THE EPISTEMOLOGY OF ISLAMIC PHILOSOPHY: A Chronological Review

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Abstract

This article describes the various forms of Islamic philosophy because some scholars claim that philosophical thought in Islam became stagnant after Ghazâlî's criticism. This library research uses qualitative method and historical approach, and focuses on examining the distinctive characteristics of each school of Islamic philosophical thought by emphasizing its epistemological aspects. This article shows that philosophy in Islamic world is very dynamic and not in a single character. In each period, the Islamic philosophy reveals a variety of patterns. To facilitate the discussion, this article is elaborated on a series of times and examines the distinctive patterns of epistemology that developed in each epoch. Although ontologically they are similar, there are epistemic differences in the philosophy developed by Muslim philosophers: Peripateticism, which dominated during the classical Islamic period (850-1250); 'Irfânâyah and two schools of wisdom (al-ḥikmah al-ishraqîyah/illumination theosophy and al-ḥikmah al-muta'âlîyah/transcendent theosophy), which dominated in the medieval Islamic period (1250-1850); and the school of al-ḥikmat al-ladunîyah/perennialist theosophy and al-'aqalîyah in the contemporary Islamic period (1850-present). This diversity emerged as a response to different challenges and adaptations to local situations.

Artikel ini membahas berbagai bentuk Filsafat Islam karena beberapa cendekiawan menyatakan bahwa filsafat pemikiran dalam Islam menjadi stagnan setelah kritikan Ghazâlî. Penelitian kepustakaan ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dan pendekatan historis, serta fokus pada analisa karakter yang berbeda dari setiap mazhab Filsafat Pemikiran Islam dengan menekankan aspek epistemologinya. Studi ini menunjukkan bahwa filsafat dalam dunia Islam sangat dinamis dan tidak berkarakter tunggal. Di setiap era, Filsafat Islam mengungkap berbagai pola. Untuk mendukung diskusi tersebut, artikel ini dielaborasi berdasar rangkaian waktu dan menganalisa perbedaan pola epistemologi yang berkembang di setiap era. Meski secara ontologi sama, ada perbedaan epistemic dalam filsafat yang dikembangkan filsuf Muslim: Peripatetisme, yang mendominasi selama periode Islam klasik (850-1250); 'Irfânâyah dan dua aliran hikmah (al-ḥikmah al-ishraqîyah/ teosofi iluminasi dan al-ḥikmah al-muta'âlîyah/teosofi transendental) yang dominan di periode Islam pertengahan (1250-1850); dan mazhab al-ḥikmat al-ladunîyah/teosofi perenial and al-'aqalîyah di periode Islam kontemporer (1850-sekarang). Keragaman ini timbul sebagai respon atas tantangan yang berbeda dan adaptasi terhadap situasi lokal.

Introduction

Some scholars said that science in the Islamic world has declined due to al-Ghazâlî 's criticism on philosophy, significant growth of *Ash'arism* and *Syafiism*, stagnation of Islamic kingdoms' authority, and Mongol aggression on Baghdad (Abidin 2012, 21–42). According to Luthfie Assyaukanie, the establishment of Nizâmiyah Madrasah under the leadership of al-Ghazâlî during the Seljuk Dynasty has spread *Ash'arism* which is less appreciative of human autonomy among Muslims. The enthusiasm for change among Muslims declined and became more critical when al-Ghazâlî wrote *Tahafut al-Falasifah*, which strongly condemned philosophy (Total Politik 2022).

That al-Ghazâlî and *Ash'arism* teachings were the cause of the deterioration of the Islamic world, including in the fields of philosophy and science, is refuted by other scholars. Ulil Abshar Abdalla acknowledges the fact of the stagnation of science in the current Islamic world but to say that al-Ghazâlî and *Ash'arism* are the causal factors is not justified. Abdalla explains that if it were true that the teachings of these two scholars made their followers exclusive and rejected new ideas, then why in Indonesia, the group that highly value new ideas is the NU teenagers claiming as the supporters of al-Ghazâlî and al-Ash'ari? (Abdalla 2021).

Budi Handrianto appeals on behalf of al-Ghazâlî. He states that, it is a fact that after al-Ghazâlî's period, natural sciences in the Islamic world did not decline, but are dynamic, especially in Arithmetic and Astronomy. It is evident that in the thirteenth century, there were approximately 20 Astronomers working at the Maragha observatory. Handrianto also states the fact that the scientific revolution in the Western world in the sixteenth century was influenced by the dynamism of Islamic natural sciences in the 13th to 14th centuries. Furthermore, al-Ghazâlî's criticism on philosophy in *Tahâfut al-Falâsifah* was actually a stimulus for the development of mechanical philosophy, which was subsequently developed by David Hume and became the foundation of progress in natural sciences in the West (Handrianto 2021; Ali 2012, 14).

