Methodology of Islamic Studies: Islam as Religion (A Perspective Epistemology, Paradigm, and Methodology)

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Abstract: *The study of methodology in Islamic studies has undergone a significant change from the traditional approach that focuses on textual and normative analysis to a more multidisciplinary and sophisticated paradigm. With the integration of epistemology, phenomenology, hermeneutics, and empirical techniques, the understanding of Islam as a religion now encompasses a broader social, cultural, and historical dimension. To achieve this goal, Systematic Literature Review (SLR) reviews are conducted using methodologies and tools that support systematic thinking, identification, feasibility testing, and meta-analysis through journal articles, books, research reports, and other sources published in the last 10 years. The Literature Selection and Quality Assessment consists of Inclusion Literature that discusses the Methodology of Islamic Studies: Islam as a Religion within the scope of Epistemology, Paradigm, and Methodology Perspectives from Google Scholar, Semantic Sholar, Eric, Crossref, and Science Direct databases. The results of the study found that the methodology of Islamic studies has shifted from a traditional approach to a more sophisticated and multidisciplinary paradigm. Epistemological shifts lead to contextual and interpretive perspectives, combining phenomenological, hermeneutical, historical, and empirical*

techniques. This approach allows for a more comprehensive understanding of Islam as a religion and a social phenomenon.

Keywords: *Islamic Studies, Religion, Epistemology, Paradigm, Methodology.*

A. Introduction

Islam teaches us to live a dynamic and progressive life by emphasizing the importance of reason through the development of science and technology. It promotes a balance between material and spiritual needs, as well as fostering social awareness. Islam also teaches the importance of respecting time, open-mindedness, the values of democracy, quality, egalitarianism, forging partnerships, rejecting feudalism, respecting cleanliness, prioritizing brotherhood, having noble morals, as well as other positive attitudes.[1] Because of this, the religious guidance contained in the Qur'an and hadith is very ideal and glorious in regulating various aspects of human life.[2]

In line with this statement, Fazlur Rahman argues that the basis of the Qur'an's teachings is explicitly moral which emphasizes monotheism and social justice.[3] This view is reflected, for example, in the teachings on worship which are loaded with the content of increasing faith and piety, which is manifested in noble morals.[4] The connection between faith, piety, and noble morals is very closely related, as stated in the Qur'an surah al-Baqarah verse 177.

The concept of Islam as a religion includes fundamental beliefs such as *tauhid* (monotheism), *risalah* (treatises), and the hereafter. Scholars such as Alvin Plantinga have explored the rationality of belief, highlighting the correct basic idea and the challenge of "sufficient evidence" standards of rational accountability.[5]

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[1] Jirhanuddin, *Islam Dinamis* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2017), v.

[2] Al-Jamali Fadhil, *Menerabas Krisis Pendidikan Dunia Islam*, Terj. H.M. Arifin, Cet. Ke-II (Jakarta: Golden Terayon Press, 1992), 11–21.

[3] Fazlur Rahman, *Islam*, Terj. Senoaji Saleh (Jakarta: Bina Aksara, 1987), 49.

[4] In Islam, the issue of good and bad, in addition to the matter of divinity becomes an important religious foundation. This is so, because what Islam wants to foster is a good human being who stays away from bad / evil deeds in this world. See also Harun Nasution, *Islam Ditinjau dari Berbagai Aspeknya*, Cet. Ke-I, Jilid I (Jakarta: UI Press, 1979), 53.

[5] Fauzan and Moh Dannur, "Peran Agama dalam Pembentukan Karakter pada Lembaga Pendidikan," *Fikrotuna: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Manajemen Islam* 8, no. 01 (August 13, 2019): 1103–1121, https://doi.org/10.32806/jf.v9i2.3488.

Additionally, scholars such as Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas[6] have emphasized the importance of understanding the human nature, knowledge, and concepts of religion in Islam which provides a deep insight into the basics of a Muslim's life. The integration of science and technology with Islamic teachings is also very important,[7] as highlighted by scholars who discuss the classification of science and the dangers of misunderstandings in this regard.[8]

Islam, as a comprehensive religion, encompasses teachings that governs various aspects of life, from worship to social interaction.[9] Islamic studies, on the other hand, is an academic discipline that aims to understand, analyze, and interpret these teachings in a systematic and critical manner. In Islamic studies, researchers use a variety of methodological approaches including textual analysis and through historical, sociological, and philosophical approaches[10] to examine how Islamic teachings are applied in real life and how they have evolved throughout history.

The study of Islam as a discipline has become increasingly important due to the complexity and relevance of Islam in contemporary life. This development is reflected in the increasing expansion of various studies, research, and publications in recent decades.[11] Diversity in Islamic beliefs, religious practices, history, and culture demands a comprehensive and multidimensional study

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[6] According to al-Attas, science includes two things, namely to explain the truth symbolized by the term ḥaq which summarizes everything, both propositions and ontology as mentioned in this writing. Syed Muhammad Naguib Al-Attas, *Islam, the Concept of Religion and the Foundation of Ethics and Morality* (Kuala Lumpur: International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization (ISTAC), 1992), 41–90.

[7] Shomiyatun, "Konsep Ilmu dalam Pandangan Islam," *Al-Misbah (Jurnal Islamic Studies)* 5, no. 1 (2017): 15–33, https://doi.org/10.26555/almisbah.v5i1.164.

[8] Mesut Idriz, "Expounding the Concept of Religion in Islam as Understood by Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas," *Poligrafi* 25, no. 99/100 (December 23, 2020): 101–15, https://doi.org/10.35469/poligrafi.2020.233.

[9] Abuddin Nata, *Studi Islam Komprehensif*, Edisi Kedua (Jakarta: Prenada Media, 2015), 2–3.

[10] Abbas Aghdassi and Aaron W. Hughes, *New Methodological Perspectives in Islamic Studies* (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 2023), 7.

[11] Fiandy Mauliansyah, "Tinjauan Historis dan Proliferasi dalam Kajian Komunikasi Pembangunan Kontemporer," *Tuturlogi: Journal of Southeast Asian Communication* 1, no. 1 (January 9, 2020): 13–27, https://doi.org/10.21776/ub.tuturlogi.2020.001.01.2.

approach. The methodology of Islamic studies becomes the main foundation in understanding the dynamics of Islam as a religion that is influential in various aspects of human life, both individually and collectively.[12]

The methodological approach in Islamic studies tends to be interdisciplinary, combining concepts from history, anthropology, sociology, and cultural studies.[13] Textual analysis of Islamic holy texts, especially the Quran and Hadith, is central to understanding Islamic teachings and values. In addition to that, historical analysis is also important to track the development of Islam over time, as well as its influence on human civilization.[14] This approach provides a better understanding of Islam, not only as a religion, but also a system of beliefs, values, and life practices that have a profound influence on shaping the culture and identity of a society.[15]

The subject of Islamic studies methodologies has become increasingly important as the complexity and relevance of Islam in the contemporary world increases. Islam, as one of the largest religions in the world, has a wide and profound influence on various aspects of human life, both individually and collectively,[16] therefore a deep understanding of Islam is not only limited to theological and ritual aspects, but also includes a broader analysis of the knowledge of Islam development and application. This study aims to bridge the gap between theory and practice in understanding Islam as a holistic and dynamic knowledge system.

