

## Islam as a Science: Ontology, Epistemology and Ethics

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### ABSTRACT

Speaking philosophical concepts of any field of science, including Islamic education focused on ontology, epistemology and axiology of science. The strengthening of any discipline is strongly determined by these three things. It means that the criteria of a science are determined by the three objectives of the study of philosophy. In connection with these issues, this paper aims to elaborate the concepts of Islam and science with the main focus on ontology, epistemology and axiology of education. In addition, this writing is expected to be useful for further understanding of studies on the relationship of Islam with science. This research is included in the library research, that is, research that limits research and data search only through library collections without requiring research and field data. In this research, researchers use qualitative research methods. In the library research that uses qualitative methods, they take the necessary data from sources such as books, journals, articles.

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## Introduction

Speaking philosophical concepts of any field of science, including Islamic education focused on ontology, epistemology and axiology of science (Zakarya, Hafidz, Martaputu, 2023). The strengthening of any discipline (Hadisi et al., 2023) is strongly determined by these three things. It means that the criteria of a science are determined by the three objectives of the study of philosophy (Triana et al., 2023). In order to develop the science of Islamic education it is necessary to clarify the ontological, epistemological and axiological framework first.

In connection with these issues, this paper aims to elaborate the concepts of Islam and science (Jatmiko Wibisono, Hafidz, Iffat Abdul Ghalib, 2023) with the main focus on ontology, epistemology and axiology of education (Nurul Umah Fijanati, Hafidz, Sukadi, 2023). In addition, this writing is expected to be useful for further understanding of studies on the relationship of Islam with science (Arum, 2018).

Speaking of "something" cannot be separated from the existence of "something" as a material object, it is no less important than the formal object which is the way of view of the speaker (Alfian Nurul Khoirulloh, Hafidz, 2023). Material objects are things that are thought

targets. (gegenstand). Something investigated, or something studied. Material objects include anything, whether it's concrete things, such as humans, plants, and stones, or abstract things such as ideas, values, and spirituality (Filsafat Sumarto, n.d.). A formal object is a way of viewing or reviewing a researcher's material object, as well as the principles it applies (Nikita Nur Zulaecha, Hafidz, Biela Nanda Oktivibi Pertiwi, 2023). The formal object of a science does not only give a science its fullness, but at the same time distinguishes it from other fields. One material object can be examined from different angles of view (Husaini Hasan, Hafidz, 2023), thus giving rise to different sciences. (UGM, 1997) This is obvious because epistemology is always connected with ontology, because both indicate the subject who observes, and the object observed (Ravertz, 2004). Therefore, it is necessary to beware of the "long-term" tendency in the field of epistemology before solving ontological questions, not exceptionally in the study of Islam.

Inaccuracies in the field of ontology are fatal to epistemology, because they mean inaccuracy of methods (Peursen, 1985). But the essence of science is its methodology (Muslih, 2005). It is more complicated when entering the study of Islam, where the revelation (the text of the Quran containing a certain idea or reality) is the object of study. As a result, the question arises whether the revelation is the source of knowledge, or the reality itself? This writing approaches it philosophically with interpretative deductive methods (Muhadjir, 2009).

## Method

This research is included in the library research (Syaiful Anam, 2023), that is, research that limits research and data search only through library collections without requiring research and field data (Husna Nashihin, 2023). In this research, researchers use qualitative research methods, that is, research that has the aim of understanding social reality by seeing the world as it is and not as it should be. Some characteristics of this qualitative research method, namely: performed on natural conditions, descriptive in nature, emphasizing on processes, data analysis inductively, and more emphasizing on meaning.

## Results and Discussion

### 1. Ontology Aspects

The question of the object of knowledge in philosophical research is called ontology (Solihin, 2007). Etymologically, the word ontology comes from the Greek; *ontos* and *logos*. *Ontos* means something that exists, while *logos* means science, theory, description or reason. Ontology is the term used to refer to the fact that it is studied and the reality that it exists about the truth or the truth of everything that exists that has the universal nature or the reality which contains discoveries to understand the existence. Ontology is an explanation of existence or existence that questions its origin. (akar paling mendasar dari apa yang kita sebut ilmu pengetahuan). So in ontology, the problem lies in its roots to become such a science (Hanafie, 2007).

Science recognizes that the problems faced are concrete problems that exist in the real world. Ontologically, science limits its problems only to problems which exist within the sphere of human experience (Suriasumantri, 2007). It has to be understood because this is what separates science from religion. Religion concerns objects that are beyond human experience. Differences between the scope of the problems encountered also lead to differences in methods. It has to be known properly in order to be able to put science and religion in real perspective. Without knowing this, it's easy for us to fall into confusion. The knowledge of God is the knowledge of the truth, and the knowledge is the understanding of God. On the one hand, religion will provide a moral foundation for the axiology of science, while on the other, science will deepen religious beliefs (Hanafie, 2007).