Handrianto argues that the error in the accusation against al-Ghazâlî originates from Western scientists who compared the conflict between religion and science with their history. This error is also rooted in their argument that Islamic philosophy is only scholastic philosophy (Corbin 1983, xiv). However, Islamic philosophy is not uniform but has distinct characteristics that contradict one another. They also accused al-Ghazâlî as the catalyst for the stagnation of natural sciences and philosophy in the Islamic world, and had the mistaken attitude towards Islamic philosophy.

Studies on Islamic philosophy in a more comprehensive manner have been conducted by many scholars. Henry Corbin, in his book "The History of Islamic Philosophy," discusses the development from post-Ibn Rushd to the development of philosophy among the Shia, such as Mullâ Sadrâ and Mir Damad. In this book, Corbin interprets Islamic philosophy broadly, not only as rational thinking in the Greek tradition but also including other aspects such as Kalam and Sufism. However, Corbin's study is characterized by a chronological approach that emphasizes the

regional origin of the philosopher and the style of their religious school (Corbin 1983, xv). Similar studies have also been conducted by Majid Fakhry. While Corbin's study finished on the development of philosophy in the Shia world, Fakhry goes further by examining the development of Islamic thought in the modern era. Fakhry's study focuses on the chronological aspect of history rather than the philosophical schools of thought (Fakhry 1983). Studies on Islamic philosophy have also been conducted by Seyyed Hossein Nasr and Leaman. Unlike Corbin and Fakhry, they wrote the history of Islamic philosophy by emphasizing the thought of the involved figures (Leaman & Nasr 2001).

The study of Islamic epistemology is conducted by Safi and M. Azram. They explain the meaning of knowledge and its sources from an Islamic perspective. Their study still serves as a fundamental for epistemology discussion (Azram 2011, 178–89; Safi 1997, 39–56). Another study by Akyol discusses the epistemology of Jâbir Ibn Hayyân (Akyol 2018, 11–22). Certainly, those differ from this current study which goes further to discuss various schools of Islamic philosophy from the perspective of each epistemology.

This article is a concise version of the three aforementioned works since they serve as the primary references for this writing. Unlike the previous ones, this article examines the aspect of epistemology in each school of Islamic philosophy. This article begins by assuming that Islamic philosophy is not singular. Islamic philosophy is not solely scholastic thought, but a variety of philosophical tradition with distinct epistemic characteristics that appear to be in conflict with one another. By examining its epistemological characteristics, this article seeks to describe the distinctive features of each school of Islamic philosophy.

Research Method

To match the objective of this study, the authors implement a descriptive-qualitative study and present it in a chronological-historical manner. Therefore, this is a literature study as it examines various sources (books and scientific articles) analyzed with a social-historical approach, especially the history of thought. The approach is used because this writing examines the thoughts, ideas, and concepts of the past. Some of the primary sources include the works of Henry Corbin, Majid Fakhry, Seyyed Hossein Nasr, and Oliever Leaman, as mentioned in the Introduction. The

secondary sources are used to enrich the discussion, such as the writings of Rabi', Nadvi, Golparvar-Roozbahani, Fata and Noorhayati, Ceylan, Kertanegara, etc. The collected data are then analyzed hermeneutically to obtain a comprehensive understanding.

Results and Discussion
The History of the Islamic Philosophy Development

Generally, historians see that the development of science and philosophy in the Islamic world occurred when Muslims came into contact with major civilizations around Arabia, such as Persia and areas influenced by Greco-Roman culture (Hellenism), as well as India (Fauzan & Fata 2018; Rusli 2018; Grant 2008; Stavig 2000; Nadvi 2012). Regarding the contact with Hellenism, Montgomery Watt explains that it happened during the Abbasid dynasty, around the mid-8th century AD. This is what he called the first wave of Hellenism. In this period, the intellectual struggle between Islam and Hellenism was not deep yet, it was only for the purposes of debating methods, both among Muslims and non-Muslims. The progress of Islamic philosophy only occurred in the second wave of Hellenism in the 10th-11th centuries AD. This period is what Watt called as "the flowering of philosophy"—the flowering season of the Islamic philosophy dialectic and Hellenism (Watt 1985, 44-74).

In contrast to Watt, Majid Fakhry stated that the contact of Islam with Hellenism had been going on since the Umayyad Dynasty in the 7th century AD. During the Umayyad era, the Muslim intellectual struggle with Hellenism was not yet perfect, but that does not mean it did not exist at all. Fakhry also mentioned Prince Khalid bin Yazid as a significant figure in introducing philosophy to the Arab-Islamic community (Fakhry 1983, xviii, 4-5). Fakhry's opinion was supported by Philip K. Hitty who referred to Prince Khalid as "the Philosopher of Marwanid-the Muslim who first commanded the translation of books on Chemistry, Medicine, and Astrology from Greek and Coptic" (Hitty 1974, 255).