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[12] Awaludin Pimay and Fania Mutiara Savitri, "Dinamika Dakwah Islam di Era Modern," *Jurnal Ilmu Dakwah* 41, no. 1 (June 30, 2021): 43–55, https://doi.org/10.21580/jid.v41.1.7847.

[13] Pasiska Pasiska *et.al.*, "Interdisipliner Pendidikan Islam dan Realitas Keilmuan Indonesia," *El-Ghiroh : Jurnal Studi Keislaman* 21, no. 1 (March 31, 2023): 75–91, https://doi.org/10.37092/el-ghiroh.v21i1.499.

[14] Suwari Suwari and Dedy Pradesa, "Rasionalitas Islam dalam Dakwah: Perspektif Normatif dan Historis," *Inteleksia: Jurnal Pengembangan Ilmu Dakwah* 5, no. 2 (2023): 241–262, https://doi.org/10.55372/inteleksiajpid.v5i2.277.

[15] Niken Ristianah, "Internalisasi Nilai-Nilai Keislaman Perspektif Sosial Kemasyarakatan," *Darajat: Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam* 3, no. 1 (March 26, 2020): 1–13.

[16] Salman Assahary *et.al.*, *Pengantar Studi Islam* (Padang, Sumatera Barat: CV. Gita Lentera, 2024), 2; See also Neneng Nurhasanah, Amrullah Hayatuddin, and Yayat Rahmat Hidayat, *Metodologi Studi Islam* (Jakarta: Amzah, 2021), 52.

According to an epistemological perspective, Islamic studies focus on how knowledge about Islam is formed, validated, and applied. Epistemology, as a branch of philosophy that studies the theory of knowledge, is an important foundation in studies related to Islamic studies.[17] Through this approach, researchers can explore authoritative sources in Islam such as the Quran and Hadith, as well as how the interpretation and understanding of these texts has evolved over time. This provides a deeper insight into how Muslims understand and practice their religious teachings in different contexts.

In addition to that, the paradigm in Islamic studies provides a broader framework for analyzing Islamic teachings and practices. The paradigmatic approach allows researchers to look at Islam in a more complex social, cultural, and political context. This includes how Islamic teachings interact with social and cultural dynamics in various societies. By understanding the underlying paradigm of Islamic studies, researchers can identify the factors that influence the development and adaptation of Islamic teachings in historical and contemporary contexts.

This study has great significance in several aspects. *First*: this study helps in understanding Islam, not only as a system of beliefs and ritual practices, but also as a system of knowledge that has strong epistemological foundations. Through an epistemological perspective, we can explore how knowledge about Islam is shaped, validated, and applied in different contexts. *Second*: this study adopts a paradigm approach that allows researchers to look at Islam in a broader framework, linking religious teachings to social, cultural, and political realities. This link is important to understand the internal and external dynamics that have influenced the development of Islam throughout history. *Third*: the methodologies used in Islamic studies are very diverse. This comprehensive and multidimensional approach allows researchers to delve deeper into how Islamic teachings are

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[17] Syahril Hidayat Beno Adiwibowo, Muh Nur Rochim Maksum, Ali Muhammad, *Islamic Science Paradigm and Islamic Science Paradigm in the Format of Progressive Education: A Comparative Study of the Thinking of Syed Naquib Al Attas and Kuntowijoyo,* in Triono Ali Mustofa *et.al.*, *Proceedings of the International Conference on Islamic and Muhammadiyah Studies (ICIMS 2023)* (Berlin, Germany: Springer Nature, 2023), 567.

applied and practiced in a variety of contexts, as well as how they adapt and evolve as the times change.

This study is a continuation of the research "Islamic Studies in the Twenty-first Century: Challenges and Prospects" by Amin Abdullah analyzing the challenges and opportunities of Islamic studies in the contemporary era, emphasizing the importance of an interdisciplinary approach and dialogue between Islamic tradition and modernity. Meanwhile, the study "Rethinking Islamic Studies in the Twenty-First Century" by Omid Safi proposes a reformulation of Islamic studies that is more critical and engages with contemporary global issues. In contrast to the two studies, this study focuses on the methodological evolution of Islamic studies comprehensively, covering epistemology, paradigm, and methodological aspects. This research not only analyzes contemporary challenges, but also maps the historical development of Islamic studies methodologies from the classical era to the modern era, providing a more holistic picture of the transformation of this field of study.

This study uses the systematic literature review (SLR) method with a qualitative-interpretive approach. This type of research is descriptive-analytical, aiming to map and analyze the development of Islamic studies methodologies. The main sources of data are journal articles, academic books, and conference proceedings published in the last 10 years, accessed through databases such as Eric, Semantic Scholar, Google Scholar, *Crossref, and the Science Direct database*. Data processing is done by using coding techniques and thematic categorization, while data analysis adopts a qualitative content analysis approach. This method refers to the SLR guidelines put forward by Kitchenham and Charters[18] and modified for the context of Islamic studies following Bearman's advice in the "Handbook of Oriental Studies: Section 1.[19] The process of selecting and analyzing articles is carried out in stages, including identification, screening,

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[18] Barbara Kitchenham and Stuart Charters, "*Guidelines for Performing Systematic Literature Reviews in Software Engineering*," Vol. 5. Technical Report, Version 2.3 (United Kingdom: Keele University, January 1, 2007), 15–18.

[19] P. Bearman (Ed.), *Handbook of Oriental Studies: Section 1, The Near and Middle East*, Vol. 124 (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 29–35.

feasibility assessment, and final synthesis, to ensure comprehensiveness and depth of analysis.[20]

B. The Concept and Characteristics of Islam as a Religion

Islam as a comprehensive religion covers various aspects of the lives of its people, not only influencing the spiritual dimension, but also providing practical guidelines for daily life. Islamic teachings include guidance on the relationship of individuals with God, social relationships between others, and the relationship of humans with the universe. This forms a comprehensive framework of guidance in various aspects of life. With a deep understanding of the basic characteristics of Islam, every Muslim will be able to explore and apply the teachings of Islam effectively in their daily lives.

