

## The Epistemology of Muhammad Syahrur's Islamic Thought and Its Implications for the Study of Polygamy Hadith

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### Abstract:

Islamic epistemological discourse, such as polygamy, contains a variety of opinions (multi-opinion). Polygamy is a debate among Muslim scholars. Some argue that polygamy is permissible, while others prohibit it. On the other hand, the Qur'an and hadith allow polygamy as long as certain conditions are met. This article aims to explain the epistemology of Muhammad Syahrur's Islamic thought and its implications for the study of polygamy hadith. This is qualitative research based on library data reference sources. The research findings show that: First, the study of Muhammad Syahrur's Islamic epistemology is based on three important aspects, namely the condition of being (al-kainūnah), the condition of process (As-Sairūrah) and the condition of becoming (As-Hairūrah). Second, Muhammad Syahrur's thoughts are based on the logic of historical aspects of the past which refer to the polygamy hadith regarding the conditions for polygamy, namely 1) a polygamous woman is both a widow and a mother (having children); and 2) a man who practices polygamy must fairly provide physical and spiritual support to their wives and children. This thinking is based on Syahrur's scientific epistemology in constructing religious studies. Third, Muhammad Syahrur's scientific epistemology is influenced by four aspects, namely mihwar regarding philosophy, theological, anthropological, and naturalistic regarding environmental or natural conditions.

[Diskursus epistemologi keislaman memuat beragam pendapat (multi-opinion) yang berbeda, misalnya tentang poligami. Masalah poligami ini terjadi perdebatan pemikiran para sarjana Muslim, ada yang menganggap boleh dan ada pula yang melarang. Sementara Alquran dan hadis Nabi membolehkan asal memenuhi syarat tertentu. Artikel ini bertujuan untuk menjelaskan pemikiran keislaman Muhammad Syahrur dan implikasinya terhadap kajian hadis tentang poligami. Metode penelitian ini ialah kualitatif yang didasarkan kepada sumber referensi data kepustakaan. Hasil temuan dari



penelitian ini adalah: Pertama, kajian epistemologi keislaman Muhammad Syahrur didasarkan kepada tiga aspek penting, yaitu kondisi berada (*al-kainūnah*), kondisi berproses (*As-Sairūrah*) dan kondisi menjadi (*Aṣ-Ṣairūrah*). Kedua, pemikiran Muhammad Syahrur itu dilandasi oleh logika dengan melihat aspek historis yang terjadi di masa lalu. Seperti hadis tentang poligami yang menurutnya harus memenuhi dua syarat, yaitu: yang pertama perempuan yang dipoligami adalah janda, dan memiliki anak yatim. Kedua, seorang suami harus berbuat adil dengan memberikan nafkah lahir dan batin. Pemikiran itu didasarkan kepada epistemologi keilmuan Syahrur dalam menkontruksi kajian keagamaan. Ketiga, epistimologi keilmuan Muhammad Syahrur dipengaruhi empat horizon, yaitu mihwar tentang filsafat, teologis, antropologis dan naturalistic tentang kondisi lingkungan atau alam].

**Keywords:**

Epistemology, Hadith, Islam, Muhammad Syahrur

**A. Introduction**

Nowadays, the study of Islamic epistemology, the thoughts of Muslim scholars, has become a topic of discussion among academics. Epistemology becomes very subjective in its ideas and notions. Epistemology is a branch of philosophy that studies the foundations and limits of knowledge. Islamic epistemology must be based on the *bayāni*, *burhāni*, and *irfani* approaches. These three approaches were put forward by Abid al-Jabiri in his book "*Takwīn al-Aql al-Arabi*"<sup>1</sup> which offers a methodology for solving Islamic problems in real life.

The epistemology of Islamic studies gives rise to multiple opinions from various aspects. Religion not only talks about creeds, beliefs, worldviews, divinity, etc. but also talks about historical-cultural aspects.<sup>2</sup> This can be solved using methodology and an objective approach with different tactics and strategies from each thinker.<sup>3</sup> The study of Islamic studies that

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<sup>1</sup> Muhammad Abid Al-Jabiri, *Bunyah Al-'Aql Al-Arabi* (Beirūt: Markaz Dirasah al-Wahdah al-Arabiyah, 2009).

<sup>2</sup> M. Amin Abdullah, "Relevansi Studi Agama-agama Dalam Milenium Ketiga," in *Mencari Islam (Studi Islam Dengan Berbagai Pendekatan)*, ed. M. Amin Abdullah et al. (Yogyakarta: Tiara Wacana, 2000), 12.

<sup>3</sup> M. Amin Abdullah, *Metodologi Penelitian Agama: Pendekatan Multidisiplin*, ed. Dudung Abdurahman (Yogyakarta: Kurnia Kalam Semesta, 2006). See also Abdullah,

originates from an understanding of hadith may become complicated when faced with new problems and obstacles. Moreover, every Muslim must believe in what the Prophet said as stated in *al-Tanzil al-Hakim* (al-Qur'an).<sup>4</sup>

This condition sometimes gives rise to the perception that Islam is considered correct if life from the 7th or 8th century can be applied to life in the 20th century. Those who hold this opinion seem to ignore the process and development of human life, where mankind develops and change along with changes in time and space "*Ṣālihun li kulli zamān wa makān*". Mankind are not influenced by epistemological conceptions which tend to be too rigid, puritanical, and dichotomous in solving problems. Some people may find it difficult to accept this fact and tend not to think synthetically, elastically, or even pragmatically.<sup>5</sup> On the other hand, epistemology prioritizes human reasoning using the senses, intuition and reason.

