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Tracing the Historical Roots and the Development of Islamic Epistemology from the Early to Modern Periods (A Study of Bayani, Burhani, and 'Irfani)

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Abstract: This article is aimed at revealing the emergence and development of islamic epistemology. Epistemology which means the theory of knowledge is not wholly owned by Modern Western scientists with the advance of civilization of them. Before the West advanced, Islam as a religion that upheld science, has its own history of the theory of knowledge or epistemology. In fact, epistemology in Islam recognizes not only tools or sources of knowledge which are in the form of senses or intelligence but also the heart (intuition). These senses, intelligence, and intuition are well known as three epistemological models of Islam (*Bayani, Burhani dan 'Irfani*).

Keywords: *islamic epistemology, bayani, burhani, 'irfani*

A. Introduction

Lately, the discourse on epistemology has again become the main interest to be explored and reviewed. The discourse related to the epistemology not only attracted the attention of western intellectuals, but also moslem intellectuals. It is not surprising if Moslem scholars today often emerge the islamic epistemology.

When we trace the history of classical islamic scientific development, "epistemological term" is indeed difficult to find in the writings of moslem intellectuals but that does not mean that studies related to epistemology have never existed in the islamic tradition. Basically, Islam has given the great attention to the general understanding of epistemology itself, namely the theory of knowledge, even from the beginning of the prophetic period. The intention of Islam to science can be seen from the designation of the word 'science' with various forms which is repeated 854 times in the *Qur'an* (Muh. Zaenal Abidin, 2011, p.109).

According to Ibn Hazm in Kartanegara, science is defined as knowledge of something as it is supposed to be (*ma'rifat al-syai 'ala ma huwa bihi*). Thus, knowledge is not of any kind knowledge or just opinion, but it is verified. Islam views science as empirical-positivist and non-empirical fields such as mathematics and metaphysics (Kartanegara, 2003, p.1-7), which are known through three islamic epistemological models namely *Bayani, Burhani* and *'Irfani*. In order to limit the discussion, this article will focus its discussion on the roots of history and the development of islamic epistemology viewed from the perspective of three islamic epistemological models; *Bayani, Burhani dan 'Irfani*.

B. Overview of the Islamic Epistemology

In order to gain a thorough understanding of the notion of islamic epistemology, it is necessary to put forward the insights and the root of the epistemological term. Etymologically, epistemology came from Greek word, namely

"episteme" which means knowledge and "logos" which means theory (Bagus, 2005, p.212-214). The term epistemology was first used by J.F. Ferrier in his work "Institute of Metaphysics" which divides philosophy into two branches, metaphysics and epistemology (Runes, 1971, p.94).

Epistemology is one branch of philosophy that discusses the origin of knowledge (Syukur, 2007, p.42). The main problem of epistemology is about what we can know and how to find out (Suhartono, 2008, p.117). Epistemology intends to examine and try to find general characteristics and the nature of human knowledge, how knowledge is obtained and tested for truth (Sudarminta, 2002, p.18). In short, epistemology is knowledge about knowledge which is often referred to the theory of knowledge (Kartanegara, 2003, p.1).

The term 'Islam' as religion is a belief that also has epistemological principles. The principles of islamic epistemology are definitely rooted in the sources of islamic teachings, the *Qur'an* and *Sunnah*. Therefore, the islamic epistemology is full of islamic values contained in the *Qur'an* and *Sunnah*. It means that the epistemology which is followed by the term of Islam would become the islamic epistemology that is inspired by the values and teachings of Islam.

In the discourse of islamic thought, historically, moslem intellectuals have discussed epistemology which begins with discussing the sources of knowledge in the form of reality. Reality in the islamic epistemology is not only limited to physical reality, but also recognizes the existence of non-physical reality, both in the form of imaginal reality and pure metaphysical reality (Kartanegara, 2002, p.58). According to Kartanegara, these sources are divided into three parts; the senses, intelligence, and heart (Kartanegara, 2003, p.18-29).

Based on these three sources, there are three methods of attaining knowledge: *first*, the method of observation as it is known in western epistemology, called the *Bayani* method which uses the senses as a substitute; *second*, the method of logical or demonstrative deduction (*Burhani*) using reason (intelligence); and *third*, the intuitive

method or '*Irfani*' by using the heart (Kartanegara, 2002, p.63).