Islam as a religion has unique characteristics that include monotheistic beliefs, moral principles, rituals of worship, and a legal system.[21] This concept includes the relationship between individuals and God, social relationships between individuals, and human relationships with the universe. One of the main characteristics of Islam is the belief in monotheism, which is the belief that there is only one God, Allah, to be worshipped.[22] This belief is reflected in the shahada, a sentence of testimony that states that there is no God other than Allah SWT and the Prophet Muhammad is His messenger. This concept of monotheism is a strong foundation in the religion of Islam and sets it apart from other religions that may have beliefs about many gods or divine entities.

The belief in monotheism, which is the foundation of the religion of Islam,[23] distinguishes it clearly from other religions that may

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[20] Which emphasizes the importance of a systematic approach in conducting literature reviews for religious and cultural studies. See Bambang Suhartawan *et.al.*, *Metodologi Penelitian* (Batam: Cendikia Mulia Mandiri, 2024), 79–95, 98–100.

[21] Moh Teguh Prasetyo, "Islam dan Transformasi Budaya Lokal di Indonesia," *Batuthah: Jurnal Sejarah Padaban Islam* 2, no. 2 (September 29, 2023): 150–62.

[22] Eftychia Stavrianopoulou, Axel Michaels, and Claus Ambos, *Transformations in Sacrificial Practices: From Antiquity to Modern Times : Proceedings of an International Colloquium, Heidelberg, 12-14, July 2006* (Berlin: Lit Verlag Münster, 2008), 139.

[23] Philip Khuri Hitti, *History of the Arabs: From the Earliest Times to the Present*, Penerjemah: R. Cecep Lukman Yasin and Dedi Slamet Riyadi (Jakarta: Penerbit Serambi, 2005), 160.

believe in many gods or divine entities. This concept not only serves as a theological teaching, but also as the basis for ritual practices and the legal system in Islam, shaping the entire structure of this religious teaching. Through the concept of monotheism, Islam unites various aspects of the lives of its people in a holistic and integrated belief system.

In addition, Islam also teaches very important moral principles. Islamic teachings emphasize values such as honesty, justice, mercy, and other virtues. Muslims are expected to practice these moral principles in their daily lives. These moral principles provide guidelines for the behavior of individuals and Muslim societies, as well as influence social relations between individuals.[24]

Worship rituals are an integral part of Islam. Muslims are required to carry out various worships, including the five-time prayer, Ramadan fasting, zakat, and hajj. Each of these worships has various goals, such as getting closer to Allah, remembering Him, cleansing oneself from sin, and strengthening social bonds between Muslims.[25] Through this practice of worship, Muslims are actively involved in religious activities that lead them towards piety and piety.[26]

The legal system in Islam is one of its unique characteristics. Islam has a legal system known as sharia, which is based on the teachings of the Qur'an and hadith,[27] as well as the principles of *ijtihad* (reasoning) and *qiyas* (analogy).[28] These principles allow for

[24] Siti Nurdina Awalita, "Nilai-Nilai Moderasi Beragama dalam Kurikulum Pendidikan Agama Islam Rahmatan Lil'alamin Tingkat Madrasah Ibtida'iyah," *Journal of Contemporary Islamic Education* 4, no. 1 (2024): 1–12, https://doi.org/10.25217/jcie.v4i1.4047.

[25] Moh Jalaluddin, Nailur Rahman, and Sunawati, "Pemanfaatan Media Ibadah di Masjid Shirotol Mustaqim, Waru, Pamekasan: (Studi Kasus: Penggunaan Media Ibadah oleh Kiyai Muadi Arif)," *Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat Dan Penelitian Thawalib* 2, no. 2 (August 5, 2023): 83–94, https://doi.org/10.54150/thame.v2i2.214.

[26] Jumal Ahmad, *Religiusitas, Refleksi dan Subjektivitas Keagamaan* (Yogyakarta: Deepublish, 2020), 59–98.

[27] Farihan Aulia and Sholahuddin Al-Fatih, "Perbandingan Sistem Hukum Common Law, Civil Law Dan Islamic Law dalam Perspektif Sejarah dan Karakteristik Berpikir," *Legality : Jurnal Ilmiah Hukum* 25, no. 1 (2017): 98–113; See also Achmad Irwan Hamzani, *Hukum Islam: Dalam Sistem Hukum di Indonesia* (Jakarta: Prenada Media, 2020), 5–10.

[28] Farhad Malekian, *Principles of Islamic International Criminal Law: A Comparative Search* (Netherlands: Brill, 2011), 79; See also C. G. Weeramantry, *Islamic Jurisprudence: An International Perspective* (New York: Springer, 1988), 40.

the adaptation and application of teachings in contemporary contexts. Sharia regulates various aspects of life, including civil, criminal, family, and inheritance matters. The principles of Islamic law are designed to promote justice, social justice, and the well-being of humanity. The Islamic legal system has a significant influence in countries with a majority Muslim population, where Islamic law can be applied partially or in its entirety.[29]

The study of Islam as a religion involves an in-depth analysis of the main concepts within this religion. One important concept is faith, which refers to a sincere and strong belief in God, the angels, His books, His apostles, the Day of Resurrection, and destiny.[30] The concept of Islam also includes complete surrender to Allah and living according to His will. In addition, the concept of ihsan is also significant in Islam, which teaches about doing good perfectly and living with the awareness that Allah is always watching and watching.

Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that Islam as a religion has unique characteristics that includes monotheistic beliefs, moral principles, rituals of worship, and the legal system. Concepts such as faith, Islam, and ihsan are the foundation of Islamic teachings. Understanding and practicing these characteristics is important for Muslims in living their daily lives and strengthening their bonds with God, fellow humans, and the universe.[31]

C. Implications of Islamic Studies as a Religion

The study of Islam as a religion has far-reaching implications in the contemporary context.[32] In an academic context, this study

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[29] Kusyana and Romlah, "Meningkatkan Keadilan Sosial Ekonomi Melalui Implementasi Akhlaq dalam Hukum Islam: Sosial Ekonomi, Akhlaq dan Hukum Islam," *Jurnal Tasyri' : Jurnal Muamalah Dan Ekonomi Syariah* 6, no. 2 (July 3, 2024): 1–18.

[30] Melsya Dwi Putri, Fadila Aulia Putri, and Putri Diana, "Membentuk Karakter Peserta Didik yang Berilmu dan Bertaqwa," *Mandub : Jurnal Politik, Sosial, Hukum Dan Humaniora* 2, no. 3 (July 3, 2024): 247–258.