The epistemology of Islamic studies above is focused on a person's thoughts. People's thinking will change after going through conditions of being and conditions of process. This view was expressed by the controversial Muslim scholar, Muhammad Syahrur. His thoughts invite pros and cons among Muslim scholars. His supporters consider him to be the "Immanuel Kant" of Arabia and the "Martin Luther" of Muslims, while those who disagree with his writing entitled *al-Kitāb wa al-Qur'ān: Qirā'ah Mu'āsirah* consider the book to be something more dangerous than Salman Rushdie's *Satanic Verses*.<sup>6</sup> Several written works exist to respond to Syahrur's thoughts; some were serious and agreed, while others only expressed their disagreement emotionally.<sup>7</sup> The criticism leveled at him did not stop him from understanding the Quran. This can be seen in his 20-years-magnum opus which showed his dedication and loyalty.<sup>8</sup>

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"Relevansi Studi Agama-Agama Dalam Milenium Ketiga" in Amin Abdullah Et al, *Mencari Islam*, 10

<sup>4</sup> QS. Al-Anbiya 21: 107. See Kementerian Agama, *Al-Qur'an Dan Terjemahnya* (Bandung: Diponegoro, 2006), 331.

<sup>5</sup> M. Amin Abdullah, "Aspek Epistemologi Filsafat Islam," in Irma Fatimah, ed. *Kajian Ontologis, Epistemologi, Aksiologi, Historis, Prospektif* (Yogyakarta: LESFI, 1992), 48.

<sup>6</sup> Salman Rushdie, *The Satanic Verses: A Novel* (New York: Random House, 2008).

<sup>7</sup> Muhammad Syahrur, *Prinsip Dan Dasar Hermeneutika Hukum Islam Kontemporer* (Yogyakarta: eLSAQ Press, 2007), xi.

<sup>8</sup> Sahiron Syamsuddin, *Hermeneutika Al-Qur'an Dan Hadis* (Yogyakarta: eLSAQ Press, 2010), 287.

Apart from Syahrur, several other Muslim intellectuals also offer contemporary Islamic epistemology. Some of these figures are Hasan Hanafi with the theory of *al-Turās wa al-Jadīdah* which laid the theoretical foundation for the pyramid of civilization, Nasr Hamid Abu Zaid with the theory of Reinterpretation of Sacred Texts, Ali Harb with the theory of Intellectual Criticism Leading to Text Criticism, and Abdullahi Ahmed al-Naim with the theory of *Naskh Mansūkh* which is considered different from the understanding of the people so far.<sup>9</sup>

Some books contradict Muhamamad Syahrur's understanding, such as *al-Furqān wa al-Qur'ān* by Shaykh Khālid Abdurrahman al-Akk,<sup>10</sup> *Tahāfut al-Qirā'ah al-Mu'āsirah* by Mahami Munīr Muhammad Tāhir Asy-Syawwāf (a Lebanese legal expert),<sup>11</sup> *Qirā'ah al-Mu'āsirah li al-Qur'ān fi al-Mīzan* by Ahmad Omran, *Mujarrad Tanjīm* by Salim al-Jabi and *Baidhat al-Dik: Naql al-Lughawi li Kitāb "al-Kitāb al-Qur'ān"* by Yusuf al-Shaidawi.<sup>12</sup> Several scholars also responded to Syahrur's thoughts, such as Latifah Anwar regarding the differences in understanding of the sunnah and hadith between Syahrur and hadith scholars.<sup>13</sup> Muhammad Ali Murdadlo regarding the theory of limitations in Syahrur's view,<sup>14</sup> hermeneutics of gender equality according to Syahrur,<sup>15</sup> *Sunnah in Muhammad Syahrur's view and analysis*

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<sup>9</sup> M. Amin Abdullah, *"Mazhab" Jogja: Menggagas Paradigma Ushul Fiqh Kontemporer* (Yogyakarta: Ar-Ruzz Press, 2002), 39-40.

<sup>10</sup> Khālid Abdurrahman al-Akk, *Al-Furqān Wa al-Qur'ān* (Beirut: Damaskus, 1996).

<sup>11</sup> Mahami Munīr Muhammad Tāhir Asy-Syawwāf, *Tahāfut Al-Qirā'ah Al-Mu'āsirah* (Limassol: Asy-Syawwāf, 1993).

<sup>12</sup> Ahmad Zaki Mubarak, *Pendekatan Strukturalisme Linguistik Dalam Tafsir Al-Qur'an Kontemporer* Ala M. Syahrur (Yogyakarta: eLSAQ Press, 2007), 11.

<sup>13</sup> Latifah Anwar, "Hermeneutika Hadis Muhammad Syahrur," *Tajdid*, Vol. 20, no. 1 (2021): 116-43.