According to Amien in Mufid (2013, p.21), islamic epistemology addresses epistemological problems in general and also specifically talks about revelation and inspiration as sources of knowledge in Islam. Related to this relationship which is between inspiration and revelation, al Ghazali in Zuhri argues that inspiration and revelation have the same source as well as some of their meanings. Moreover, *ilham* and *wahyu* are divinity (*rabbani*) which are taught to humans as the ways to obtain knowledge (Zuhri, 2007, p.30).

From the explanation above, it can be concluded that the islamic epistemology is a theory of knowledge imbued by islamic values and teachings by originating to the senses called *Bayani* method, intelligence called the *Burhani* method, and the heart called the '*Irfani*' method which still refer to revelation as the basis of the three sources of knowledge above.

C. Development of Islamic Epistemology in the Early Period

Speaking of islamic epistemology, it cannot be separated from the discussion of knowledge (*al 'ilm*) in Islam. Knowledge in Islam is the main prerequisite in practicing islamic teachings. Re-establishing the building of knowledge in Islam means redirecting the mindset of moslems to be in line with the principles of the knowledge contained in the *Qur'an* and *Sunnah* that the Prophet brought. Thus, a discussion on the islamic epistemology means discussing the concept of science in Islam starting from the time of prophethood.

During the period of prophethood, the existence of knowledge in Islam was under the direct instructions of the Prophet *Muhammad saw* as a messenger of *Allah Swt*. The problems that arised at that time could be resolved, both with the adoption of the *Qur'an* directly or with the explanation of the Prophet himself. But after the death of the prophet, in the time of friends (*shahabah*), there was no guarantee (the authority of truth as the Prophet's time) in solving a problem, so that it required

sufficient thoughts to establish a decision that developed at that time. This was like what happened to the age of the godless Umar ibn Khatab. Umar ibn Khatab was one of the best friends who made many changes in islamic teachings. One of these was an attempt to collect verses of the *Qur'an* in one manuscript. Umar succeeded in convincing Abu Bakar Shiddiq that the collection of *mushaf* was a good thing even though it had never been done by the Prophet (Mana 'al Qattan, 2000, p.120). Besides the idea of collecting *mushaf*, there were several forms of changes in islamic law as a product of Umar ibn Khatab's thoughts such as inheritance.

Furthermore, in the second century *hijri*, there were emerged three major schools in islamic teachings, especially in the field of islamic law. *First*, four Sunni schools consisting of Hanafi, Maliki, Syafi'i and Hanbali schools. *Secondly*, the Dzahiri school which was almost the same as the other four Sunni schools, but the method in obtaining text was closed, so that it did not accept the understanding of the *hadith* expert's method even more to rational expert (*Ahlu ar ra'yi*). This condition caused this school to disappear. *Third* was the Shi'i school which consisted of Zaidiyah and Imamiyah. At that time, the process of compiling the books began to emerge in various schools. Muhammad bin Hasan ash Shaibani compiled a book for his teacher Abu Hanifah, *al Muwatha* by Imam Malik was a hadith book which contained laws (*fiqh*) in the Maliki school, Imam Shafi'i also composed his book entitled *al Umm* and others (Zarqa, 2004, p.190).

In general, each school (*madzhab*) has its own characteristics because of differences of opinion in using methods of scientific excavation in the field of law. But the difference is only limited to the problems of the branch of religion (*furu*), not a matter of principle or the subject of *shari'a* (*ushul*). They agreed that all sources or the basis of the *shari'a* were the *Qur'an* and the *Sunnah*. If there is a law that is contrary to the two laws, it must be rejected and not practiced. They also respected each other, as long as the person concerned was in accordance

with the lines determined by islamic law (Supriadi, 2008, p.8).

The islamic studies in other fields is the study of interpretation which focuses on the discussion of the *Qur'an* and the field of *Sunnah*. The figures of it who were among friends were Ibn Mas'ud, Ibn Abbas, Ubay ibn Ka'ab, Zaid ibn Thabit, Abu Musa al Asy'ari, Abdullah ibn Zubair, Anas ibn Malik, Abdullah ibn Umar, Jabir ibn Abdillah, Abdullah ibn Amr bin 'Ash, and also Aisyah, with their respective interrelationships between one another (Mana' al Qattan, 2000, p.336). Interpreters and hadith in this period tried to interpret the *Qur'an* and *Sunnah* with explanations that were fixed on the text.

