not a source of knowledge

because it cannot be proven by any means of validation, and cannot be verified using facts. Hence, pragmatism is not much different from the view about materialism, both of which does not believe the existence of God because it cannot be witnessed empirically. This means that pragmatism is a misleading ideology that leads people to deny the existence of God and all his powers (Hamka et al. 2023, 89).

Western people also give criticism; one of them is David Holinger who considered that the epistemology of pragmatism was too superficial to achieve the value of something (Hollinger 1980, 95). The focus of pragmatism, which only judges the truth of science based on the consequences of these truths or facts, will not be able to become a tool to reveal something in detail. It happens due to the fact that the value of truth of the sensory perception is relative and tends to be subjective, depending on the individual (Kinzel & Kusch 2018, 5). This opinion can support the criticism on the concept of knowledge regarding pragmatism, but David Holinger's opinion is also inseparable from criticism because his opinion is not much different from the philosophers of pragmatism, who only believe in empirical and rational knowledge without involving God. Therefore, Muslims must reject pragmatism because it is incompatible with Islamic aqīdah, in which the Quran and Sunnah are the initial basis for the source of knowledge with which humans are able to recognize their God (Fata et al. 2023, 67; Washil et al. 2018, 319).

Second, it is criticism on the concept of truth. In the philosophy of pragmatism, truth is an atheist-materialist truth. James stated "truth means, as a matter of course, agreement, correspondence, of idea and fact"(James 1907, 198). This then has implications for the existence of truth, which can only be measured based on its value of usefulness. This concept then acknowledges truth as something that is relative, as stated that truth or beliefs can be changed according to the context (Ruetenik 2018, 31). Naquib al-Attas presented a serious response for this, asserting that it is a mistake if one only employs pragmatic values to measure truth that focuses on facts and values of usefulness (Khakim et al. 2020, 225). Fanaticism towards empiricism will eventually lead to skepticism against non-empiric reality (Muslih 2019, 217). It means that there are two meanings implied by the concept of the truth of pragmatism. First, the truth of pragmatism is an atheistic

truth, the truth to remove God from human life, and the second truth is relative and is not universal.

Pragmatism's view on truth that is in accordance with reality is a relative truth in Islam because the absolute truth comes from God. This relative truth comes from man, whose existence may exist, or it is a creation that may and may not exist (Kartanegara 2003, 32-33; Merican 2021, 101). In this case, Islam also has a concept of relative truth called *al-sawâf and al-khata'* as expressed by al-Syâfi'i (Saefuddin et al. 2010, 166-167). The discussion of these two concepts includes matters discussed in the branches of religion, not the vital matters in religion. However, if the discussion involves the principal problem in Islam, the words *al-ḥaqq* and *al-bâtil* are used.

Pragmatism also declares truth as an agreement or correspondence between ideas and facts (James 1922, 165). This is greatly contrary to the teachings of Islam. In Islam, truth is something that comes from Allah, the Almighty God (Zubaidi et al 2020, 288). That is why the truth is known as *al-ḥaqq* in Islam, the pronunciation of the word *ḥaqq* does not only reflect reality, but it is more comprehensive. *Ḥaqq* in Islam covers the aspects of actions, beliefs, and norms (al-Isfahâni n.d., 124). The relationship between truth and reality in Islam is a relationship that is categorized as dichotomy. The word *ḥaqq* can also be interpreted as *ḥaqqîqah* that means reality because the tendency of the word *ḥaqq* is a fair and wise conformity that is in line with absolute values in the form of Islamic law (Rahmatullah et al. 2022, 321). However, it should be noted that Islam does not always declare reality as a truth because truth comes from Allah through the Quran and hadith that He descended, and these produce fixed values known as *sharî'a* (Masturin et al. 2022, 219).

Third, it is the criticism of the concept of religion. The concept of religion or belief according to pragmatism is considered true if it is beneficial to those who believe it (Berlin & Russell 2005, 729). In pragmatism, religion is only a means of meeting the needs of the soul based on the needs of worldly happiness. A statement says that religious pragmatism is based on a need to find something that saves us (Ruetenik 2018, 10). From this concept, it can be understood that religion is considered as an object whose presence is either needed or

not needed by humans. Pragmatism considers religion to be the human's fabrication to fulfill what his/her soul needs.

Bertrand Russell delivers his criticism by calling what James said as a subjectivistic madness (Berlin et al. 2005, 729). This criticism is not given without any basis. James wants the faith on the system of belief to be only limited to the desire to believe or not, as seen from the consequences after believing it. However, it is necessary to note that Russell's criticism also contains problems considering that he does not believe that religion comes from God, and he does not believe the truth in religion. Hence, the view of pragmatism related to religion is a heresy and disbelief, in which religion is only interpreted as a means fabricated by humans to fulfill the needs of the soul. This view contrasts with the worldview of Islam that sets religion as the nature of human originating from Allah as a way to reach the blessing of Allah (Washil et al. 2018, 325).