The Greek philosophy included in Islamic thought has encouraged the rapid development of Islamic philosophy. However, according to Oliver Leaman, it is a big mistake to assume that before getting acquainted with Greek philosophy, Muslims did not have a rational-philosophical method of thinking. Prior to the translation of Greek books, philosophical rational thought had run well in the Islamic scholarly tradition, particularly in

theological and legal studies. The existence of this scientific field, according to Leaman, helped prepare the basis for the conformity and development of Greek logic and philosophy in Islam, not the other way around (Nasr 2001a, 17).

The Islamic philosophy development is getting faster and richer along with the encounter of Muslims with the philosophical thoughts of other nations, including Persia/Iran, and India. In this position, Muslims do not just act as consumers of thoughts, more than that they accept all of it critically and process it into products of a new philosophical thought by referring to Islamic values as a guideline. These endeavors are visible in various critical debates among Muslim thinkers, for example the debate between al-Ghazâlî and Ibn Rushd (Fauzan and Fata 2018, 406-32). In modern times, Islamic philosophical thought increasingly gets new inputs when Muslims come into contact with modern Western philosophy and science which tend to be positivistic (Fata 2012, 2056-72; Fata & Noorhayati 2016, 215-28; Husaini 2005, 41-46; Hasbullah & Murad 2018, 78-96).

The varied elements cause Islamic philosophy to have different colors of *mazhab*/schools. If a categorical map is made, the development of Islamic philosophy can be generally typified in several dominant epistemological models: *first*, *mazhab* peripatetic (*masyâ'iyah*) which was the dominant philosophical school in the Islamic classical era (850-1250); *second*, *mazhab 'irfânîyah* and two schools of ḥikmah (wisdom): namely *al-ḥikmah al-ishrâqîyah* (illumination theosophy) and *al-ḥikmah al-muta'âlîyah* (transcendent theosophy), dominated the development of Islamic philosophy in the medieval Islamic era (1250-1850); and *last*, the schools of *al-ḥikmah al-ladûnîyah* (perennial theosophy) and *al-ḥikmah al-'aqalîyah* in the modern/contemporary Islamic era (1850-present).

The Concept of Islamic Epistemology

Epistemology questions how we know, what we know, and what we are able to know. This involves critical thinking about sources of knowledge such as experience, perception, reason, and authority. Epistemology also addresses issues such as objectivity, truth, rationality, and probability in the process of knowledge formation (Russell 2014, 43).

Islamic epistemology is a branch of study within Islamic philosophy exploring sources of knowledge and how to acquire them in the context of

Islamic belief and religious practice. Islamic epistemology encompasses thoughts on how humans gain knowledge about Allah, the Quran, and the overall Islamic religious tradition (Safi 1997, 39-56).

The main concept in Islamic epistemology is *Tawhid* or belief in one God which refers to the belief that all knowledges are from Allah. In Islam, Allah is considered the highest source of knowledge and humans can acquire knowledge through revelation or inspiration from Allah, reason, and experience. Islamic epistemology also includes the study of methodologies in acquiring knowledge and establishing truth. In Islamic epistemology, truth is considered an achievement that can be attained through correct and proportional thinking. Overall, Islamic epistemology teaches that knowledge should always be linked to moral and ethical values of religion and that knowledge gained should be used for good and beneficial purposes for humanity (al-Faruqi 1992, 5-8).

Islamic epistemology has various perspectives and approaches, thus, it is diverse. This is due to the fact that Islam does not teach a single theory or model for acquiring knowledge, but allows various perspectives and approaches used to achieve understanding of truth and knowledge. Some examples of perspectives and approaches in Islamic epistemology include *Rational methods* referring to the logical and philosophical tradition of thought in Islam that is greatly influenced by Greek philosophy; Theological methods that base the understanding of knowledge on religious teachings and revelation, so the main source of knowledge is the Quran and hadith; Mystical methods that attempt to achieve an understanding of knowledge through spiritual experience and self-introspection. In Abid al-Jabiri's concept, these three methods are known as Burhani, Bayani, and Irfani (Rabî 2003, 65).

In practice, Islamic scholars have developed various theories and models on how humans acquire knowledge in the context of Islamic belief and practice. This shows that Islamic epistemology has high diversity and complexity, making it an interesting subject of study for scholars and lovers of knowledge. The following section explains the epistemic diversity in Islamic philosophy.