Considering the explanation above, in the period of *shahabah*, *tabi'in* and *tabi'ut tabi'in* who lived in the early days of Islam, the study focused more on texts. This scientific activity is included in the *Bayani* epistemology class because it bases its study more on the standard texts contained in the *Qur'an* and the *Sunnah* of the Prophet.

D. Development of Islamic Epistemology of the Kalam Tradition

If we look at history, the tradition of *kalam* in Islam cannot be separated from the events of *tahkim* or arbitration that occurred during the Caliphate of Ali ibn Abi Talib. After the incident, some of the soldiers of Ali bin Abi Talib did not agree with his attitude. They withdrew from under the banner of Ali bin Abi Talib. They assumed that Ali had done something wrong because he wanted to make peace with the Mua'awiyah party through *tahkim*. They argued that the problems that occurred at that time could not be decided through *tahkim*. Decisions only came from God by returning to the laws in the *Qur'an*. They saw Ali bin Abi Talib doing wrong and sin, so, they left their ranks. In islamic history, they were known as the Khawarij, namely a group of people who came out and separated themselves. These problems that occurred in the illustrated political field eventually led to the emergence of theological issues or *kalam*. Then, the problem arised was who was an infidel and who remained as Moslem.

Finally, the Khawarij saw that Ali, Mu'awiyah, Amr ibn 'Ash, Abu Musa al Asy'ari and others who accepted *tahkim* (arbitration) were infidels (Nasution, 1985, p.8).

Then, the Khawarij developed and broke into several sects. The concept of infidel (*kafir*) was also experiencing change, that was whom was considered to be infidels not only people who did not determine the law with the *Qur'an*, but also people who committed major sins. It was the problem of sinning which then had a major influence in the growth of the future of theology in Islam. This problem raised three schools of *kalam* or theology in Islam: first is the Khawarij sect which says that the person who commits a great sin is an infidel, therefore he must be killed. Since the four Moslem leaders above (Ali, Mu'awiyah, Amr ibn 'Ash, Abu Musa al Asy'ari) were considered infidels, they decided to kill the four of them, but only Abdurrahman bin Muljam was assigned to kill Ali who succeeded in his duties (ash Shalabi, 2004, p.1028). Upon the statement of the Khawarij sect, then, the second sect emerged, namely Murji'ah, as an antithesis for the Khawarij. According to Muhammad Abu Zahrah, Murji'ah comes from the word *irja'*, a doctrine of returning affairs -to Allah- which has been done by the friends; Sa'ad bin Abi Waqas, Abdullah bin Umar and others. This sect argued that the believer who commits a major sin does not become an infidel but remains a believer, because he still has the hope of getting forgiveness from Allah, and the case regarding his status is suspended until the end (Abu Zahrah, 2009, p.127-130; Goldziher, 1981, p.74-76). Caused by the debate between the two schools, then the third stream emerged, the Mu'tazilah, with an understanding of the middle position. This sect gives the predicate to the perpetrators of great sin as *fasiq* (Imarah, 1998, p.61; Athif al 'Iraqi, 1993, p.54-58; Anwar and Rozak, 2002, p.209).

The Understanding of the middle position of Mu'tazilah above was known as position between two positions (*al manzilah baina al manzilatain*). That was one of the five basic principles of the Mu'tazilah sect. Although there were differences of opinion

regarding the basic principle, this sect was generally considered to have five basic principles (*ushul al khamsah*); *tauhid*, justice (*al 'adl*), promises and threats (*wa'd wa al wa'id*), position between two positions (*al manzilah baina al manzilatain*), and calls for kindness and prevents evil (*al amr bi al ma'ruf wa an nahy 'an al munkar*) (Zarkasyi, 2006, p.130).

In addition, there were also two other schools, namely Qadariyah and Jabariyah. These two schools were more popular with problems related to the actions of a servant (*af'alul 'ibad*). Qadariyah believed that humans were beings who had free will in their actions. In essence, according to Qadariyah, humans had free will to do something. The Jabariyah was the opposite. According to Zarkasyi (2006, p.51-67), the sect saw that humans do not have the will but acted under compulsion from God.