Yûsuf al-Qarḏāwī denied and rejected the view of pragmatism related to religion through his explanation of four reasons explaining why it is impossible for human to be separated from Islam (Zubaidi et al. 2020, 288). The first reason is human's rational need. The second reason is the needs of human nature (Rahmatullah et al. 2022, 326). The third reason is the needs of mental health and the power of spirituality (Manawi et al. 2023, 241). The fourth need is the code of ethics (Merican 2021, 108). Thus, religion is not something that is judged by its utility value. Religion is humans' need, religion is a human nature, and religion is something that comes from God.

The view of pragmatism, concerning religion, that only judges it based on its value of usefulness for Islam is an incomprehension of the concept of religion. Previously, there was a very clear difference between the concept of religion between the West and Islam. Hamid Fahmi Zarkasy explicated the difference, starting from the definition of religion, which refers to Islam (Zarkasyi 2018, 17). The word "religion" is derived from the Latin word *re-ligare* which means binding. While the term has various interpretations based on various dictionaries, one of them can probably be interpreted as an organized system of beliefs, ceremonies, and rules used to worship God (*Merriam Webster.Com Dictionary* n.d.).

Responding to this, Western thinkers have different opinions in defining religion. Karl Marx and his followers mention that religion is the opiate of the masses. Then, Western sociologists consider it a shared expression of human values, and Western Psychologists call it a complex mystical trait (Zarkasyi 2018, 18). These differences indicate that the definition of religion in the West is very problematic and indicate the West's failure in understanding religion. In this case, the term *dîn* is the proper term to describe Islam.

The concept of religion carried by the West is very incapable of interpreting Islam as a religion. The term *dîn* is a term created in the treasury of Islamic thought derived from the Quranic words *inna al-dînâ 'inda allâh al-Islâm*. Al-Attas elucidates that the word *dîn* is linguistically derived from the root words *dâna*, *yadînu*, *daynun*, and *dayn*, which mean debt (Helmiati 2021, 360). More comprehensively, religion means indebtedness and being bound to pay debts and must obey the regulations related to debts and receivables (Zarkasyi 2018, 19). From the dimension of language, the meaning of *dîn* is very closely related to God because there is a relationship between God who gives debts and humans who are in debt.

Fourth, it is the criticism on moral concepts. Criticism is also directed against the pragmatism view of the morality of life. Morality or a virtue will be considered right and good if it benefits humans (Berlin et al. 2005, 727). Then, the value of a morality is relative, and it is something speculative and subjective (Kaushik & Walsh 2019, 1). Both of these become the basis of the morality of pragmatism, which is very crucial to criticize due to the unclear standard of the morality of pragmatism (Ihsan et al. 2022, 26). The morality of pragmatism leads humans to be primitive humans who only care about profit regardless of the method used.

Bernart Gert comments on the morality of pragmatism. He writes that James and his pragmatism are a failure in understanding the difference between a reason to act and a reason to believe (Gert 2005, 88). These two things differ beliefs as the basic reason for believing and beliefs that are considered as the basic reason for acting (Gert 2005, 88). However, it should be noticed that Bernart Gert's criticism must also be criticized because he considers the source of morality is not religion, but humans only (Gert 2005, 8). This opinion

contrasts with the worldview of Islam. The morality of pragmatism is a form of disbelief in religion and God because it discards the value of God and religion as the sources of morality (Khakim et al. 2020, 236).

Pragmatism's view of morality is also a mistake because morality, according to pragmatism, is what benefits humans and has a real impact in life. For Islam, morality is known as *akhlâq*. it can be interpreted as honor, good name, or a dignity (al-Anṣari, n.d; al-Azhârî 2001, 18). Meanwhile, in terms of terminology, al-Ghazâlî affirmed that *akhlâq* is an expression of a state that remains in the soul, which encourages actions without the need of thinking and research (Muslih 2021, 307).

Islam judges the good and bad of *akhlâq* based on *sharî'a* and reason (Khaidir et al. 2023, 142). This is then reiterated by al-Ghazâlî that *akhlâq* is not just an act that appears for a moment (Dom 2011, 133), but it will become a habit that brings people to live peacefully in line with *sharî'a* (Muslih 2021, 307). Henceforth, it is clear that morality is a trait that exists in human soul, which encourages good deeds that correspond to *sharî'a* (Dellarosa 2022, 379). Unlike pragmatism, which considers *akhlaq* or morality as a choice based on profit, pragmatism has been mistaken in understanding morality and the moral concepts they carry because these do not actually provide usefulness but confusion.