<sup>14</sup> Muhammad Ali Murdadlo, "Keadilan Gender Dalam Hukum Pembagian Waris Islam Perspektif The Theory of Limit Muhammad Syahrur," *Tafāqquh: Jurnal Penelitian Dan Kajian Keislaman*, Vol. 6, no. 1 (2018): 76-89,

<sup>15</sup> Rohmatul Izad, "Pemikiran Hermeneutika Muhammad Syahrur Tentang Konsep Kesetaraan Gender Dalam Islam," *Dialogia*, Vol. 16, no. 2 (2019): 156.

of his thoughts,<sup>16</sup> Syahrur's thoughts about Quran,<sup>17</sup> and theft in Muhammad Syahrur's view.<sup>18</sup>

Arab Muslim Islamist scholars who responded positively and appreciated Muhammad Syahrur's thoughts were 1) Peter Clark in "Review Article: The Shahrur Phenomenon: A Liberal Islamic Voice from Syria".<sup>19</sup> This article focused on the figure of Syahrur as a controversial thinker who was accused by his opponents of being a Zionist agent, enemy of Islam, etc; 2) Charles Kurzman's book entitled *Liberal Islam: A Source Book* groups Syahrur in the group of Islamic Liberal thinkers (ISLIB), 3) Dale F. Eickelman, a non-Muslim scholar, wrote the articles *Islamic Liberalism Strikes Back* and *Inside the Islamic Reformation*. This article highlighted aspects of Eickelman's admiration and affirmation of the figure of Muhammad Syahrur as a brilliant Muslim scholar who dared to express a different and new perspective in the view of Islam.<sup>20</sup>

The description above shows the importance of exploring the epistemology of Muhammad Syahrur's religious understanding of polygamy in the Prophet's hadith. This paper aims to discuss the epistemology of Muhammad Syahrur's Islamic studies in the book *Nahw Usūl Jadīdah li al-Fiqh al-Islāmi: Fiqh al-Mar'ah al-Wasiyah-al-Irt fi al-Qawamah-al-Ta'addudiyah-al-Libās*. Syahrur's Islamic epistemology will be studied concerning the polygamy hadith.

The problem above was answered using scientific qualitative methods based on library research which was divided into primary and secondary data. The data were analyzed using a descriptive-analytic approach, by exploring and describing the epistemology of Syahrur's Islamic thought and analyzing his thoughts about the existence of Allah. The analysis presented

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<sup>16</sup> M Wahid Syafi, "Sunnah Dalam Pandangan Muhammad Syahrur Dan Fungsinya Dalam Menafsirkan Al-Qur'an: Studi Analisis Tentang Poligami," *Jurnal Manthiq* 5, no. 2 (2020): 102–17

<sup>17</sup> Eko Zulfikar, "The Contemporary Thought on The Qur'an: The Discourse of Muhammad Syahrur's Al-Kitab Wa Al-Qur'an," *Islamuna: Jurnal Studi Islam*, Vol. 7, no. 1 (2020): 56–74.

<sup>18</sup> Ahmad Nadhifuddin, "Tindak Pidana Pencurian Menurut Muhammad Syahrur Dan Relevansinya Di Era Modern," *Al-Jinayah: Jurnal Hukum Pidana Islam*, Vol. 4, no. 2 (2018): 268–300.

<sup>19</sup> Peter Clark, "The Shahrur Phenomenon: A Liberal Islamic Voice from Syria," *International Journal of Phytoremediation* 21, no. 1 (1996): 337–341.

<sup>20</sup> Ahmad Zaki Mubarak, *Pendekatan Strukturalisme*, 12.

is to criticize Syahrur's reasoning regarding his interpretation of the Quran and hadith related to polygamy.

## B. Theoretical Framework

This research used theories from the sociology of knowledge and social contraction of Peter Berger and Thomas Lukmann.<sup>21</sup> This theory explains that knowledge is influenced by education, social, economic, and cultural developments. Besides, the information he responded to was then conveyed orally and in writing based on religious and philosophical doctrines. Syahrur began to develop explicit religious philosophy in interpreting the Quran and the Prophet's Sunnah. He likens the Quran as an engineer, while the hadith is the reality of the actions of the Prophet Muhammad. So Syahrur constructed his understanding in theological, anthropological, and naturalistic studies. The implications of this understanding affected the understanding of the existence of God and his creatures. Apart from that, the epistemology of Islamic studies provides ample space to study the concept of polygamy based on the Quran and hadith. Syahrur has a different understanding from the scholars. For example, his hermeneutic theory pays attention to the causes of hadith nuzul and the theory of the influence of the thoughts of other figures.<sup>22</sup> This theoretical framework will explain the epistemology of Muhammad Syahrur's Islamic studies as applied to the problem of polygamy in the hadith of the Prophet.

## C. Epistemology of Muhammad Syahrur's Islamic Thought

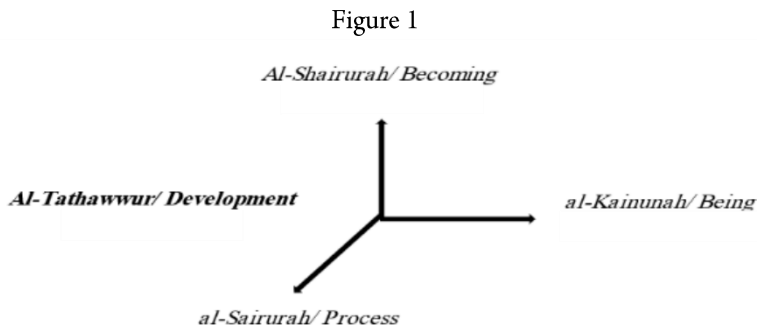
The epistemology of Muhammad Syahrur's Islamic studies began with three important things in understanding Muhammad Syahrur's epistemology which is centered on *mihwar* (discussion) in philosophy and is the main basis for discussions of theology (God), naturalism (nature), and anthropology (humans). First, *Kainūnah* (condition of being) is the beginning of something existing. Second, *Sairūrah* (condition of processing) is the movement of time. Third, *Hairūrah* (condition of becoming) is something that becomes the goal of the first existence (*al-kainūnah al-Ula*)

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<sup>21</sup> Peter L Berger dan Thomas Lukmann, *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge* (New York: Pinguin Books, 1966).