Epistemology Model of Classical Islamic Philosophy

In the Islamic classical era (850-1250), Islamic philosophy was dominated by Peripatetic epistemology (*masyâ'îyah*). The term *peripateticism* comes from the Greek word *peripatein* (to go around) and *peripatos* (to veranda), while *-ism* means to flow. In Arabic, the word peripatetic is known as *masyâ'î* (walking around). While the flow is called *masyâ'îyah* (Nur 2022, 61). In Greek literature, this word refers to a sports hall in Athens used to teach philosophy by walking around and surrounding the students (Drajat 2007, 27). Peripateticism also means "one who walks round or around". It refers to Aristotle's habit of always walking around his students when teaching philosophy (Kartanegara 2006a, 26).

In Islamic philosophy, Peripatetic *mazhab*/school was first introduced by al-Farâbî, then al-Râzî, and reached its peak on a large scale in Ibn Sînâ period. Furthermore, this *mazhab* was used by Ibn Bajjah and Ibn Ṭufayl in a broader philosophical context after the criticism of al-Ghazâlî (Mhire 2013, 733; Rusli 2018, 161). In tracing the epistemology of Peripateticism in Islamic philosophy, it can be reviewed in the following methodological aspects.

First, expression mode or discursive (*bahṭti*) argumentation explanation is using formal logic based on rational reasoning. The reasoning procedure used is "syllogism", which is a well-known method of drawing conclusions from knowledge or called the premise (major and minor); it is done after finding the term that mediates the two premises which are usually called the "middle term" or *al-ḥadd al-wasaṭ*.

Second, due to its discursive nature, the developed philosophy is indirect because symbols are used to capture objects, either in the form of words, concepts, or representations. The knowledge mode (epistemology) is called *ḥuṣûlî* or acquisition obtained indirectly through intermediaries. *Third,* strong emphasis on the powers of reason and influenced by the authority of earlier Philosophers. Peripatetic philosophers depend more on their power of philosophy or reason, thus, they deserve to be called Islamic rationalists (Kartanegara 2006a, 27-28).

Based on the elaboration above, it can be concluded that peripatetic epistemology in the Islamic philosophical tradition relies on the potential of reason to acquire knowledge. Due to the prominent position of reason for the Peripatetic *mazhab*, this group is then called the Islamic rationalists

and "the deductionists" (Kartanegara 2007, 94). The reason is that the characteristic of this method is its exclusive (strong) reliance on deductive reasoning and rational proof. This happened due to the many influences of Greek philosophical thought, especially Aristotle, on Islamic philosophers at the beginning of the Greek civilization to the Islamic world, especially in methodology or epistemology. This shows the openness and good acceptance of Muslim philosophers toward Greek philosophy (Drajat 2007, 76-78).

Epistemology Model of Medieval Islamic Philosophy

Map of the Islamic philosophy development in the Middle Ages (1250-1800) changed in epistemology style and patterns of thought. If in the classical era, Islamic epistemology was dominated by Peripatetic *mazhab*, then in medieval Islam, there was a synergy between philosophy and *tasawuf*/Sufism (gnosis). There were two *mazhab* in Islamic epistemology that were dominant in the Middle Ages, namely '*irfânîyah* and *ḥikmah* epistemologies.

'Irfâniyah Epistemology

'Irfânî, also known as *tasawwuf*, is a term used by the Iranians for the development of Islamic philosophy after Ibn Rushd. In the realm of Islamic intellectuals, it is often not categorized as part of philosophy as it relies more on the processing of the senses in *qalb* (heart/intuition) and mystical experiences that are supra-rational in nature. However, in the Islamic philosophy development after Ibn Rushd, *tasawwuf* is tightly inseparable from philosophy. According to Ibn Khaldûn, both theology (*'ilm al-kalâm*) and *tasawwuf* have basically been mixed up in such a way with philosophical issues. The two branches of Islamic science which are *naqlîyah* are now shifting to the area of *'aqlîyah* (Kartanegara 2006a, 57).

The epistemology of *'irfânî* is based on an introduction to mystical or religious experiences. The Sufis (experts in *tasawwuf*) call this mode of recognition by the term *ma'rifah*, namely knowledge which is a direct gift from God (Fata 2011, 2054), or recognition based on the *qalb* which can pierce directly into the object's "heart". The method of gnostic knowledge (*al-manhâj al-'irfânî*) takes the theory of prophetic epistemology in obtaining

knowledge or as a continuation of prophecy carried out through the *qalb* purification and enlightenment (Harb 2003, 267).

The epistemology of *tasawwuf* is different from the epistemology of philosophy (Peripatetic). Mulyadi Kartanegara explained, if intellectual perception in philosophy requires an "intermediary" in recognizing the object, for example in the form of letters, concepts, or representations, then intuitive perception does not require the "intermediary". Because of its dependence on an "intermediary", according to the Sufis, reason will not have essential knowledge about its object as a true reality (Kartanegara 2006a, 58). As the rhetorical question formulated by Jalâl al-Dîn al-Rûmî, "Can you edit a rose from R.O.S.E?" "No, you just said the name," Rûmî said, "Find one with a name!" The answer from this dialectic shows the weakness of reason in reaching the reality of its object. The introduction of *'aqlîyah* is like knowing roses from the word R.O.S.E or the letters. In fact, there is an essential difference between a real rose in a garden, and the letters R.O.S.E (Kartanegara 2006b, 97).