[31] Fitriana *et.al.*, *Pendidikan Agama Islam* (Kuningan, Jawa Barat: CV. Aina Media Baswara, 2024), 70–75.

[32] Faizin, Joni Helandri, and Supriadi, "Implementasi Nilai-Nilai Pendidikan Islam dalam Konteks Modern: Tinjauan terhadap Praktik dan Tantangan," *Ta'lim : Jurnal Studi Pendidikan Islam* 7, no. 1 (January 27, 2024): 93–116, https://doi.org/10.52166/talim.v7i1.5742.

provides an in-depth understanding of the teachings of Islam and its influence on Muslim society. In a social and political context, Islamic studies can provide a better understanding of universal and relevant Islamic values in building a just and harmonious society. In an individual context, these studies can provide a deeper view of the meaning of life and the purpose of life.[33]

The study of Islam as a religion has significant implications in the academic context. Through this study, academics can gain a deep understanding of the teachings of Islam, including its theological aspects, Islamic law, history, and philosophy. By studying the teachings of Islam, researchers and academics can provide rich insights into Islamic thought and its influence on Muslim society.[34]

In the social context, the study of Islam as a religion has important implications in understanding the universal values it teaches. Values such as justice, brotherhood, tolerance, and social concerns contained in Islamic teachings can contribute to the formation of a just and harmonious society. Through the study of Islam, one can gain a deeper understanding of the application of these values in contemporary contexts, including in interfaith relations, human rights, and other social issues.[35]

In the political context, the study of Islam as a religion also has significant implications. A deep understanding of the teachings of Islam can help Muslim communities and political leaders in formulating public policies based on Islamic values. Islamic studies opens a discussion space on the application of the principles of democracy, justice, and social welfare in the political system in accordance with the teachings of Islam.[36]

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[33] Muhammad Yusron Maulana El-Yunusi, Aulia Mufidatus Safiani, and Siti Mafridatul Mahbubah, "Peran Filsafat Pendidikan Islam dalam Mengembangkan Potensi Individu Masyarakat Berbasis Rohani," *Tsaqofah* 3, no. 5 (September 3, 2023): 988–1001, https://doi.org/10.58578/tsaqofah.v3i5.1758.

[34] Rahmat Hidayat and Candra Wijaya, *Ilmu Pendidikan Islam: Menuntun Arah Pendidikan Islam di Indonesia* (Medan, Sumatera Utara: Lembaga Peduli Pengembangan Pendidikan Indonesia, 2016), 239–262.

[35] Theguh Saumantri, "Pluralisme dan Inklusivitas dalam Masyarakat Multikultural Perspektif Pemikiran Tariq Ramadan," *Zawiyah: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam* 9, no. 1 (August 22, 2023): 135–149, https://doi.org/10.31332/zjpi.v9i1.5899.

[36] Nur Efendi and Muh Ibnu Sholeh, "Dinamika Sosial dalam Proses Pengambilan Keputusan dalam Manajemen Pendidikan Islam," *Attanwir: Jurnal Keislaman Dan Pendidikan* 14, no. 2 (2023): 45–67.

In an individual context, the study of Islam as a religion can provide a deeper understanding of the meaning and purpose of life. Understanding the teachings of Islam can help Muslim individuals to live meaningful lives through the practice of worship, the application of moral values, and the achievement of a balance between this life and the hereafter. Islamic studies offer a solid spiritual foundation for Muslim individuals in facing challenges and living their daily lives.[37]

In addition, the study of Islam as a religion can also provide a deeper understanding of the history and development of Islamic thought throughout various periods. By studying the history of Islam from early times to contemporary eras, researchers can analyze the social, political, and cultural changes that affect Muslims. An understanding of this historical context is very important to interpret Islamic teachings appropriately and avoid a narrow or limited understanding.[38]

The study of Islam as a religion can also contribute to understanding the role and position of women in Muslim society. Through Islamic studies, academics and activists can explore a deeper understanding of Islamic perspectives on gender issues, women's rights, and gender justice. A deeper understanding of the teachings of Islam can help promote gender equality, fight discrimination, and fight for women's rights in a contemporary context.[39]

In the context of interreligious dialogue, the study of Islam as a religion has significant implications. Through the study of Islam, a deeper understanding of the teachings of this religion can be obtained, which in turn can facilitate dialogue and understanding between Muslims and adherents of other religions. Islamic studies open up space for the creation of interfaith cooperation in solving social

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[37] Amirah Mawardi, "Membaca Al-Quran dan Kecerdasan Spiritual: Sebuah Studi pada Santri Pondok Pesantren Khairul Ummah Kabupaten Bantaeng," *Pilar* 14, no. 1 (June 12, 2023): 105–112.

[38] Theguh Saumantri and Hajam, "Urgensi Metodologi Studi Islam Interdisipliner untuk Moderasi Islam," *An-Nawa: Jurnal Studi Islam* 5, no. 1 (June 6, 2023): 1–18, https://doi.org/10.37758/annawa.v4i1.579.

[39] Wahyuddin Halim, "Peran Pesantren dalam Wacana dan Pemberdayaan Masyarakat Madani," *Akademika: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam* 22, no. 2 (December 19, 2017): 191–218.

problems, promoting peace, and building harmonious relations between various religious communities.[40]

In the context of education, the study of Islam as a religion makes an important contribution in developing a broader and more tolerant understanding of religion.[41] Through Islamic education, both at the school and tertiary levels, the younger generation of Muslims can gain a deep understanding of the teachings of their religion and its relationship to contemporary social, political, and cultural issues. Islamic studies in education can also promote pluralism, interreligious dialogue, and a better understanding of cultural and religious diversity.[42]

Referring to various existing concepts, the study of Islam as a religion has broad and significant implications in various aspects of people's lives. This study not only helps in understanding and applying universal values such as justice, tolerance, and social care, but also contributes to the formulation of public policies that are in accordance with Islamic principles. In addition, Islamic studies provide spiritual and moral guidance for individuals, deepen their understanding of Islamic history and thought, and play an important role in gender and equality issues. Through education, the study also supports the development of tolerance and pluralism and facilitates interfaith dialogue, all of which contribute to the formation of a more harmonious and inclusive society.

D. The Evolution of Epistemology in Islamic Studies, from Traditional to Contemporary Approaches

Epistemology is a branch of philosophy that studies the nature, origins, and limitations of knowledge.[43] The main focus is on

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[40] Daniel Philpott, *Religious Freedom in Islam: The Fate of a Universal Human Right in the Muslim World Today* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019), 56–78.