Differences of opinion which originated from the status and place of the perpetrators of great sin, then developed in other aspects of theology. The discussion of the attributes of God, about prophethood, the *Qur'an* and others became a debate and difficult to reconcile. This was clearly seen when the Mu'tazilah sect was determined to be the official ideology of the state at the beginning of the rule of the Daulah Abbasiah, namely the reign of the Caliph al Ma'mun (813-822 AD). Caliph al Ma'mun was the son of the caliph Harun ar Rasyid (766-809 AD). During this caliph Harun ar Rashid, there was a process of contact between Islam and other religions (Jews-Christians) and civilizations outside of Islam. In addition, at this time, the movement to translate the works of Greek philosophers was encouraged. At first, the translation process focused more on medical books, but later, translation included general science and philosophy (Nasution, 1995, p.11). Finally, the thoughts of Greek philosophers who were more inclined to intelligence also influenced the style of thought of the Mu'tazilah.

After reigning for three periods of the Caliph, this Mu'tazilah school began to disappear and was shifted from the center of government. Moreover, they were being challenged by the Hambali group (followers of

Ibn Hambal's school). Then, followed by the death of Caliph al Ma'mun in 833 AD, the Mu'tazilah was officially annulled by the state during the reign of Caliph al Mutawakil in 856 AD (Nasution, 1985, p.10). As the most rational sect, and considered to be beyond the limits of human reason, Mu'tazilah also received many opposition. This then led to the sect of Ash'ariyah (Rayyan, 1973, p.195), which was founded by a great figure who was a former follower of the Mu'tazilah sect, Abu Hasan al Asy'ari. In almost the same time, the

Maturidiyah sect also emerged, both of which became the antithesis of rational views developed by the Mu'tazilah (Harun Nasution, 1985, p.11).

The differences of thought of each school of theology or *kalam* in Islam could not be separated from the method they used. In general, according to Zarkasyi (2006, p.33-34), the difference between methods among schools or groups in *kalam* can be summarized through the following table:

Mu'tazilah, Khawarij, Murji'ah, Qodariyyah, Jabariyyah dan Syiah	Ahlus Sunnah wal Jama'ah (salaf)	Ahlus Sunnah Wal Jama'ah (khalaf; Asy'ari)	Ahlus Sunnah wal Jama'ah (khalaf; Maturidi)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Putting the mind down from <i>naql</i> / <i>wahyu</i> ➤ Taking the argument with <i>takwil</i> / <i>kalami</i> ➤ Taking the argument with reason ➤ Refuse ahad news (<i>khabar Ahad</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Prioritizing revelation / <i>naql</i> from the mind ➤ Reject <i>takwil</i> ➤ Taking the ahad news (<i>khabar Ahad</i>) ➤ Taking the argument of verses from the <i>Qur'an</i> and authentic <i>hadith</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Balance between reason and revelation / <i>naql</i> ➤ Taking the argument with <i>takwil</i> ➤ Taking argument with reason 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Balance between reason and revelation / <i>naql</i> ➤ Independence in thinking ➤ Using general rules ➤ Attachments between thoughts and deeds ➤ Pay attention to meaning and content ➤ Critical character

From the table above, it can be seen that the development of islamic thought in the period of the *kalam* tradition or theology is on the *Bayani* epistemology because it is still based on the reference text contained in the *Qur'an* and *hadith*. On the other hand, it began to enter using the *Burhani* epistemology through strong and clear argumentation of intelligence.

E. Development of Islamic Epistemology the Early Period of Moslem Philosophers

In history, it was noted that the study of islamic epistemology received more serious attention during the period of early moslem philosophers. Moslem philosophers at this

time were divided into two regions, the Eastern region such as Abu Yusuf Jacob ibn Ishaq Al Kindi (801 AD), Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn Zakaria ibn Yahya Ar Razi (865 AD), Al Farabi (870 AD), Ikhwan Shafa group '(10 AD), Ibn Maskawaih (932 AD), Ibn Sina (980 AD), imam al Ghazali (1056 AD) and the West such as Ibn Bajah (1082 AD), Ibn Thufail (1110 AD), Ibn Rusyd (1126) and Ibn Kholdun (1332 AD) (MM Sharif, 1995, Hasyimsyah Nasution, 2005). Here it will be explained some of the philosophers above who have serious discussions about the islamic epistemology.