The Philosophy of Pragmatism in the Perspective of Kalâm Jadîd

Kalâm jadîd is one of the approaches used in studying current religious issues and social realities (Yusufian 2005, 13). Kalâm Jadîd science is a new innovation from the classical Kalam science in facing the challenges of thought brought by Western philosophy. Substantially, Kalâm Jadîd science has the same content and foundation as the classical Kalam science, in the form of *istbât al-aqîdah wa al-râd al-shubhât*, but it contains differences regarding the methods and objects it encountered that is Western philosophy. Nu'mânî explains that kalâm jadîd is a new direction put within the process of rebuilding Kalam science aiming to reject various abuses, contemporary heresies and supporting *sharî'a* (al- Rifâ'î 2016, 45).

Correspondingly, kalâm jadîd can be used in a relevant analysis to explain philosophical problems (Hasib et al. 2023, 116). In the

process of criticizing the philosophy of pragmatism, kalâm jadîd outlines the substance and values expressed by pragmatism and confronts it with Islamic aqîdah to see the relevance and contradiction of pragmatism with faith. It is an effort to maintain and fortify the aqîdah of Muslims (Dom 2011, 133). It is known that pragmatism makes empirical ability the only path of epistemology. It is a form of misalignment between pragmatism and Islamic aqîdah. To fortify aqîdah, it is necessary to emphasize that humans' empirical abilities in Islam (five senses) are only one of the Islamic epistemologies.

Sensory ability is the last level in Islamic epistemology because it is relative and reductive. How can such a large mountain look small when it is seen from afar, for example, shows the inaccuracy of human senses (Soltani 2015, 7-14). Thus, a further process is needed for determining the empirical reality captured by the senses in order to create 'science and truth' (Merican 2021, 109). The process is the reasoning of revelation and intuitive sharpening, and these two are not parts of the epistemology of Western civilization (Fata et al. 2023, 67-68). Hence, it is clear in Islam that the position of the senses does not act as the only source of truth since it is understood that the five senses have limitations in capturing a reality, and humans need guidance, which is authentic revelation.

Pragmatism also sets truth as an agreement or correspondence between ideas and facts. If observed, this is the real threat of Islamic aqîdah because this argument is the basis of an understanding that acting pragmatically in the West today is like admitting the action of gaining wealth using any way as long as it is profitable as a truth because the idea and reality are clear. It completely contrasts with the teachings of Islam. In Islam, truth comes from Allah the *Almighty* (Khakim et al. 2020, 229). That is why the truth in Islam is called *haqq*, which refers to essence. The essence of humans is servants who serve the creator, and then all their actions must always be based on the needs to seek the blessing of Allah the almighty, not just seeking profit and wealth. Facts can be justified if they are in line with aqîdah and shari'a. Then, it is clear that the truth in Islam, *haqq*, is more comprehensive because it includes aspects of actions, beliefs, and norms (al-Isfahâni n.d., 124-125).

Correspondingly, it is necessary to separate phenomenon and reality. In this description, reality refers to the word *ḥaqq*, which means *ḥaqīqah* or truth that has two physical and metaphysical dimensions. Meanwhile, phenomenon refers to events that have physical dimensions (Khakim et al 2020, 229). *Al-ḥaqq* is manifested in the holistic worldview or Islamic worldview, which contains the concepts of God, human, nature, truth, justice, and *akhlâq*. The concept and the knowledge of God will be the determinant of human behavior and the state of the world in the future. This is what human needs to understand comprehensively about God since misunderstanding everything about God will lead to misunderstanding reality and truth, and misunderstanding truth and reality will lead to making mistakes in life (Khakim et al. 2020, 241).

In the philosophy of pragmatism, religion will only be values covering the extent of its usefulness and tangible benefits for human. This is certainly a real challenge for Islamic *aqīdah* due to the belief that religion is not a concept that is based on rational reasoning but also intuitive reasoning. Affirming the position of Islamic *aqīdah*, religion cannot only be referred to as religion but *dīn* since this term is more appropriate to explain Islam (Aljunied 2022, 12). Definitively, the rational and intuitive reasoning relevant to this is al-Attas's description stating that the concept of *dīn* has four meanings. First, it is indebtedness; a human beings owe their existence to Allah, so they are obliged to repay their indebtedness by worshipping Allah the Almighty (al-Attas 1993, 63-64). Second, human must surrender to Allah by obeying all kinds of commands and staying away from all restrictions Allah the Almighty made. Third, the power of the law of *dīn* leads to the creation of civilization called the *Tamaddun* (Harris 2022, 157). Fourth, this natural (*fitrah*) tendency is an instinct to surrender to Allah and to be religious without any coercion, *lâ 'ikrâha fî al-dīn* (Shamshiri et al. 2020, 119). It means that the four contents of the meaning of *dīn* in Islam cannot be measured only based on empirical reasoning of practical usefulness in humans. Intuitive reasoning needs to be done. It will bring people to the true meaning of religion and faith. Islamization means achieving salvation both in this world and in the hereafter; this is a human nature to submit to Allah and always worship Allah through obeying and implementing