[41] Aunur Shabur Maajid Amadi and Najih Anwar, "Perbandingan Metodologi Studi Islam Tradisional Dan Modern Di Indonesia," *Jurnal Pendidikan Tambusai* 7, no. 3 (October 18, 2023): 22519–22526, https://doi.org/10.31004/jptam.v7i3.10134.

[42] Sherman A. Jackson, *Islam and the Blackamerican: Looking Toward the Third Resurrection* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 23, and 171.

[43] Pablo Ivan Azocar Fernandez and Manfred Ferdinand Buchroithner, *Paradigms in Cartography: An Epistemological Review of the 20th and 21st Centuries* (New York - London: Springer Science & Business Media, 2013), 2.

understanding how knowledge is acquired, developed, and justified. Epistemology explores a variety of key questions, such as legitimate sources of knowledge, criteria for determining truth, and the limits of human knowledge. It involves analyzing various theories of truth—such as correspondence, coherence, and pragmatism—to establish how a statement or belief can be considered true. In addition, epistemology also addresses the problem of justification of beliefs and uncertainty regarding our ability to acquire absolute knowledge.

Epistemology in Islamic studies focuses on the way knowledge of Islamic teachings is acquired and understood. In this context, the main sources of knowledge are the Qur'an and Hadith, which are considered to be God's revelations.[44] Knowledge is also obtained through ijtihad, which is independent reasoning by scholars, and qiyas, which is the use of analogies to apply the principles of Islamic law. Islamic epistemology explores the relationship between reason (ratio) and revelation, assessing how the two can complement each other in understanding religious teachings. Islamic philosophy and theology also contributed to the development of this understanding by emphasizing how rationality can be used to explain religious beliefs.

The evolution of epistemology in Islamic studies reflects a profound shift in the way we understand and acquire knowledge about the teachings of Islam, from traditional to contemporary approaches. In the early days, Islamic epistemology focused on the sacred texts of the Quran and Hadith as the main source of knowledge. This traditional approach prioritizes the authority of scholars and interpretation methods such as tafsir, ijtihad, and qiyas. Classical Islamic philosophers, such as Al-Kindi and Ibn Sina, also made significant contributions by integrating Greece thought in the study of religion, thus bridging rationality and revelation.

Traditional epistemology in Islamic studies is generally centered on textual and normative approaches. According to Arkoun, this approach emphasizes the literal interpretation of the Qur'an and Hadith as the main source of Islamic knowledge. Classical scholars

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[44] Mahfud Junaedi and Mirza Mahbub Wijaya, *Pengembangan Paradigma Keilmuan Perspektif Epistemologi Islam: Dari Perenialisme hingga Islamisme, Integrasi-Interkoneksi dan Unity of Sciences* (Jakarta: Prenada Media, 2020), 49.

such as al-Ghazali and Ibn Taymiyyah developed a rigorous method of legal istinbat, focusing on linguistic and contextual analysis of sacred texts to produce Islamic law and doctrine.[45]

In the 19th and early 20th centuries, reformist thought emerged that introduced a rational and scientific approach to Islamic studies. Figures such as Muhammad Abduh and Rashid Rida attempted to revive the teachings of Islam by incorporating elements of Western thought and scientific methods. This approach emphasizes empirical research and objectivity, as well as the application of science in religious studies. In addition, Muhammad Abduh and Rashid Rida also advocated ijtihad (independent reasoning) and the reinterpretation of Islamic texts in the modern context. On the other hand, Fazlur Rahman developed the theory of "double movement" which emphasizes the importance of understanding the historical context of revelation and applying it in a contemporary context.[46]

In the modern era, the epistemological approach is increasingly developing with the emergence of social and cultural perspectives. Globalization brought with it new cultural influences and thinking that introduced pluralist and interdisciplinary perspectives. The development of modern social sciences brought significant changes in the epistemology of Islamic studies. Amin Abdullah proposed an integration-interconnection approach that combines Islamic sciences with social and humanities sciences. This approach expands the scope of Islamic studies by including sociological, anthropological, and historical analysis in understanding Islamic religious phenomena.[47]

A contemporary approach in the epistemology of Islamic studies involves post-colonial criticism, which focuses on the impact of colonialism on Muslim thought and identity. This includes the

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[45] Mohammed Arkoun and Robert D. Lee, *Rethinking Islam: Common Questions, Uncommon Answers* (New York: Routledge, 2019), 81–133; See also Carool Kersten, "From Braudel to Derrida: Mohammed Arkoun's Rethinking of Islam and Religion," *Middle East Journal of Culture and Communication* 4, no. 1 (January 1, 2011): 23–43, https://doi.org/10.1163/187398611X553733.

[46] Fazlur Rahman, *Islam and Modernity: Transformation of an Intellectual Tradition*, Vol. 17, Issue 2 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 172.

[47] M. Amin Abdullah, *Islamic Studies in Higher Education: An Integrative-Interconnective Approach* (Yogyakarta: Student Library, 2006), 203–11.

reconstruction and reinterpretation of Islamic teachings in a global context. Islamic feminist epistemology is also evolving, integrating gender perspectives to explore the role of women in the Islamic tradition. In addition, an interdisciplinary approach combines various disciplines to understand Islamic teachings more comprehensively. Digital technology and social media also play an important role, influencing the way knowledge about Islam is disseminated and accepted.

Contemporary epistemology in Islamic studies is also influenced by the development of post-modern and post-structuralist theories. Talal Asad criticized the concept of "religion" as a universal category and emphasized the importance of understanding Islam in the context of power relations and discursive formations. Meanwhile, Khaled Abou El Fadl developed an authoritative hermeneutic theory that emphasized the importance of ethical and contextual interpretation of Islamic texts.[48]

Recent trends in the epistemology of Islamic studies are leading to a more holistic and interdisciplinary approach. Tariq Ramadan advocates a "radical transformation" in Islamic thought by integrating Islamic ethics into contemporary issues such as human rights and social justice.[49] Meanwhile, Omid Safi promotes a "progressive Islam" that combines social criticism with Islamic spirituality. These approaches reflect efforts to bridge Islamic traditions with the demands of the modern world, while maintaining the integrity and authenticity of Islamic teachings.[50]

Referring to the various opinions above, it can be understood that epistemology in Islamic studies has undergone significant development from a traditional approach that focuses on the sacred texts of the Quran and Hadith to a more holistic and interdisciplinary contemporary approach. In the early days, methods such as tafsir, ijtihad, and qiyas became the basis of interpretation, while classical

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[48] Khaled M. Abou El Fadl, *Speaking in God's Name: Islamic Law, Authority and Women* (Oxford, United Kingdom: Oneworld Publications, 2001), 13–17.