<sup>22</sup> Rohmansyah Rohmansyah, "Hadith Hermeneutics of Ṣalāhuddīn Bin Ahmad Al-Idlibī about Aisyah's Criticism for Abu Hurairah's Narration," *International Journal of Islamic Studies and Humanities*, Vol. 4, no. 2 (2013): 33–49.

after going through the processing phase.<sup>23</sup> It can be explained that the condition of *sairūrah* (processing) is the emptiness of time when there is no existence and movement. This condition is also influenced by travel and changing times, so it will change something that already exists into something else.<sup>24</sup> The condition of *sairūrah* (becoming) will not be realized as long as there is no process for something. This will lead to the belief that there is no existence without development, and there is no development without existence. This situation is shown in Figure 1 below:



Based on this point of view, a reader can understand and research natural existence and social change. The condition of being (*al-Kainūnah*) in the form of nature is a materialistic existence that occupies an empty place. It is an existence that is beyond human consciousness.

Theoretically, the study can be made easier by focusing on *al-Kainūnah* (condition of being) and *Al-Hairūrah* (condition of becoming). Both relate to matter and time. However, practically these two things just exist, do not change, and do not develop. Therefore, *Al-Hairūrah* (condition of becoming) is needed which is produced from *al-Kainūnah* (condition of being) and *As-Sairūrah* (condition of processing) which will experience development and change to produce a complete materialistic existence. This change is as mentioned in the word of Allah: "... everything will perish except

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<sup>23</sup> Muhammad Syahrur, *Nahwu Ushul Jadidah Li Fiqh Al-Islami Fiqh Al-Mar'ah* (Al-Washiyah, Al-'Irts, Al-Ta'adudiyah, Al-Libas) (Damaskus: al-Hali li al-Thiba'ah wa al-Nashr wa al-Tauzi', 2000), 27.

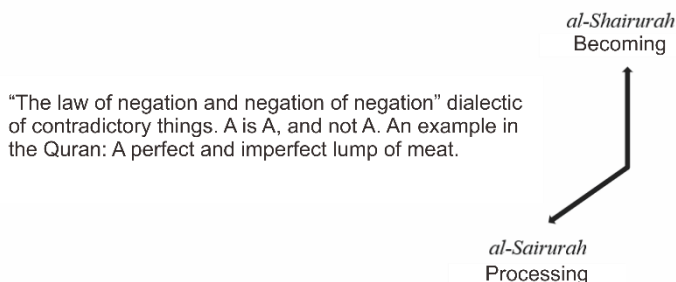
<sup>24</sup> *Ibid*, 27.

Allah...". (QS. al-Qashash [28]: 88), and this verse is supported by another verse in Surah Ali Imran [3]: 185,<sup>25</sup> and al-Anbiyā [21]: 35.<sup>26</sup>

Taking *al-Kainūnah* (condition of being) and *Al-Hairūrah* (condition of becoming) will result in a stage that does not experience *As-Sairūrah* (condition of processing) and does not experience *harakah* (shifting changes and influences on certain materials). For example, Allah created Heaven and Hell as two eternal things. Heaven and hell experience *Al-Hairūrah* (condition of becoming), but do not experience *As-Sairūrah* (condition of processing). This is what is called damage as mentioned in the word of Allah surah al-Qashash verse 88 above. Damage to this verse does not mean the absence of something but rather the destruction of *Al-Hairūrah* (condition of becoming) which emerged from something old and a new and eternal *Al-Hairūrah* (condition of becoming) emerged.

Based on the above, it can be concluded that *Al-Hairūrah* (condition of becoming) is the basic concept for existence and ultimate goal as understood from the first Big Bang theory based on *Al-Hairūrah* (condition of becoming) and the second Big Bang theory, namely at the first blast of the trumpet. Meanwhile, the creation of humans did not experience *al-Kainūnah* (condition of being). This is shown in Figure 2 below:

Figure 2.



Based on the picture above, Muhammad Syahrur applies his theoretical model to four following discussions:<sup>27</sup>

<sup>25</sup> “Every soul will taste death. And only on the Day of Resurrection shall you be paid your wages. Whoever is kept away from hell and put into heaven, then he is truly lucky. The life of this world is nothing but deceptive pleasure.” (QS. Ali Imran [3]: 185).

<sup>26</sup> “Every soul will taste death. We will test you with bad and good as a (true) trial. And only to Us will you be returned.” (QS. al-Anbiyā [21]: 35).

<sup>27</sup> Muhammad Syahrur, *Nahwu Ushul Jadidah li Fiqh al-Islami Fiqh al-Mar’ah*, 38.