According to Jalâl al-Dîn al-Rûmî, reason is like a wooden leg. Prosthetic legs are the weakest legs. "Love", for example, according to the Sufis cannot be comprehended by discursive reason. No matter how many books of love theory we read, it can only be understood by experiencing it directly. This is what is meant by intuitive direct recognition, also called *ladûnî* science. In *'irfânî's* epistemology, the process of recognizing object is not analyzed as something distinguishable from its subject. The object is precisely present in the researcher's soul because it is inseparable from the subject. Because the object is present, this mode of recognition is also known *as ḥuḍûrî* knowledge, namely knowledge obtained through a process of enlightenment by the presence of Divine light in the *qalb* (Yazdi 1992, 47). Thus, *ma'rifah* cannot be gained through reasoning or senses, but only achieved by heart and intuitive experience.

Furthermore, al-Jabiri explained, *'irfânî* epistemological system is based on the principle of dichotomy between *dhâhir* (exoteric) and *bâṭin* (esoteric). *Bâṭin* has a higher status in the hierarchy of *'irfânî* knowledge. The *'irfânî* analogy is different from the indication analogy (*qiyas bayân*) and the logical syllogism because both are based on direct similarities. However, because the *'irfânî* analogy is based on similarities, it is not bound by rules and can get an infinite number of forms and levels (infinite number and

level). The analogy of *'irfânî* can take the form of a figure of speech (*tamthîl*) or metaphor and become a representation (Al-Jabiri 1991).

Ḥikmah Epistemology

The synergy between philosophy and *tasawwuf* in the Islamic philosophy body is realized in the form of the school of *ḥikmah* (theosophy). In medieval Islam, there were two dominant schools of *ḥikmah* in Islamic philosophy, *ḥikmah al-ishrâqîyah* (illumination theosophy) and *ḥikmah al-muta'âlîyah* (transcendent theosophy).

According to Sayyed Hossein Nasr, the history of the term *ḥikmah al-ishrâqîyah*/illumination refers to Plato and the Neo-Platonist tradition. The Illuminates were followers of the Egyptian Saints (Seth) who were the children of Hermes' sister (Nasr 1997, 62). The epistemological method in the Neo-Platonist philosophical tradition is done by intellectual cleansing and soul purification, so as to achieve an inner (*bâṭin*) revelation (enlightenment). This method is implemented through the process of intuitive introspection and the use of symbols. Illuminationists think that the deduction and rational thinking methods are not adequate for the Philosophy Study, especially when it comes to *ḥikmah ilahiyah* (God's wisdom), and about "the path of the heart", asceticism and purification of the soul, which will only happen after one experiences a realization of *bâṭin*.

In Islamic philosophy, the school of illumination was founded by Suhrawardi al-Maqtûl, an Iranian Islamic Philosopher. According to Seyyed Hossein Nasr, Suhrawardi created a knowledge-based philosophical synthesis through illumination (enlightenment) and reconciliation efforts of rational mind training and soul purification. The centrality of the synthesis between rational knowledge and mystical experience is an ideal doctrine for the *ishrâqî* Suhrawardi (Nasr 2001a, 664; Habib 2018).

In illumination epistemology, knowledge is divided into two parts i.e., *dhâhir* and *bâṭin*. The knowledge of *bâṭin* is given a higher place. Although the illumination epistemology relies on "divine inspiration and supernatural guidance", directly capturing things that are "*bâṭin*", it still needs demonstration (prove) to develop them further into more detailed understandings (Bagir 2017, 81). For this reason, the epistemology of illumination does not only rely on the *bâṭin* strength in gaining knowledge

but also relies on demonstrative abilities. Strictly speaking, the illumination epistemology is based on discursive reasoning and intellectual intuition, the formal training of mind, and the purification of soul (*bâṭin*) (Nasr 1997, 64).

As one of schools in Islamic philosophy, the methodology or epistemology characteristic used by illumination philosophy is to give prominent place for the intuitive method (*'irfân*), as a companion or basis for rational reasoning. Here, the illumination school synthesizes two approaches: *burhân* and *'irfân* in a solid and holistic system of thought. In illumination school, a seeker of truth (science/epistemology) can be classified into four groups: 1) those who feel thirsty for knowledge, thus, decide to search and gain it; 2) those having formal knowledge and perfecting discursive philosophy but are still unfamiliar with gnosis (mystics), such as Ibn Sinâ and al-Farâbî; 3) those who have no knowledge of discursive philosophy, but have cleansed their souls to achieve intellectual intuition and inner enlightenment, such as al-Hallâj, Abû Yâzid al-Bustâmi, and Tustârî; and 4) those who perfected discursive philosophy and acquired gnosis, such as Pythagoras, Plato, and Suhrawardi (Saidurrahman 2014, 100; al Walid 2020, 165; Abdullah 2013, 17; Habib 2018, 208).