[49] Tariq Ramadan, *Western Muslims and the Future of Islam* (Oxford, United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, 2004), 144.

[50] Omid Safi (Ed.), *Progressive Muslims: On Justice, Gender, and Pluralism* (Oxford, United Kingdom: Oneworld Publications, 2003), 21–27.

philosophers integrated Greece thought. The 19th and 20th century reformers introduced a rational and scientific approach, emphasizing the importance of historical context in understanding revelation. In the modern era, social, cultural, and globalized perspectives enrich Islamic epistemology, with contributions from various figures who propose an integral-interconnection approach, as well as post-colonial critiques and Islamic feminist epistemology.

E. Paradigm Shift in Understanding Islam as a Religion

Islam, as one of the major religions in the world, has undergone various changes and developments in terms of understanding and interpretation throughout its history. The paradigm shift in understanding Islam is not only influenced by social, political, and cultural changes, but also by the development of science and technology. Paradigm shift refers to a fundamental change in the way of thinking, understanding, and approaching a concept or phenomenon.[51] In the context of Islam, paradigm shifts include changes in the interpretation of sacred texts, religious practices, and understanding of the relationship between religion and science.

The paradigm shift in Islamic history can be seen since the classical period. In the early days of Islam, religious understanding was dominated by literal interpretations of sacred texts such as the Qur'an and Hadith, with classical scholars such as Imam Malik, Imam Shafi'i, Imam Hanafi, and Imam Hanbali being the main references in the interpretation of Islamic law (*fiqh*). In the middle period, there was a development of science in the Islamic world, especially in the fields of philosophy, mathematics, and astronomy, where Muslim scholars such as Al-Farabi, Ibn Sina, and Al-Ghazali began to combine rational thinking with religious doctrine, marking a shift from literal interpretation to a more philosophical and rational understanding. In the modern period, in the 19th and 20th centuries, the influence of colonialism and modernization triggered a major change in the understanding of Islam, where reformists such as

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[51] David W. Shenk, *Ilah-ilah Global: Menggali Peran Agama-agama dalam Masyarakat Modern*, Ter. Agustinus Setiawadi (Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 2006), 21–22.

Jamaluddin Al-Afghani, Muhammad Abduh, and Rashid Ridha sought to reconcile Islamic traditions with modern ideas such as democracy, human rights, and modern science.

The paradigm shift in understanding Islam as a religion is a dynamic and constantly evolving process. A deeper understanding of this shift can help Muslims become more adaptive and relevant in facing the challenges of modern times. By understanding and appreciating differences in religious interpretation and practice, Muslims can enrich their spiritual experience as well as contribute positively to the global community.

The traditional paradigm in understanding Islam as a religion is generally essentialist and normative. This approach, as described by Wilfred Cantwell Smith, tends to see Islam as a fixed and homogeneous entity. However, criticism of this approach has emerged as the study of modern religion has developed to emphasize the complexity and diversity of religious practices.[52]

The phenomenological perspective in Islamic studies, developed by figures such as Ninian Smart, offers a new paradigm in understanding religion. This approach emphasizes the importance of "epoche" or postponement of judgment, and seeks to understand the religious experience from the point of view of its adherents. In the context of Islam, this approach seeks to understand how Muslims interpret and experience their religion in their daily lives.[53]

Clifford Geertz, in his work "Islam Observed," applies an anthropological-interpretive approach to understanding Islam. Geertz emphasized the importance of "thick descriptions" to understand symbols and meanings in Islamic religious practice. This approach paves the way for a more contextual and diverse understanding of Islam.[54]

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[52] H. M. Rozali, *Metodologi Studi Islam dalam Perspectives Multydisiplin Keilmuan* (Depok: Rajawali Buana Pustaka, 2020), 9–16; See also Wilfred Cantwell Smith, *The Meaning and End of Religion: A New Approach to the Religious Traditions of Mankind* (New York: MacMillan, 1963), 123.

[53] Nurma Ali Ridlwan, "Pendekatan Fenomenologi dalam Kajian Agama," *Komunika: Jurnal Dakwah Dan Komunikasi* 7, no. 2 (2013): 7, https://doi.org/10.24090/komunika.v7i2.385.

[54] Nur Syam, *Madzhab-Madzhab Antropologi* (Yogyakarta: Lkis Pelangi Aksara, 2007), 19–26.

The hermeneutical paradigm in Islamic studies, developed by figures such as Fazlur Rahman and Mohammed Arkoun, offers a new perspective in understanding Islamic texts. Rahman proposed a "double movement theory" that emphasized the importance of understanding the historical context of revelation and applying it in a contemporary context. Meanwhile, Arkoun advocates for "applied islamology" that integrates a historical-critical approach with modern hermeneutics. Talal Asad brought about an important paradigmatic shift with his criticism of the concept of "religion" as a universal category. He emphasized the importance of understanding Islam in the context of power relations and discursive formations. This approach paves the way for a critical analysis of the construction of knowledge about Islam and its implications in a global context.[55]

The feminist perspective in Islamic studies, developed by figures such as Amina Wadud and Fatima Mernissi, brings a new paradigm in understanding gender and sexuality in Islam. They challenged the patriarchal interpretation of Islamic texts and offered a more egalitarian reading. This approach broadens the understanding of Islam by including the voices and experiences of Muslim women.[56]

Recent trends in Islamic studies are leading to a more pluralistic and intersectional paradigm. Omid Safi advocates for "progressive Islam" that integrates social criticism with Islamic spirituality.[57] Meanwhile, Tariq Ramadan proposed a "radical transformation" approach that seeks to bridge Islamic traditions with contemporary issues such as human rights and social justice.[58] These paradigms reflect an effort to understand Islam as a religion that is dynamic and responsive to the challenges of modernity, while maintaining the integrity and authenticity of its teachings.

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[55] Nyong Eka Teguh Iman Santosa, *Sejarah Intelektual: Sebuah Pengantar* (Sidoarjo: UruAnna Books, 2014), 37–48.

[56] Kecia Ali, *Sexual Ethics and Islam: Feminist Reflections on Qur'an, Hadith, and Jurisprudence* (India: Simon and Schuster, 2016), 53–81; See also Ziba Mir-Hosseini, "Muslim Women's Quest for Equality: Between Islamic Law and Feminism," *Critical Inquiry* 32, no. 4 (June 2006): 629–645, https://doi.org/10.1086/508085.