His law (Rahmatullah et al. 2022, 320). Essentially, Islam provides real benefits to humans in the form of the highest tranquility and happiness, but one will only feel these if he/she believes in the aqîdah of Islam correctly. This is also expressed by al-Attas in his book about the meaning of happiness and his experience in Islam (Arroisi et al. 2023, 634).

True morality is based on the fact of the existing morality (Piacente 2023, 14). Seeing norms, morals, ethics or akhlâq through an empirical lens concerning how useful they will be in one's life becomes the characteristic of a person who adheres to pragmatism. It is obviously contrary to Islamic aqîdah, and it is not in accordance with Islamic values as a way of life. Kalâm jadîd criticizes this due to its nature as a real threat to Islamic civilization and the existence of manners and morals as the basis of Muslims' behaviors. Moral, ethics, or akhlâq in Islam are not only based on the interests of the world because manners and akhlâq are the path leading to eternal happiness (Rahmatullah et al. 2022, 319). Quoting the argument of a Muslim scholar named Hamid Zarkasyi, it is true that doing good deeds for others or being good to anyone actually gives positive energy to the person doing it, which may not be seen physically. The existence of that energy can be felt by doing positive activities continuously (Armayanto et al. 2021, 22). Then, the empirical impact cannot be used as the main reason for someone to perform moral actions because morality is a basic potential of human.

Eventually, the analysis of Kalâm Jadîd science leads to the understanding that the philosophy of pragmatism is not in accordance with Islamic aqîdah. It can be seen from the key concepts and arguments of empirical experience as the only source of truth. Being pragmatic is not a part of Islamic teachings and is not a feature of Islamic civilization due to the fact that all elements of life in Islam must be based on the intentions to seek the blessing of Allah through a path that He provides (Shamshiri et al. 2020, 118). In Islam, being pragmatic in every aspect of life is very inappropriate since Islam clearly explains what is the purpose of human existence on earth. It is explained in Q.S. al-Dzariyat [51]: 56,

"And I did not create the jinn and mankind except to worship Me."

The *tafsir* or interpretation of al-Marâghî conveys that the sentence *Illâ liya'budûn* means the jinn and humans are created to worship Allah and it is not Allah that needs them (al-Marâghî 1946, 65). Through the explanation of this verse, the pragmatic attitude is automatically rejected. Human does not behave based on what makes him/her happy because human is actually a creature that Allah created who has a servile obligation to worship Allah (Wahyudin et al. 2019, 310). If pragmatism becomes a tradition and human's behavior, it is actually the first step to the destruction of humanity and humans themselves. Thus, it is necessary to be wise and think clearly about what should be done to avoid deviation from aqîdah due to the current Western philosophical thought, especially pragmatism.

Conclusion

Pragmatism, as a Western viewpoint and lifestyle, has been existing within the secular Western society and becomes a real threat to human civilization, especially Islamic civilization. First, pragmatism has its own concept of truth; empiricism and the coherence of ideas with reality become determinants of the value of truth in life. Second, knowledge will be considered relevant as a scientific discipline if it is able to have a direct impact and generate utility value in human life. Third, religion and morality are manifested as an act of human desire, to choose to believe something or not based on empirical experience. Consequently, one may believe in God if the belief makes a person happy; however, if the belief does not bring happiness, then it is useless to believe in it.

Kalâm Jadîd science acts as the eye of Muslims to see that the conception of Western culture and civilization. This is an effort to defend aqîdah and Islamic civilization. Being pragmatic is not a part of Islamic teachings and is not a feature of Islamic civilization because all elements of life in Islam must be based on the intentions to seek the blessing of Allah through a path He provides. Thus, the philosophy of pragmatism is irrelevant to the Islamic point of view. If pragmatism becomes a tradition and humans' behavior, then there is only one step away to the destruction of humanity and humans. Hence, it is

necessary to be wise and think clearly about what to do for avoiding deviation from aqīdah due to the current Western philosophical thought, especially pragmatism. Islam has indeed explained the purpose of human existence on earth, which is explained in the Quran through surah al-Dhariyat verse 56.

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