Mystical experience is the direct experience of seeing the genuine reality. It is very important, so it does not only rely on the authority of the past because in mystical experience, the research "object" is "present" inside oneself. Mystical experience is very urgent for the search for truth because a person (a philosopher or a Sufi) can directly witness the truth (*al-ḥaqq*) through the experience, which cannot be gained in the same way through the senses or reason. Otherwise, their philosophy will be influenced by inaccessible expressions of *shaṭahat*. For this reason, the truth of mystical experience must be tested through discursive language.

In the theory of illumination epistemology, there are two fundamental problems in logic, *first*, universal propositions (*al-qaḍâyâ al-kullîyah*) in illuminationist logic in which the obtained conclusions using formally established syllogisms do not have epistemological value as starting point in philosophical construction. Illuminationist logic rests on the "definite" mode (*al-ḍarûrî*) and the "eternal" mode (*dâ'iman*). By introducing the mode of "possibility" (*imkân*), universal affirmative propositions might not be "constantly true". This is due to the impossibility of "knowing" all

that is possible. The epistemological implication of illuminationist formal logic is that formal validity has a lower degree than certainty achieved by a subject that merely know. Therefore, philosophical intuition precedes deductive reasoning. *Second*, Illuminationist logic rejects the universal definition formulated by Aristotle and Ibn Sinâ. For the Illuminationists, true knowledge cannot be gained from a formula that unites the *summum genus* and the *differentia*. Knowledge must depend on "something else" defined in one's self-awareness when the individual recognizes what he defines (*the definiendum*) (Leaman & Nasr 2001, 875).

While the epistemology of *ḥikmah al-muta'âlîyah* (transcendent theosophy) criticizes the Peripatetic school which only relies on the power of reason (ratio) (Açikgenç 2009). The transcendent theosophical school also believes in discursive reason and mystical experience and thus, it is similar with the belief of Illumination school. As mentioned in the preceding paragraph, the illumination school is based on mystical experience, and after that, it is conveyed in a philosophical-discursive language. More so the transcendent theosophical epistemology, as stated by Bagir, emphasizes that mystical experience is not only "possible" to be expressed discursively-logically, but "must" be expressed for the purposes of public verification (Bagir 2014, 89).

Mulla Shadra, a transcendent theosophical philosopher, expressed gus approach in knowledge completion, 1) that knowledge is gained through processing mental power after being in contact with intelligence; 2) that understandable objects of knowledge must undergo ontological changes in order to be recognized; 3) that knowing is a combination of the existence of clear sources and methods; and 4) knowledgeable and educated people are identical in terms of existence (Ceylan 1990, 43; Golparvar 2017, 69; Rizvi 2012, 35).

According to Seyyed Hossein Nasr, the school of transcendent theosophy believes that conceptual knowledge is gained through concepts inside one's mind about what is known. Meanwhile, knowledge with presence implies the reality saved in human mind/intellect without the mediation of mental concepts, such as when a person knows his own self or Divine reality. This knowledge is illuminative and transcends the realm of reason, but that does not mean it is without intellectuality. All knowledge on these philosophical and theosophical matters are based on revelation (Nasr 2001b, 45).

According to Haidar Bagir, the epistemology of *ḥikmah al-muta'âlîyah* believes that religious feelings as a source of truth can be expressed in rational and logical languages. Thus, these feelings can be verified because, *first*, verification is only done based on the principle of coherence (rational-logic); *second*, a thought must be in accordance with acquisition through other levels of thought, both imaginative and rational-logic; *third*, by verifying rationally and logically, an idea is put into the "free market", so it can be discussed, debated and agreed on its value (Bagir 2017, 60).

Epistemology Model of Modern/Contemporary Islamic Philosophy

The development of Islamic philosophy in the modern/contemporary era was influenced by Western philosophy, classical Islamic philosophy, and the tendency to revive Eastern philosophical traditions in a Neo-Platonic style (*ishrâqîyah*). Hence, two epistemological schools can be grouped in the modern/contemporary Islamic philosophy, namely perennialism epistemology (*ḥikmah al-ladûnîyah*) and rationalism epistemology (*'aqlîyah*) (Rachman 2021, 186).