1. Condition of being, Condition of processing and Condition of becoming about Allah, al-Rabb and al-Ilah

Humans will forever be unable to understand the existence of God and humans as His sentient and intelligent creatures, except through the conditions of being, conditions of processing, and conditions of becoming that occurred in the creation of humans themselves. When limited by these three things and the level of knowledge that reaches its primacy, the existence of God and humans can be understood using two scientific perspectives, namely: 1) God is in His Essence, God is an Essence that exists and stands alone in Himself. Alone. 2) Allah is for us as an existing Essence that can be known through everything that exists and is subject to "conditions of being", "conditions of processing" and "conditions of becoming". Allah is *Rabb* (God the Creator, Owner, and Sustainer of the universe), and *Ilah* (God who must be worshipped).

God in Essence means God only exists in the condition of being. It means that Allah exists, stands alone, and is never subject to "conditions of processing" and "conditions of becoming", eternal, and eternal forever. Every good name is in His one Essence and cannot be differentiated and compared. Because humans cannot say that God is aware of His Essence. On the other hand, if it is said that Allah is aware of His Essence, it means that Allah's consciousness is higher than His Essence and will dominate His Essence. Therefore, God's consciousness is different from His Essence because it has experienced the condition of being. Meanwhile, God's consciousness experiences "conditions of being" and "conditions of processing". So according to Syahrur, Allah accepts this particularization which consists of several parts.

Meanwhile, if it is said that God is pure reason (pure consciousness), then humans will fall into the same problem where God does not exist in His Essence because there is no place for pure reason.

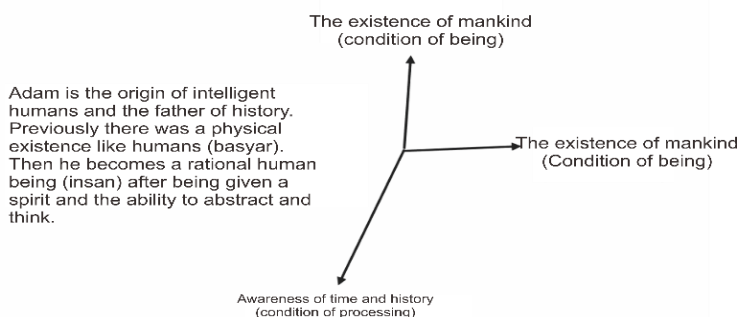
This view was believed by the Mu'tazilites when they said that Allah is pure reason and He is not aware of His Essence. Then they divided Allah into two parts, namely: consciousness and Essence. In the end, the Mu'tazilites were divided into two groups, namely the group that eliminated consciousness and determined Essence; and the group that negates Essence, establishes consciousness, and negates the properties of His Essence. Their argument starts from the words of Allah SWT: "There is nothing like Him and He is the All-Hearing and All-Seeing". (QS. al-Shura [42]: 11), and His words: "Allah never has children and there is no God with Him, each god

will bring the creatures he created, and some of the gods God will defeat others. Glory be to Allah from what they attribute.” (QS. al-Mu'minun [23]: 91).

2. Condition of being, Condition of processing and Condition of becoming regarding social

Social creatures are intelligent, each of whom is bound by a relationship of consciousness. In this case, consciousness means the passage of time. Meanwhile, the "condition of being" in social creatures is human existence itself. The condition of processing is a historical journey, while the condition of becoming is growth and development. From this, it can be seen that the starting point of human existence is in these three conditions which lie in Adam as the father of rational humans and the father of history. Since then, Adam's time has experienced conditions of being, conditions of processing, conditions of becoming, and developments between one another. This is as shown in Figure 3 below:

Figure 3



Humans do not exist when the condition of being is eliminated. When history and the passage of time are eliminated, then there are only human-like animals, and so the conditions of processing and conditions of becoming humans will return to the past. History will return to purely physical times and this is impossible. The condition of processing cannot be stopped over time. Meanwhile, time travel is an objective existence beyond human will. History is the objective of the passage of time and can be realized consciously by humans. On the one hand, beings who do not have historical awareness mean they have no value and meaning.

Furthermore, dimensions hold big problems related to human decisions and will. Humans in this condition can develop their potential and change time and space. This is what is called a historical shift in development. The

second dimension is conditions of processing which relate to conditions of becoming or shifts in historical development. Here humans play a basic and effective role in speeding up and slowing down the process. Conditions of becoming are an important factor in human attitudes, and, behavior and learning for mankind. The Qur'an explains that the passage of time brings humans from an uncertain realm to a certain realm. In the process, humans can determine choices and goals in life to obtain rewards or punishment.