The first philosopher discussed here is Abu Yusuf Jacob ibn Ishaq Al Kindi (801-860 AD). According to al Kindi, there are three

kinds of human knowledge; sensory knowledge, rational knowledge, and intuition knowledge. *First*, sensory knowledge, which is knowledge that is obtained directly when people observe material objects, then in the process without a grace period and moving to imagination. Knowledge obtained in this way is non-permanent, always changes and moves every time. *Second*, rational knowledge, obtained by using reason that is universal, not partial and immaterial. This knowledge investigates to its essence. *Third*, *isyraqi* knowledge which is knowledge that comes and is obtained directly from the beam of divine light. The culmination of this knowledge is the knowledge obtained by the Prophets to bring teachings derived from God's revelation. This knowledge is only possessed by those who are holy and close to Allah (Ahmad Musthofa, 1997, p.104).

Then the next is al Farabi (870-950 AD) arguing that humans gain knowledge through sensing, imagining, and thinking, where these three powers refer to human selfhood: *jism*, *nafs*, and *'aql*. *First*, sensory power that allows humans to receive stimuli such as heat and cold, which with this power humans can taste, smell, hear sounds, feel, and see. *Second*, the power of imagination that allows humans to get an impression of things that are felt after the object disappears from sensory reach. This power is to combine or separate all the impressions that exist so as to produce various pieces or combinations, and the results can be correct, it could be wrong. *Third*, thinking power that allows humans to understand various meanings, so they can distinguish the noble from the despicable and master the arts and sciences (Ahmad Zaenul Hamdi, 2004, p.77).

The next philosopher is Ibn Sina (980-1037) with the spirit theory that is purified (*ar ruh al muqaddas*), which is the human soul that is a rational faculty prepared from security and related to the universal mind, and its needs fulfilled with inspiration and revelation (Ibn Sina, 2009, p.167). In accordance with the Greek philosophical tradition, Ibn Sina states that all knowledge is a kind of abstraction to understand the form of something known. He argues that

true knowledge can be obtained through reason which is the only means through which human beings are able to achieve truth and build personality (M. M. Sharif, 1995, p.159).

The next philosopher is al Ghazali (1056-1111). In his view regarding epistemology, humans have three tools to obtain knowledge; the five senses, mind, and heart. *First*, the five senses produce sensory knowledge that is inconclusive because it has various weaknesses, so it is not included in real science. *Second*, reason as a tool of thinking that produces knowledge, and in the process of thinking is needed by the senses who are helpers and loyal followers of reason. Intellect functions to process sensory stimuli in the process of gaining knowledge. Thus, reason also has weaknesses. *Third*, heart (*qalbu*) as a means of acquiring essential knowledge which is termed *laduni* science in the form of inspiration, the knowledge that enters suddenly into the heart as if infiltrated without knowing where it comes from. This knowledge is obtained without the need for effort and fiddling with arguments (Fathul Mufid, 2013, p.27).

The next philosopher is Ibn Rushd (1126-1198). In his view, there are two kinds of path to achieve knowledge, the senses and ratios. Ibn Rushd argues, that only knowledge is produced by ratios which can be considered true knowledge, while knowledge of sensory results does not reach that degree, because it can still be deceived by its own shadow. According to Ibn Rusyd, to get the right knowledge about the Creator of this nature is by right reasoning based on logic. Logic is a means to obtain the truth of convincing truth by means of the demonstrative (*burhani*) method. Ibn Rushd also argues that the path to truth is not only through philosophical reflection (*burhani*), but there is another way, through in depth analysis of the scriptures (Suparman Syukur, 2007, p.84).

Based on a brief description of epistemological thinking from the muslim philosophers mentioned above, it is shown that reason or *ratio* is the most dominant as a means to obtain correct knowledge by using demonstrative methods (*burhani*). The

position of the *Qur'an* and the *hadith* for them is as a means of legitimacy, so that its application is by giving rational or *ta'wil*. At this time, reason is an important means in searching knowledge, so that this period falls into the category of *Burhani* epistemology.

F. Development of Islamic Epistemology the Period of Mystical Tradition and Premodern

Among the figures in this period were Shihabudin Suhrawardi al Maqtul (1153, some say 1155) who was known as an illumination figure (Lorens Bagus, 2005, p.313) and Ibn 'Arabi (1165) who was known by the Sufis as the teacher who the greatest (*ash syaikh al akbar*) (Sayyed Hossein Nasr and Oliver Leaman, 2003, p.617). Suhrawardi al Maqtul was a philosopher who mastered islamic philosophy, especially the peripatetic philosophy of al Farabi and Ibn Sina. So it does not be surprised if later the two figures were criticized, although he was influenced by the views of both of them. Suhrawardi was also well acquainted with the concepts of the Sufis in the third and fourth centuries of the *hijri*, such as Abu Yazid al Bustami, al Hallaj, and Abu al Hasan al Kharqani, which they according to Suhrawardi were the original Persian illuminators (Muhammad Muslih, 2008, p.213, Abul Wafa Taftazani, 2003, p.195).