In some opinion studies, ontology can be said to be metaphysical (Sadulloh, 2009). The simple understanding of metaphysics is the study of the deepest and most radical nature of reality. Metaphysics and science are two different things. Both of them tried to ask a general question. However, metaphysics concerns concepts whose origins cannot be measured

experimentally. In this case, it doesn't mean metaphysics rejects science. On the other hand, science itself also raises questions about the authenticity of reality. Metaphysics seeks to solve important problems that science cannot solve.

Ontology also influences the fundamental assumptions of the material objects of Islamic study. If the text of revelation is the source of knowledge, then the material object is assumed to be "there" physically, but transcendental. On the contrary, if the knowledge source is reality (macro or micro cosmos), then the physical object of Islamic study is also assumed as "existing" empirically-sensual, but imaginary. History proves that the view of the first side has the potential to neglect empirical reality (both experiential and social). (teks Al-Quran atau kitabah).

In view of the responsibility of Muslims not to be exempt from the Qur'an as a guideline to face and answer problems in the reality of life, then the two ways of view can be expressed as extreme so that there needs to be such a moderation.

## 2. Epistimology Aspects

### a. Epistimology Definition

Epistemology is one aspect of philosophy in addition to ontology and axiology. Before discussing further, it's unethical to forget its etymological origins. Epistimology is derived from two synthesizing words, epistime and logos, both of which originate in Greek. Epistime means knowledge and logos means knowledge (Huda, 2023). So it can be understood that epistemology is a branch of philosophy that cuts into the language of science.

According to Sibawaihi in his book entitled *Eskatology al-Ghazali and Fazlur Rahman Comparative Studies of Classical-Contemporary Epistemology*, this epistemology can be interpreted as a theory of knowledge that concentrates on an effort to understand how knowledge is formed, its limits, validity and reliability and its relationship with truth (Sibawaihi, 2004). Based on his opinion, it seems clear that this area of epistemology is conditional on the structure of the composer of science covering the sources, how to find and find the validity of the data using specific methodologies.

### b. Source of Islamic Studies

Islam is a religion of mercy and understanding which guides the Quran and Sunnah as a fundamental punishment (Mahfud Junaedi, 2021). As we know that the Qur'an is a way of life guideline for the entire nation. Although the period of revelation took place 15 centuries ago, the Qur'an is claimed to be transcendental and sacred.

As-sunnah or Hadist is a second source (Mahfud Junaedi, 2021). The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) is a prophet of the prophet Muhammad Shallallahu alihi wa sallam. The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) will not contradict the Qur'an. These are the two guidelines that are fundamental to the study of Islam.

### c. Epistimology in Islamic Paradigm

The three approaches of the Islamic Epistemology are Bayani, Burhani, and Irfani. The three will lead us to the analysis of the verses of Allah through the methods of each approach as explained as follows:

#### 1) Bayani

Bayani is a method of thinking to acquire science through the emphasis of authoritative texts (nash) (Makiah, 2014). It is the source of the Qur'an and the Sunnah. Then, the product of this method is the knowledge of Shari'ah such as tafsir, Aqidah, fiqh, etc.

#### 2) Burhani

Burhani is a method of digging science based on human reason and empiricism (Mahfud Junaedi, 2021). So that the product of science that is produced is as logical as a cluster of exact and social science.

#### 3) Irfani

This method is based on intuition, conscience sensitivity and mahabbah.

Through these three methods, the present scientific facts honestly indicate that the Quran as the guideline of Islamic science is indeed a condition of science. In fact, many scientists acknowledge the validity of the Qur'an after it has come to light empirical and scientific knowledge that is in line with the content of the Quran from several centuries ago.

Again affirmed that by this, Islam is highly qualified philosophically to be called a science. It is because of the truth of its existence, the method of studying it until the purpose of the presence of Islam on earth has answered how the position of Islam itself as a science (Rahmad, 2011).

As for Kuntowijoyo, he has an idea in understanding and contextualizing the texts of the Quran with transcendental structuralism. Which will later produce the appropriate methods for implementing the values of the Quran and Sunnah born 15 centuries ago into the context of today's social symptoms (Kuntowijoyo, 2006). Before entering into what methods he has drawn up, he believes it will take at least six stages for the Islamic science to be applied effectively. These are: (1) the awareness of change, (2) the collective consciousness, (3) the historical consciously, (4) the social facts, (5) the abstract societies, and (6) the need for objectivity (Kuntowijoyo, 2006).

### 3. Methodology of Islamic Studies

One of the figures who presented Islamic scholarship was Kuntowijoyo. Islamic scholarship was born out of an interest in modern Western science that is at odds with the spirit of the Renaissance which was originally aimed at humanizing mankind, but what happened was dehumanization and secularization. The rise of rationalism in the 15th and 16th centuries, which rejected theocentrism of the Middle Ages, also prompted the emergence of Islamic scholarship. That rejection led to modernism in philosophy which is the place of departure of secular science. Secular science is the science that magnifies the mind of man and dismisses the revelation of God.

From here comes the study of Islam which Kuntowijoyo put forward in his book. (Islam Sebagai Ilmu). Kuntowijoyo mentions two kinds of methodologies in the study of Islam, namely Integralization and Objectification. Integralization is the integralization of the wisdom that man possesses with the revelation of God. While objectification is a method to make the knowledge of Islam capable as a mercy for all mankind (Kuntowijoyo, 2006). These two methodologies cannot be separated in the study of Islam as proposed by Kuntowijoyo.