These stages are the law of negation and the elimination of negation due to the passage of time and historical development. The Qur'an contains several important themes such as 1) Tawhid. Tawhid experiences conceptual development from personification to abstract concepts and from polytheism to monotheism. This stage objectively displays a form of fulfillment, namely fulfillment of nature, idols, ancestors, and saints which is manifested in the grave pilgrimage. At this stage, the Quran contains monotheism "there is no god but Allah". This is the simplest and most important message for all mankind. Syi'ar monotheism is the comprehensive foundation of Islam which was conveyed from the Prophet Adam to Muhammad. 2) Nobility of behavior. This theme experiences accumulative development (good character), such as the act of doing good to parents, Ten Testaments, and other good deeds based on the message of the Prophet Muhammad. 3) Sharia. This theme has developed in the form of abolition (*nasakh*) of laws and additional legal provisions among God's laws.<sup>28</sup>

Syahrur thought that if a community takes the conditions of being and processing, but ignores the conditions of becoming, and then the community will not experience development, and will remain in the status quo which only has two dimensions (conditions of being and processing). For example, the Arab community, they are in the being dimension and the processing dimension. Dimension of being is something that factually exists, is not destroyed, and is in process (condition of processing). Without the conditions of becoming, the community has no purpose in living in this world, so their community is weak and despicable. Their strength in the field of development only depends on other civilizations that exist in the third dimension. Therefore, how can Arab civilization (Islamic, Nationalist, Marxist, and Liberalist) take a complete third dimension from other civilizations?

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<sup>28</sup> Muhammad Syahrur, *Nahwu Ushul Jadidah li Fiqh al-Islami Fiqh al-Mar'ah*, 80.

First, the condition of becoming in science. All their scientific discoveries over the centuries in the fields of medicine, engineering, physics, chemistry, and mathematics are scientific products of other people (other nations). They do not produce knowledge but rather destroy it. Apart from that, they only take knowledge from other nations' civilizations, not their own, even though there are many universities and their graduates, existing universities only teach science instructively to students but do not teach about how they produce knowledge.

Second, this community does not have the conditions of becoming in the field of technology. They don't produce technology at all, so they don't contribute. Conditions of becoming in the field of technology have entered every aspect of their lives. Computers, planes, cars, electricity, water cleaning equipment, construction of roads, bridges, buildings, telescopes, medical equipment, and military weapons come from other people's products, not theirs (Indonesians, -pent). Like it or not, these technological advances are obtained from other people's civilizations. Life is impossible to live without technology because life is very dependent on other's technology or civilization.

Third, conditions of becoming in the field of social sciences and humanities. The social sciences and humanities discuss the role of humans both theoretically and practically. Meanwhile, humans are in a static civilization. Experts divide science into two parts, namely natural science and social science. They divide natural science into two parts, namely basic and applied science. However, Muhammad Syahrur only considers this as a technical division to facilitate the study, preparation, and definition of science alone. According to him, science has two sides, namely the basic side which talks about scientific material, and the applied side which talks about its implications and relevance for all human life. From here it is known that mathematics and philosophy are two basic sciences. Philosophy studies problems of understanding, while mathematics studies problems of instruments/tools. Meanwhile, other sciences such as psychology, logic, society, economics, law, politics, history, and geography are applied sciences.

3. Condition of being, Condition of processing, and Condition of becoming regarding Interaction with the Quran (*al-Tanzil al-Hakim*).

The Qur'an contains the word al-Quds which means Most Holy and able to give life. Therefore, the Quran was only revealed to living and intelligent people. If humans submit to the conditions of processing and conditions of

becoming and living their lives based on the Quran, it will be as if the Quran has been passed down to each generation. This happens because the Qur'an has a condition of being. Therefore, Syahrur believes that the Qur'an can be understood from the form of the universe, the phenomena and names of Allah which were transformed into phenomena of the universe.

The Qur'an with its condition of being (*al-Kainūnah*) cannot be controlled by all its meaning by humans except Allah because of its miracles which are united to Himself. Thus, a Prophet and Apostle will not be able to master the Quran. If the Prophet or Apostle can master the entire meaning of the Qur'an, both *juz'i* and *kulli*, then it means that he becomes an ally of Allah in the knowledge, writing, and compilation of the Qur'an.

On another occasion, Muhammad Syahrur said that the interaction with the Quran will be able to solve problems in Islam, such as fiqh problems in determining Islamic law and philosophical problems in theology (*kalam*). For this reason, several tools are needed, namely: 1) contemporary Islamic philosophy which can give birth to modern philosophical ideas, (2) contemporary Islamic *fiqh* and (3) progress in the field of establishing laws that do not talk about the field of religious rituals. With these tools, problems of freedom, government, society, technological development, democracy, and human rights can be resolved. The slogan "the door to *ijtihad* is still open" in the determination of Islamic law is meaningless. Muslims should use foundations and concepts in the field of Islamic fiqh such as boundary theory (*hudūd*) in determining laws. The view that the Prophet's words are not revelation, the idea that *ijma* (consensus) is not the consensus of deceased scholars but the consensus of living scholars. *Qiyas* thinking means presenting material evidence, not analogizing something present now with something that is not there. Syahrur criticized the understanding of the concepts of *ijtihad* such as *ijma* and *qiyas*. *Ijtihad* is one way to see and understand a problem when the source of the punishment cannot be found in the Quran and hadith. The Prophet Muhammad also appreciated the scholars who performed *ijtihad*:

عَنْ عَمْرِو بْنِ الْعَاصِ أَنَّهُ سَمِعَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَقُولُ إِذَا حَكَمَ الْحَاكِمُ فَاجْتَهَدَ ثُمَّ أَصَابَ فَلَهُ أَجْرَانِ وَإِذَا حَكَمَ فَاجْتَهَدَ ثُمَّ أَخْطَأَ فَلَهُ أَجْرٌ (رواه البخاري ومسلم)

"From Amr bin Ash, he actually heard Rasulullah SAW say: If judge judges and then makes *ijtihad* and then his *ijtihad* is correct then he gets

two rewards. And if judge judges and then makes ijthad and then his ijthad are wrong, he will receive a reward." (Al-Bukhāri and Muslim).<sup>29</sup>

4. Condition of being, Condition of processing, and Condition of becoming in Understanding the Sunnah.

According to Muhammad Syahrur, sunnah qauliyah is the second revelation as a replacement for the words of the Prophet as the first mujtahid who had grounded absolute revelation in the realm of objective reality through a historical process (conditions of processing and conditions of becoming) which determined conditions and society.