The philosophy of illumination (*al hikmah al isyraqiyyah*) Suhrawardi is the school of islamic philosophy which was born as a reaction to the peripatetic theory. This school was built by Suhrawardi with his concept is that the essence of everything is light. The opposite of light is darkness and there is another reality as a link between the two called *barzakh* (Syihabudin Suhrawardi, 2003, p.124). Ontologically, the concept of the existence of peripatetic philosophy which states that the fundamental of reality is existence, rejected by Suhrawardi. For him, the primary and fundamental essence of a reality, being existence is only secondary. It is the nature of essence and only exists in the human mind. According to Suhrawardi, knowledge in peripatetic philosophy may be sought (*al mathlub*) but it is not necessarily obtainable (*al hushul*). According to him, new

knowledge can be obtained by first the subject realizes about him self (consciousness) and establishes a direct relationship with the object. Thus both the subject and object require both to be present. This kind of acquisition of knowledge is meant by the knowledge of *hudhuri* or knowledge by presence (Muhammad Muslih, 2008, p.218).

The next figure of the mystical tradition is Ibn 'Arabi with the '*Irfani* epistemology which stems from *ma'rifah* knowledge, namely knowledge acquired intuitively through inspiration from Allah directly on the truth and the nature of something that can be captured by the feeling *batiniyah* (*dzaug*). According to Ibn 'Arabi, there are three kinds of knowledge: *first*, intellectual knowledge (*al' ilm al 'aqli*) which is the result of reasoning; *second*, state of knowledge (*'ilm al ahwal*), as a result of experiments; and *third*, secret knowledge (*'ilm al asrar*), which is similar to revelation (Muhyidin Ibn 'Arabi, 2002, p.288). Ibn 'Arabi has contributed to formulating an epistemology known as '*irfan* (*gnosis*), which is knowledge with representations enlightened and obtained from knowledge with a mystical presence through illuminative relations. He states that knowledge of *ma'rifah* is acquired intuitively through inspiration from God directly about the truth and nature of things, which can be captured by the inner feeling (*dzaug*) (Mehdi Haeri Yazdi, 1994, p.241).

As for the popular figures in the premodern period was Mulla Sadra (1572). His thinking is known as high wisdom (*al hikmah al muta'aliyah* or transcendent theosophy) (Lorens Bagus, 2005, p.1101-1102). The thinking of Mulla Sadra is classified as the school of islamic philosophy based on intuition-intellectual, rational proof and islamic law. This is a new thing in the tradition of islamic philosophy with the concept of existentialist philosophy in Islam. Epistemologically, *al hikmah al muta'aliyah* is different from theology which starts from the *shari'a* and then seeks legitimacy ratios, in contrast to peripatetic philosophy which starts from Greek philosophy then seeks legitimacy of the *shari'a*, and differs from philosophy of illumination and '*irfan*

starting from experience mystics then try to express rationally and harmonize with the *shari'a*. *Al hikmah al muta'aliyah* in the view of Mulla Sadra starts from the ratio then seeks mystical experience or vice versa which is then harmonized with the *shari'a*. The process of gaining knowledge in *al hikmah al muta'aliyah* is done in three ways; *first*, starting from spiritual experience and then seeking ratio support, and then harmonizing with the *shari'a*; *second*, beginning with rational thinking and then living with spiritual experience, and then seeking *shari'a* support; *third*, starting from the *shari'a* teachings then rationalized, and so sharpened by spiritual appreciation (Mulla Sadra, 1981, p.12, 324).

Regarding the method of gaining knowledge, Mulla Sadra explained that there are two kinds of methods; the method of *hushuli*, which is the knowledge obtained through learning and effort (*at ta'allum wa al kasb*), and the method of *hudhuri*, knowledge obtained through direct giving and divine withdrawal. That is, Mulla Sadra in developing his epistemological thinking sought to reconcile philosophical methods and sufistic methods (*Burhani* and *Irfani* methods) and then harmonized with islamic law (Khalid al Walid, 2005, p.113).