Perennial philosophy acts as a "countercultural spirituality" or a reaction to the absence of Western spiritual (William 2018). This is relevant to the spiritual crisis context of modern humanity which is the main focus of perennial philosophy by considering the esoteric side of religion as the solution. *Philosophia perennis* means an eternal truth at the center of all traditions relevant to *Sanatana Dharma* in Hinduism, and *al-ḥikmah al-khâlidah* or *al-ḥikmah al-ladûnîyah* in Islam (Nasr 1995, 7).

Mulyadi Kartanegara explained that perennialist philosophers took the traditions of major religions (Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, and Islam) and the religions of ancient societies (Indians, Mayans, and Greeks/Hellenists), as sources of inspiration for their philosophical thought. They deeply understand religious teachings on the esoteric/mental aspect. Especially in Islam, perennialist Muslim philosophers take the concept in the form of Sufism (Kartanegara 2006a, 174-78). Perennial philosophers divide knowledge into two types: 1) absolute, perfect, and certain (*yaqîn*) knowledge that comes directly from God, as written in the Quran; and 2) presumptive knowledge gained through rational methods. Seyyed Hossein Nasr emphasized, these two types of knowledge are reachable by human mind, because the mind

consists of two components i.e., partial-rational reason (*'aql juz'î*) and global-intuitive reason (*'aql kullî*). Partial mind can only see external phenomena, exoteric or obvious things (*ẓâhir*). Meanwhile, the global-intuitive mind is deeper and reaches internal aspects or esoteric (*bậtin*) reality. The ability of human mind on the partial and intuitive things is empowered by the Divine Spirit (achieved through the practice of *ṭarîqah*) (Guessoum 2014, 103).

Meanwhile, rational epistemology (*'aqlîyah*) refers to the human ability to actualize the capability of thinking rationally to comprehend everything. For rationalists, a sufficient and reliable source of knowledge is ratio (reason) (Fata 2012, 2057). In expressing the concepts and ideas of thought, rationalism carries it out through language relying on reasonable procedures and confirmation according to logic (Rachman 2021, 188). This process is done so that the truth appreciation can be rationally accepted.

In rational epistemology, logic has a significant existence because reason's ability to acquire knowledge can be flawed if it does not fulfill the rules of proper (logical) thinking. Logic is a scientific method used by reason in understanding physical (Physics) and non-physical (metaphysical) objects (Fata and Noorhayati 2016, 215). Nevertheless, after knowing the shortcomings of these epistemologists, Muslim philosophers formulated several levels or types of logic, namely poetic (*syi'ri*), rhetoric (*khitabi*), dialectic (*jadali*), sophistic/sophism (*mughaithi*), and demonstrative (*burhani*) methods. The demonstrative method is considered by the Muslim philosophers as the most scientific method that can precisely capture the reality of the research objects because it avoids logical fallacies. Therefore, Islamic philosophers use demonstrative methods in scientific, rational, and philosophical research (Madjid 1994, 209).

According to Harun Nasution, since the 19th and 20th centuries AD, rational religious thought developed in the Islamic world. In religious rational thought, humans have freedom, and reason has a dominant position in perceiving the Quran and Hadith teachings. The freedom of reason is only tied to the absolute teachings of the two sources of Islamic science, namely *qaṭ'i al-wurûd* and *qaṭ'i al-dalâlah* teachings. The meaning of the Quran and Hadith is comprehended according to one's reason. Thus, a *majâzî* or metaphorical interpretation arises. In other words, in religious rational thinking, comprehension on the Quranic verses and hadith must

be in accordance with the opinion of reason, so long as they do not conflict with the aforementioned absolute teachings (Nasution 1996, 8-9). Due to this reason, the ability of reason according to the Islamic rationalism is to recognize sensory objects by abstracting universal meanings from sensory data and non-physical objects (*ma'qûlat*) by deducing from the unknown to the known (Kartanegara 2005, 66). By using the method of demonstrative or rational epistemology in the construction of philosophical thought, the existence of ratios is very urgent in the contemporary Islamic philosophy development (Azadpur 2011, 3).

In brief, the schools in Islamic Philosophy are presented in Table 1 which is arranged based on the characteristics of epistemology. In the classical Islamic era (850-1250 AD), Islamic philosophy was predominantly shaped by peripatetic epistemology, which was initially introduced by al-Farâbî, followed by al-Râzî, and reached its peak through the works of Ibn Sînâ. Peripatetism relied on formal logic and rational reasoning. In medieval Islam, there existed a harmonious relationship between philosophy and *tasawuf*/Sufism (gnosis). Two dominant schools of thought in Islamic epistemology emerged during the Middle Ages: *'irfânîyah* epistemology and *ḥikmah* epistemology.