Modernism in the philosophy that forms secular science is thought to have separated the revelation of God. When viewed from the growth of secular science, it refers more to the separation of human thought from the revelation of God. The development of secular science begins with philosophy that reaches the point of departure of science, then proceeds to anthropocentrism (man occupies the highest position), the next course after anthropocentrism is differentiation, this differentiating is the process of separation in which knowledge is no longer based on the revelations of God.

In the study of Islam, Kuntowijoyo wanted to reconcile Islamic thought with the revelation of God. The result of such unification was the birth of integralist science. The process of growth of integralist science begins with religion which is the revelation of God (the Qur'an). After the two sources of knowledge, the next stage is the reunification of religion with other sectors of life, including religion and science or called by differentiation, from which the formation of integralist science.

Although Kuntowijoyo gives a critical note of the evolving scientific paradigm in the West that has resulted in dehumanization and secularization, he is not entirely anti-Western. The offer of Islamic scholarship in an attempt to realize the integralistic Islamic sciences, does not later deny the secular sciences that are developing today. When secular knowledge is the product of humanity, while Islamic knowledge is a product of the faithful.

Once the process of integration has been completed, the next step that should be taken in an attempt to develop Islamic science is by objectification. These two aspects in practice

must go side by side. A deed is said to be objective when it is perceived by people other than Islam as something natural, not as a religious deed. Even so, from the one who has a deed, if he considers it a religion, including charity. This objectification (Muhammad Zainal Abidin, 2021).

Objectivization begins with the internalization of values, so that he is positioned between the internalisation, externalization, objectivization and the symptoms of objects (Kuntowijoyo, 2006). or example, respect for neighbors arises from an internal belief that the neighbor's role in everyday life is so great that the Prophet Muhammad even fed his old neighbor. This is what internalization means. When a Muslim respects his neighbor, helps him when he is in trouble, then it is externalization. For example, when a Muslim neighbor is non-Islamic and still respects the Muslim so that he feels the benefit of neighboring with a Muslim, that is what is called objectification (Abdurrahman Wahid, 2021).

#### 4. Ethics of Islamic Dogma

Ethics is derived from the Greek word *ethikos* or *ethos* which means customs, customs and practices. Generally speaking, ethics is a theory of human behavior or actions that is viewed from an aspect of good and bad values that can be determined by reason (Zaprul Khan, 2016). Ethics is part of the axiology of Islamic science. The Islamic paradigm, which acknowledges that Islamic science originates directly from the Quran, governs the ethical values contained in Islamic sciences. Because the prophetic purpose of Muhammad Saw is to create ethics, or morals. Kuntowijoyo mentions moral ethics with prophetic ethics. Prophetic ethics originates from the prophet Muhammad Saw and comes from the revelation of Allah Swt (Kuntowijoyo, 2006). According to Kuntowijoyo that objective science no longer needs to be Islamized, Islam acknowledges objectivity, so if knowledge is truly objective, then it does not need to be-Islamized anymore. A technology will remain the same, both in the hands of Muslims and disbelievers (Kuntowijoyo, 2006). In spite of this opinion, then this Kuntowijoyo Islamic science project then he did not direct to the natural sciences. This major UGM teacher focused on social sciences as part of his Islamic research project, so in the end he said that Islamic sciences are the result of prophetic social science, social science that incorporates prophetic values. According to Kuntowijoyo, this prophetic word actually has three main values: humanization, liberation, and transcendence. (membawa manusia beriman kepada Tuhan) (Muhammad Nur, 2014).

There are differences between Western and Islamic views on axiology. First, Western science argues that scientists should be neutral to values both ontologically and axiologically (Nafis Harahap, n.d.). In this case, Western scientists just find information and let others use it, both positively and negatively. The second argues that science does not conflict with values limited only to the metaphysics of science. However, in practice, science must place the object of research on moral principles (Emayulia Satria, 2016).

Therefore, knowledge does not really have its own value; it depends heavily on who and what doctrine is adhered to. While Islamic axiology argues that God, the Creator, is the source of knowledge. Because God really tells man what is good and what is bad. Besides, the individual who will judge good and bad actions.

#### Conclusion

Based on the description of the above paper it can be concluded that Islam as the science or the study of Islam can not be exempt from the three aspects of philosophy, ontology, epistemology, axiology. Ontology is an explanation of existence or existence that questions the origin of science. Epistemology is a theory of knowledge that concentrates on an attempt to understand how knowledge is formed, its limits, validity and reliability, and its relationship with truth. The axiology in this paper only deals with the ethics of Islamic dogma. In addition to the above three aspects, the study of Islam proposed by Kuntowijoyo must pass through the methodology of Islamic study, namely Integralization and Objectification. The purpose of the study of Islam is to reconcile the human mind with the revelation of God. The result of this



unification was the birth of an integralist science which was considered capable of being a grace for all mankind.

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