Sunnah qawliyah which is believed to be the second revelation will have implications for eternity even though the time, place, and historical process (conditions of processing and conditions of becoming) have changed. Apart from that, it elevates the sunnah to the position of God's revelation which has a condition of being in itself (*al-kainunah lidzatihi*). Allah's revelation and the Prophet's sunnah are signifier texts, not signified. Signified text is a message that is only sung beautifully on radio, TV, at weddings, funerals, or religious services, without understanding the meaning. According to him, Allah's revelation of the Quran and Sunnah which turned into a cultural product (*muntaj saqafah*) and became public consumption is not the true revelation of Allah and the Prophet's Sunnah. Nash Hamid Abu Zayd<sup>30</sup> stated that the Quran and hadith of the Prophet are not written in text images, videos, and so on. Both descended directly from Allah to the Prophet without intermediaries and without changing. Explicitly, Syahrur in his theoretical thinking plays more on science which can be seen in several writings such as limit theory, differential theory, integral theory, and others. Even in understanding verses and hadiths related to law.<sup>31</sup>

Syahrur stated that Muslims must adhere to the sunnah of the Prophet within the framework of rules that have the principles of Islamic law in new matters related to the sunnah of the Prophet, namely: First, the sunnah of the Prophet is everything that the Prophet Muhammad did, said and agreed

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<sup>29</sup> Muhammad bin Ismāil Al-Bukhāri, *Ṣaḥīḥ Al-Bukhāri*, vol. 4 (Beirūt: Dār Ibnu Kašīr, 2002), 1.

<sup>30</sup>Fahrudin Faiz, *Hermeneutika Al-Qur'an: Tema-Tema Kontroversial* (Yogyakarta: eLSAQ Press, 2005), 98-99.

<sup>31</sup> Abdul Malik, "Tafsir Alqur'an Paradigma Integratif: Studi Atas Qira'Ah Althaniyah Muhammad Syahrur," *Al-A'raf: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam Dan Filsafat* 14, no. 1 (2017): 117, <https://doi.org/10.22515/ajpif.v14i1.707>.

to and that is not God's revelation as based on surah al-Najm verses 3-4. Second, the sunnah of the Prophet, both *mutawatir* and *ahad*, which are mentioned in several hadith books and narration books are only material for consideration to be used as legal decisions which always change according to developments as agreed by *fiqh* scholars. Third, the Prophet's sunnah is the first *ijtihad* in Islam and the first choice of applicable framework for realizing absolute ideas (revelation), but its application is not the last or only one. Fourth, the Prophet's sunnah is the initial stage of completion of the realities of life. Fifth, the Prophet's sunnah is the first mirror of truth that describes the interaction between the Qur'an and the objective reality that emerged when revelation was revealed with all kinds of objective factors without empty conjecture and delusion.

In the epistemological context of Syahrur's thinking, the sunnah does not have absolute legal force, it will always change according to the context of changes in time and space because the sunnah is a product of *ijtihad*. Therefore, according to Gracia, the Quran and hadith must be understood textually and contextually.<sup>32</sup> It seems that Syahrur's thoughts about the sunnah are correct, but it seems to devalue the sunnah or hadith as the main source after the Quran; Hadith functions as *bayān*/explanation of global verses of the Quran.<sup>33</sup> For example, knowledge about prayer *kaifiyat*, ablution practices, prayer times, and other things that are not explained in detail in the Quran. All this knowledge cannot be carried out properly if there is no explanation in the hadith of the Prophet. So the hadith of the Prophet has a high position as a source of Islamic law after the Quran.<sup>34</sup>

#### **D. Implications of Muhammad Syahrur's Thoughts on Hadith Studies on Polygamy**

Three theories offered by Muhammad Syahrur, namely condition of being, condition of processing, and condition of becoming have implications for understanding the text of the Quran. For example, about polygamy.

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<sup>32</sup> Alma`arif Alma`arif, "Kesadaran Hermeneutik Dalam Membaca Teks: Model Ijtihad Umar Ibn Al-Khattab," *Al-A'raf: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam Dan Filsafat*, Vol. 13, no. 2 (2016): 191

<sup>33</sup> Erwati Aziz, "Fitrah Perspektif Hadith: Studi Kritik Sanad, Matan, Dan Pemahamannya," *Al-A'raf: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam Dan Filsafat*, Vol. 14, no. 1 (2017): 143,

<sup>34</sup> Rohmansyah Rohmansyah, "Hadith Hermeneutic of Ali Mustafa Yaqub," *KALAM*, Vol. 11, no. 1 (2017): 187–214,

Muhammad Syahrur explained comprehensively that the creation of humans came from one soul, talking about orphans and caring for orphans who had lost their fathers. In connection with a child who does not have a father and mother, according to Syahrur, the issue of polygamy is eliminated. Meanwhile, if the child has a mother whose father has died and the mother remarries, then this does not constitute polygamy as explained in the verses of the Quran.<sup>35</sup>

Based on the letter An-Nisa verse 3 concerning polygamy, Muhammad Syahrur allows polygamy by proposing two conditions, namely: First, that the second, third, and fourth wives are widows who have orphans. Second, men who practice polygamy must truly be able to do justice materially and spiritually to their wives and children. So according to Syahrur, a woman who is married to become a second, third, or fourth wife is a widow who has orphans, not a widow who does not have orphans, and also not a woman who is still a young woman. Doing righteous deeds not only to his second, third, or fourth wife, but also to orphans, nurturing, protecting, and educating them until they grow up.