[57] Safi (Ed.), *Progressive Muslims: On Justice, Gender, and Pluralism*, 5–34.

[58] Ramadan, *Western Muslims and the Future of Islam*, 144–174.

The paradigm shift that develops is caused by various factors, such as contact with other cultures and religions, the development of science and technology, and reform and modernization movements. Interaction with other cultures and religions often brings new perspectives that affect the understanding of Muslims. Advances in science and technology also affect the way Muslims understand the world and their religion. For example, the theory of evolution and other scientific discoveries sparked debates about the literal versus contextual interpretation of sacred texts. The reform and modernization movements emerged along with the growing awareness of the importance of human rights, democracy, and gender equality, which led to the emergence of movements that encouraged the reinterpretation of religious texts to better suit modern values.

F. Development of Islamic Research Methodology (Textual, Historical, and Empirical Methods)

Islamic studies is a rich and complex field, encompassing a wide range of disciplines and methodological approaches. In recent decades, Islamic research methodologies have undergone a significant transformation, allowing for a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of Islamic texts, history, and practices. The three main methods that dominate research in Islamic studies are the textual method, the historical method, and the empirical method. Each of these methods offers a unique and important framework for exploring different aspects of Islam from different perspectives.

The textual method focuses on the analysis and interpretation of Islamic sacred texts, such as the Quran and Hadith, as well as Islamic classical literature. This approach is the earliest and fundamental in the study of Islam. The goal is to understand the teachings and messages contained in these texts, using various hermeneutics and philological tools. This method is crucial in uncovering the original meaning of religious texts and how they can be applied in contemporary contexts. According to Wael B. Hallaq, this method involves techniques such as *tafsir* (exegesis), *ta'wil* (allegorical

interpretation), and *istinbat* (legal deduction) developed by classical scholars to understand and interpret sacred texts.[59]

In the Sunni tradition, the methodology of *al-fiqh* developed by Imam Shafi'i became an important foundation in the study of Islamic law. This method, as explained by Mohammad Hashim Kamali, involves the analysis of legal sources such as the Quran, Sunnah, *ijma*', and *qiyas*, as well as the application of interpretive principles such as *'am* (general) and *khass* (special), as well as *mutlaq* (unlimited) and *muqayyad* (limited).[60]

In the Middle Ages, Muslim philosophers and theologians such as al-Ghazali and Ibn Rushd developed methodologies that integrated Aristotelian logic with Islamic thought. Majid Fakhry explained that this approach gave birth to a more systematic and rational research method in Islamic theology and philosophy.[61] In this regard, al-Ghazali criticized philosophers who relied too much on reason without paying attention to revelation.[62] However, he also wrote *Maqasid al-Falasifah* (The Purpose of the Philosophs), in which he systematically compiled philosophical thought to show the harmony between Aristotelian logic and Islamic teachings. Al-Ghazali emphasized the importance of combining scientific logic and methodology with Islamic spirituality to achieve a more comprehensive understanding of religion.

Ibn Rushd, known in the West as Averroes,[63] also played an important role in integrating Aristotelian thought with Islam. He defended Aristotelian rationalism and logic as legitimate tools for understanding Islamic revelation. Ibn Rushd argued that there was no

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[59] Kamarusdiana and Ahmad Zaki M, "Posisi Al-Qur'an dalam Epistimologi Hermeneutika," *Al Amin: Jurnal Kajian Ilmu Dan Budaya Islam* 2, no. 01 (August 27, 2019): 74–87, https://doi.org/10.36670/alamin.v2i1.18.

[60] Mohammad Hashim Kamali, *Principles of Islamic Jurisprudence* (Cambridge: Islamic Texts Society, 2003), 474–494.

[61] Hamzah and Wa Muna, "Ibn Rushd's Epistemology in The Reconciliation of Religion and Philosophy," *Zawiyah: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam* 4, no. 1 (September 24, 2018): 169–86, https://doi.org/10.31332/zjpi.v4i1.1006.

[62] Imam Al-Ghazali, *Tahafut Al Falasifah: Kerancuan Para Filsuf*, Penerjemah: Achmad Maimun (Yogyakarta: Ahmad Sholihan, 2015), 40–41.

[63] Patrick V. Reid, *Readings in Western Religious Thought: The Middle Ages through the Reformation*, Revised Vol. 2 (New York: Paulist Press, 1995), 168.

conflict between philosophy and religion, and that the use of logic could strengthen the understanding of sacred texts.[64]

Historical methods in Islamic research began to develop rapidly in the modern era. Ibn Khaldun, considered the father of Islamic historiography, introduced a critical approach to history in his work "Muqaddimah." Ibn Khaldun's methodology, as analyzed by Franz Rosenthal, emphasizes the importance of causality analysis in historical events and criticism of historical sources.[65]

Approaches that combine scientific logic and methodology with religious thought provide the basis for the development of a more rational and systematic Islamic research methodology. This allows Muslim scholars to explore and understand the teachings of Islam in a broader intellectual context, as well as to integrate knowledge sourced from Islamic traditions with classical Greece philosophy. This methodological transformation not only enriched Islamic theology (*kalam*) and philosophy, but also contributed to the development of science and critical thinking in Islamic civilization as a whole.

Furthermore, the historical method emphasizes the study of the development of Islamic history. This approach includes historical criticism, which involves analyzing historical sources to understand important events and figures in Islamic history. Historiography, which is the study of how Islamic history has been written and understood, is also an important part of this method. Through this approach, researchers can identify possible biases in historical narratives written at various periods. Archaeology also contributes to the historical method by providing physical evidence that can support or challenge existing historical narratives. With the historical method, researchers can gain a deeper understanding of the social, political, and cultural dynamics that influenced the development of Islam throughout history.

In the 19th and 20th centuries, Western scholars such as Ignaz Goldziher and Joseph Schacht introduced the method of historical

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[64] Rusyd, 43.
[65] Syed Farid Alatas, "Ibn Khaldun and the Ottoman School of Historical Thought," *Ankara Üniversitesi SBF Dergisi* 68, no. 3 (2013): 1–20.

criticism in Islamic studies. This approach, while controversial, brings a new dimension to Islamic research by applying philological and historical analysis to classical Islamic sources. According to Herbert Berg, the historical criticism method allows researchers to evaluate the authenticity and chronology of Islamic texts more critically.[66]

Ignaz Goldziher proposes that many of the hadiths that are considered valid actually arose after the time of the Prophet Muhammad as a result of social, political, and theological developments. This analysis opens up a discussion on the authenticity of hadith sources and encourages further research into the history of the preparation and transmission of religious texts in Islam. In contrast, Joseph Schacht, an expert in Islamic jurisprudence, introduced the theory that many aspects of Islamic law developed after the early Islamic period. In his work "The Origins of Muhammadan Jurisprudence," Schacht proposes that the concept of Islamic law and jurisprudence evolved through a long and complex process, which involved the adaptation and reinterpretation of previous laws.[67]

The historical critical approach introduced by Goldziher and Schacht not only challenged the traditional view of Islamic sources, but also encouraged the development of a more rigorous and systematic methodology in Islamic studies. By applying philological and historical analysis techniques, scholars can explore the origins and development of Islamic religious texts in a more in-depth and critical way. This approach also paves the way for a broader discussion of how historical and social contexts have influenced the interpretation and acceptance of Islamic teachings throughout history.