Table 1
Schools in Islamic Philosophy according to Their Epistemological Characteristics

Period	School of Thought	Epistemology	Figures
The Classical Islamic Era (850-1250 AD)	Peripateticism (*masyâ'îyah*)	Formal logic based on rational reasoning (ratio)	Al-Farâbî, al-Râzî, Ibn Sînâ, Ibn Bajjah, Ibn Ṭufayl, Ibn Rushd
The Medieval Islamic Period (1250-1850 AD)	'Irfânîyah	based on an introduction to mystical or religious experiences	Jalâl al-Dîn al-Rûmî, al-Jillî
	Al-ḥikmah al-ishraqîyah (theosophy of illumination)	based on discursive reasoning and intellectual intuition, formal training of the mind, and purification of the soul (*bâṭin*)	Suhrawardi al-Maqtûl, al-Hallâj, Abû Yazîd al-Bustamî and Tustârî

	ḥikmah al-muta'âliyah (teosophy of transcendent)	Based on truth of mystical experience must be tested through discursive language	Mirdamad, Mulla Shadra, Mula Hadi Sabziwari
The Modern-Contemporary Islamic Period (1850-present)	al-ḥikmah al-ladunîyah (theosophy of perrenialism)	Based on division of human mind to two capabilities: *'aql juz'î* and *'aql kullî*. *'Aql juz'î* can only see external phenomena, exoteric or obvious things (*dhâhir*). *'Aql kullî* reaches deeper and internal aspects or esoteric (inner) reality. Esoteric truth is an absolute truth.	Seyyed Hossein Nasr
	Al-'aqaliyah (rationalism)	Logic and scientific methods are used to understand physical and non-physical objects.	Jamal al-Dîn al-Afghanî, Muhammad Abduh Fazlur Rahman

'Irfânîyah epistemology was founded on mystical or religious experiences, known as *ma'rifah*, which the Sufis regarded as direct knowledge from God. The school of illumination was established by Suhrawardi al-Maqtûl. He developed a philosophical synthesis that emphasized knowledge which is gained through illumination (enlightenment) and sought to reconcile the training of the rational mind with the purification of the soul. Illuminationist epistemology relied on discursive reasoning, intellectual intuition, and the formal cultivation of the mind and inner spiritual purification. On the other hand, *ḥikmah al-muta'âliyah* (transcendent theosophy) criticized the Peripatetic school for its exclusive reliance on reason (ratio). The transcendent theosophical school, like the Illumination school, acknowledged the importance of discursive reason and mystical experiences. However, it placed greater emphasis on the necessity of expressing mystical experiences in a discursive-logical

manner for the purpose of public verification. One prominent figure associated with this school is Mullâ Sadrâ.

In modern/contemporary Islamic philosophy, two epistemological schools are identified, they are Perennialism epistemology (*ḥikmah al-ladûnîyah*) and rationalism epistemology (*'aqlîyah*). Perennial philosophy considered as a "countercultural spirituality" or a response to Western spiritual dominance. Perennialists draw inspiration from various religious traditions as sources for their philosophical ideas. They classify knowledge into two types: 1) absolute, perfect, and certain (*yaqîn*) knowledge that originates directly from God as revealed in the Quran, and 2) presumptive knowledge acquired through rational methods. A prominent figure associated with perennialism is Seyyed Hossein Nasr.

On the other hand, rational epistemology (*'aqlîyah*) pertains to the human capacity to employ rational thinking in comprehending all things. Rationalists seek to interpret verses and hadiths in accordance with reasonable opinions, as long as they do not contradict absolute teachings. Figures representing Muslim rationalists include Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, Abduh, and others.

Conclusion

The epistemology of Islamic philosophy in the historical range of Muslims has a variety of colors. All of this illustrates how Islamic philosophy is not singular and rigid in the way of thinking. Therefore, one cannot see Islamic philosophy with a single lens. A complete understanding is needed in order to see the whole color of Islamic thought. Historical dynamics from classical times to modern/contemporary times have had a major influence in shaping Muslims' way of thinking. The peripatetic epistemology model developed in the classical era, the *'irfân* and *ḥikmah* epistemologies in the Middle Ages, as well as the perennial and rational epistemology in the modern/contemporary era. This dynamic appears in accordance with the socio-cultural context of science that develops in Islamic society. This epistemic diversity is also the response of Muslims to the challenges of the times they are experiencing; Muslims actively respond to changes in each period. The epistemic diversity that occurs indicates a shifting paradigm in Muslim's thinking manner, thus, proves them as a group of people who are continuously developing, dynamic, and not static. Shifting paradigm in Islamic philosophy also ensures fundamental changes

in the way of thinking. However, the above review shows that although epistemologically they have various colors, Muslim philosophers and thinkers are still trying to make Islamic basic values as a worldview. This diversity in ways of thinking does not make Muslim philosophers and thinkers forget their true roots as people who adhere to the values of monotheism.

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