Through the views of the three figures, it can be underlined, that islamic epistemology at this time is more inclined to intuitive methods or *Irfani*. The process of knowledge at this time is obtained intuitively through inspiration from God directly about the truth and the nature of something that can be captured by the feeling *batiniyah* (*dzaug*).

G. Development of the Islamic Epistemology in the Modern Period

In today's modern era, moslem thinkers and intellectuals have emerged who have tried to solve the chaos of previous thinkers and intellectuals by using approaches that have been carried out by western scholars. The statement is based on methodological assumptions that the formulations of the mind in the islamic tradition that have been constructed by theologians (*mutakallimun*), fiqh experts (*fuqaha*), interpreters (*mufasssirin*) and Sufis (*mutashawwiffun*) are

considered no longer sufficient enough to be used as a foundation islamic epistemological science because of differences in historicity (M. Amin Abdullah, 2003, p.10).

Some of the thoughts in modern era included Muhammad Abid al Jabiri, Muhammad Arkoun, Fazlur Rahman, Sayyed Hossein Naser, Nasr Hamid Abu Zayd, Muhammad Syahrur, and Abdullah Ahmad al Na'im. In this paper only the thoughts of Muhammad Abid al Jabiri will be explained, because he is considered to have a large contribution in the discourse of modern Arabic islamic thought with three epistemological frameworks that he built as a result of his historical critical study of islamic Arabic thought. The three epistemological frameworks are *Bayani*, *Burhani*, and *Irfani*.

First, the *Bayani* epistemology. Etymologically, the term of *bayani* contains various meanings: continuity (*al waslu*), separation (*al fashlu*), clear and bright (*al zhuhur wa al wudlhuh*) and the ability to make light. The term of *bayan* includes the meaning of everything that complements the act of understanding (Mahmud Arif, 2002, p.13). In general, the term of *Bayani* is interpreted as an explanation that contains the intention of revealing and explaining something (Muhammad Muslih, 2008, p.181). *Bayani* is a method of arabic typical thinking that emphasizes the authority of text (*nash*), directly or indirectly and justified by linguistic reason which is extracted through inference (*istidlal*). Directly means understanding the text as knowledge becomes and immediately applies it without the need for thought. Indirectly means understanding the text as raw knowledge so that it needs interpretation and reasoning. However, this does not mean that reason or ratio can determine the meaning and purpose, but must rely on the text. In *Bayani*, the ratio is considered not capable of providing knowledge unless it is based on the text. In a religious perspective, the goal of *Bayani* epistemology is the esoteric aspect (*shari'a*) (Muhammad Abid Al Jabiri, 2009, p.38).

The second is *Burhani* epistemology. Etymologically, burhan is a strong and clear argument. In terms of logic, *burhan* is

intellectual activity to prove the truth of a proposition through a deduction approach by connecting one proposition that has been proven axiomatic. Thus, *burhan* is an intellectual activity to establish a particular proposition (Muhammad Abid al Jabiri, 2009, p.46). To gain knowledge, *Burhani* epistemology uses the rules of syllogism. In arabic, syllogism is translated as *al qiyas al jam'i* which refers to the meaning of collecting. In terminology, syllogism is a form of argument in which two propositions called premise are referred to together in such a way that a decision must accompany. *Burhani* knowledge is not purely based on the ratio, but is based also on the ratio of external objects, then it goes through the stages before syllogism, namely the stage of understanding (*ma'qulat*), the stage of participation (*'ibarah*), and the stage of reasoning (*tahlili*). The understanding stage is the process of abstraction of external objects that enter the mind. According to al Jabiri, drawing conclusions with syllogism must fulfill several conditions, knowing the background of the preparation of the premise, there is a logical consistency between reasons and conclusions, and conclusions taken must be definite and correct, so that it is not possible to cause truth or other certainty (Achmad Khudori Soleh, 2003, p.250).

Third is the *'Irfani* epistemology. Etymologically, *'Irfani* comes from the word

'irfan which is similar to *ma'rifat*. *'Irfan* here means dealing with direct experience or direct knowledge with objects of knowledge (Muhammad Muslih, 2008, p.197). *'Irfan* is knowledge obtained by spiritual practice where it is hoped that by purity of heart, God will bestow knowledge directly on him. Thus, methodologically, spiritual knowledge is obtained at least through three stages; preparation, acceptance and disclosure. The first stage is preparation. To be able to receive an abundance of knowledge, a person usually has to complete the levels of spiritual life. The second stage is the acceptance. If a certain level of sufism has been achieved, it will get an abundance of direct knowledge from God illuminatively. At this stage a person will get the reality of such absolute self-awareness, so that with that awareness he is able to see the reality of himself as a known object. And the third stage is disclosure. This is the final stage of the process of achieving knowledge of *'Irfani*, where mystical experience is interpreted and expressed to others through speech or writing (Achmad Khudori Soleh, 2003, p.241-244).