Finally, the empirical method involves collecting and analyzing data that can be observed or measured to understand Islamic

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[66] Herbert Berg, *The Development of Exegesis in Early Islam: The Authenticity of Muslim Literature from the Formative Period* (Richmond: Curzon Press, 2013), 61.

[67] Muhammad Mustafa A'zami and Joseph Schacht, *On Schacht's Origins of Muhammadan Jurisprudence* (Arab Saudi: King Saud University, 1985), 11; See also Ahmad Isnaeni *et.al.*, "Mustofa Azami's Criticism of Joseph Schacht's Thoughts on Hadits," *Kalam* 15, no. 1 (November 2, 2021): 33–54, https://doi.org/10.24042/klm.v15i1.8680.

phenomena in the context of the daily lives of Muslims. Through a sociological approach to religion, researchers can study how Islamic practices and beliefs influence, and are influenced by, social structures, family relationships, and communities. Religious anthropology, which includes ethnographic research on Islamic culture and traditions, also plays an important role in the empirical method. Field studies, including surveys, interviews, and participatory observations, allow researchers to understand how Muslims practice their religion in their daily lives. The empirical approach provides insight into how Islam is practiced and experienced in various social contexts as well as how factors such as globalization, migration, and social change affect the lives of Muslims.

In the field of sociology of religion, quantitative and qualitative methods have begun to be widely applied in Islamic research. Figures such as Ernest Gellner used a structural-functional approach to analyze Muslim societies, while Dale Eickelman developed an ethnographic approach in the study of Islamic anthropology.[68] These methods enriched the understanding of Islam as a social and cultural phenomenon, and made important contributions to sociological and anthropological theories.

By combining data-driven quantitative analysis with a deep qualitative approach, this research allows for a more comprehensive understanding of how religious beliefs, practices, and identities interact with various aspects of social and cultural life. This empirical approach helps to uncover the complexity and diversity of Islamic practices in various contexts, as well as their impact on the social structure and interpersonal relationships in Muslim societies.

Recent developments in Islamic research methodologies are leading to an increasingly complex and integrated interdisciplinary approach. Omid Safi advocates "critical Islamic studies," which combines textual, historical, and socio-cultural analysis. This approach aims to explore the dynamic relationship between sacred

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[68] Dale F. Eickelman, *The Middle East: An Anthropological Approach. Englewood Cliffs* (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1981), 85–124.

texts, historical contexts, and social practices in Muslim societies, as well as to critique and deepen the understanding of Islamic teachings within the framework of contemporary contexts. On the other hand, Tariq Ramadan proposes a methodology that combines a deep understanding of Islamic tradition with a contextual analysis of contemporary issues. Ramadan argues that an understanding of Islamic traditions must be done by taking into account modern challenges such as human rights, pluralism, and globalization. This methodology emphasizes the importance of adapting Islamic teachings to be relevant to the current social and political context, while still maintaining the integrity of traditional teachings.[69]

This interdisciplinary approach not only enriches Islamic research by integrating various disciplines, but also opens up space for a more constructive dialogue between theory and practice.[70] By combining a variety of perspectives—including textual, historical, social, and contemporary analysis—researchers can obtain a more holistic and nuanced picture of Islam, as well as how its teachings and practices adapt to changing times and global challenges.

Contemporary Islamic research methodologies are also influenced by the development of digital technology, which has opened up new opportunities and expanded the scope of analysis in Islamic studies. The digital humanities approach, as explained by Elias Muhanna, offers various innovative methods such as big data analysis, text mining, and data visualization. These methods allow researchers to conduct large-scale analysis of Islamic texts and socio-religious phenomena in ways that were previously impossible.[71]

Big data analysis, for example, allows the processing and interpretation of large amounts of data related to religious texts and social interactions within Muslim communities. Text mining, on the other hand, facilitates the unearthing of patterns and trends in large

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[69] Ramadan, *Western Muslims and the Future of Islam*, 144–74.

[70] Adiyono, Dede Nurohman, and Makmur Harun, "The Socioanthropology of Islamic Education: Integrating Social, Cultural, and Anthropological Perspectives," *Al-Banjari : Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu-Ilmu Keislaman* 23, no. 1 (July 16, 2024): 28–50, https://doi.org/10.18592/albanjari.v23i1.13605.

[71] Elias Muhanna, *The Digital Humanities and Islamic & Middle East Studies* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter GmbH & Co KG, 2016), 1–11.

texts, helping researchers to identify key themes and relationships between various elements of text. Data visualization allows for graphical representations of complex data, providing a new way to understand and present research findings more intuitively.

This approach not only enriches Islamic research methodologies with advanced digital tools, but also expands the analytical dimension by providing deeper insights into the structure and content of Islamic texts as well as socio-religious dynamics. By utilizing digital technology, researchers can access and analyze data with higher efficiency, as well as explore new dimensions in Islamic studies that can pave the way for a more comprehensive and detailed understanding.

G. Conclusion

Islamic studies methodologies have undergone a significant shift from traditional approaches that focus on textual and normative analysis to more sophisticated and multidisciplinary paradigms. The development of epistemology in Islamic studies shows a shift from essentialist interpretation to a more contextual and interpretive point of view. The phenomenological and hermeneutical paradigms allow for a more dynamic and diverse view of Islam by taking into account power dynamics, socio-historical contexts, and religious experiences in the construction of religious knowledge. Islamic research techniques now combine contemporary historical and empirical perspectives with traditional textual methods, as seen in the application of sociological theories, anthropological research, and historical critical methodologies in modern Islamic studies. More comprehensive and multidisciplinary methodologies, which integrate textual, contextual and empirical analysis, have emerged in recent years. In summary, methodological pluralism in contemporary Islamic studies allows for a more thorough understanding of Islam as a religion, a social phenomenon, and a dynamic and diverse intellectual heritage.

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