The three epistemological theory concepts according to Muhammad Abid al Jabiri above can be described through the table below (Muhammad Muslih, 2008, p.196, 206-207, 212):

Fundamental Structure	Bayani Epistemology	Burhani Epistemology	'Irfani Epistemology
Sources	Text / <i>Nash</i> / <i>wahyu/revelation</i> and <i>ijma</i> '	Reality (nature, social), <i>al 'ilmu al hushuli</i>	Experience, prelogical knowledge
Methods	<i>Ijtihadiyyah</i> , <i>istinbathiyyah</i> , <i>istintajiyyah</i> ,	Abstraction, analytical, critical	<i>Dzauq</i> , <i>riyadhah</i> , <i>kasyaf</i>
Approaches	Language / <i>lughowiyyah</i>	Philosophical, scientific	Intuitif, psiko-gnosis
Theoretical Framework	Deductive thinking pattern that originates in text, meaning	<i>At tashawwur</i> , the premise of logic	<i>Dzahir-bathin</i> , <i>haqiqi-majazi</i> , <i>tanzil-ta'wil</i>

Function and role of reason	Intellect as a regulator of lust, justification,	Critical analysis, <i>al 'aql al kauni</i>	Participatory, <i>bilwasilah, bila hijab</i>
Type of argumentation	Dogmatic, dialectical	Demonstrative, logic patterns	Spirituality/esoteric, <i>'athifiyyah</i>
Benchmark scientific validity	The closeness between text and reality	Correspondence (connection of reason with reality), coherence (logical), pragmatics	Universal, empathy, understanding others
Basic principles	<i>Infishal</i> / discontinue / atomistik, analogy	Certainty, <i>idroklus sabab</i>	<i>Al ma'rifah, al ittihad, al hulul</i>
Supporting science group	Jurisprudence, grammar / language, <i>kalam</i>	Philosophy, science	<i>Tasawuf</i>
Relationship between subject and object	Subjective	Objective	Intersubjective, cross space and time, <i>ittihadul 'aql</i>

Through the table of islamic epistemology sketches according to al Jabiri above, it can be clearly seen the difference between the three epistemologies of *Bayani*, *Burhani* and *'Irfan* through their fundamental structure. Thus, it is not denied that Al Jabiri has made a significant contribution in the modern islamic epistemology.

H. Conclusion

After going through the description above, it can be concluded that the islamic epistemology which means the theory of knowledge inspired by the values and teachings of Islam has basically emerged since the presence of Islam through the first revelation of prophethood. It is, when the Prophet was sent, the foundations of science which became the foundation of the islamic epistemology had begun to be built. Then continued by the friends (*shahabah*) and their followers who are often referred to as *tabi'in* and *tabi'ut tabi'in*. At this time the epistemology of Islam was categorized as a *Bayani* epistemology which was still fixed on the texts or texts of the *Qur'an* and *hadith*. Only after the emergence of the *kalam* tradition and islamic philosophy, the islamic epistemology began to get serious attention by making reason as a source of

knowledge. This period was then categorized by the *Burhani* epistemology where moslem intellectuals, in this case *mutakallimun* and *falasifah*, did not only dwell on the issue of texts or religious texts.

Furthermore, due to dissatisfaction with the results found by philosophers with their peripatetic logic, a new school (*madzhab*) emerged in the era of mystical traditions which stated the importance of the role of the heart and intuition. This period is then categorized by *'Irfani* epistemology where knowledge is obtained by spiritual cultivation through heart purity. This thought was later refined by the subsequent thinkers who sought to reconcile philosophical methods and the sufistic method (*Burhani* and *'Irfani* methods), and then harmonized with islamic law known as the highest wisdom method (*al-hikmah al muta'aliyah*). Finally, in order to solve the chaos of moslem thinkers and intellectuals before and due to the existence of a long time difference and historicity, moslem figures emerged using approaches that have been carried out by Western scholars.

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