Based on the above, the context of righteousness referred to in the verse is not the issue of sexual relations between husband and wife (biological elements), but only at the level of the context of social understanding. A husband must be righteous in providing for the needs, education, and future of his wife and children. Syahrur thought that Allah commanded polygamy by giving considerations: Do not commit polygamy if you cannot act righteously so as not to be trapped in arbitrariness, difficulties, and irresponsibility.

Polygamy in Syahrur's view at first glance seems to be by what the Prophet did. The Prophet Muhammad married widows who had children and did not marry young women who were still young women to help and save their families. However, this does not mean that polygamy is not permitted by marrying young women who are still young women. It seems that Syahrur only looks at history without looking at the hadiths which allow polygamy on condition of righteous conduct and a maximum limit of four women. This is as stated in the words of Prophet Muhammad:

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<sup>35</sup> Muhammad Syahrur, *Nahwu Ushul Jadidah li Fiqh al-Islami Fiqh al-Mar'ah*, 302.



حَدَّثَنَا يَحْيَى بْنُ حَكِيمٍ حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ جَعْفَرٍ حَدَّثَنَا مَعْمَرٌ عَنِ الزُّهْرِيِّ عَنِ سَالِمٍ عَنِ ابْنِ  
عُمَرَ قَالَ أَسْلَمَ غَيْلَانُ بْنُ سَلَمَةَ وَتَحْتَهُ عَشْرُ نِسْوَةٍ فَقَالَ لَهُ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ خُذْ  
مِنْهُنَّ أَرْبَعًا

"It has told us Yahya bin Hukaim, it has told us Muhammad bin Ja'far, it has told us Ma'mar from Zuhri from Salim from Ibn Umar said, Ghailan bin Salamah converted to Islam and he had ten wives, then the Prophet said to him: Take four of them." (HR. Ibn Mājah and Ahmad).<sup>36</sup>

This hadith shows that Ghailān, who came from the Saqīf area, had ten wives during the Jahiliyah period. After converting to Islam, the Prophet Muhammad told him to take four people and divorce the others. This is closely related to other hadiths that use the word *fāriq sāiruhunna* (marry four women).<sup>37</sup> Another hadith indicates that the Prophet Muhammad told Al-Hāris bin Qais to choose four of his eight wives.<sup>38</sup> The same hadith was also mentioned by Ad-Dāruqutni in his book.<sup>39</sup>

These hadiths do not textually regulate the limits of polygamy, especially for men. These hadiths only limit the number of wives in polygamy (no more than four wives). Historically, Jahiliyah people at that time, such as Ghailān, had many wives. However, after they convert to Islam, they can only have polygamy based on Islamic law (maximum four wives). This is in line with the Quran that the condition for polygamy is to act righteously, even though in another verse, Allah stated that humans will not be able to act righteously even if they want to act righteously.

Contextually, polygamy is permitted without limiting the woman he will marry (widow to not). Because if it was limited, then why did the Prophet tell Ghailān to choose four wives and divorce the rest? Even the Prophet was reported to have had more than four wives, but that was specific to the

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<sup>36</sup> Ahmad bin Hanbal, *Musnad Al-Imām Ahmad Bin Hanbal*, vol. 5 (Beirut: Al-Muassasah Ar-Risālah, 2001).

<sup>37</sup> Muhammad bin Abd al-Bar bin Āsim al-Namri al-Qurtubī, *At-Tamhīd Limā Fi Al-Muwattā Min Al-Ma'āni Wa Al-Asānidi*, vol. 12 (Maroko: Rabāt, 1967), 54.

<sup>38</sup> Abū Dāwud Sulaimān bin al-Asy'aš al-Sijistāni, *Sunan Abī Dāwud*, vol. 2 (Riyād: Bait al-Afkār al-Dawliyyah, n.d.), 239.

<sup>39</sup> Ali bin Umar Ad-Dāruqutni, *Sunan Ad-Dāruqutni*, vol. 3 (Beirut: Muassasah Ar-Risālah, 2004), 270.

prophet and did not apply to his people.<sup>40</sup> Explicitly, the letter *waw* in this verse means *takhyīr* or choice (one, two, three, or four).<sup>41</sup> On that basis, Muhammad Syahrur only explained from the perspective of verses from the Quran and did not use the hadith of the Prophet. Besides, he Prophet's hadith clearly does not state that the conditions for polygamy are being widowed and having children as orphans. According to Syahrur, if these two conditions are not met, polygamy is failed.

History records that the Prophet married war widows so that their children would not be abandoned. Syahrur explicitly uses historical grounds to allow polygamy. This is supported by QS. An-Nisā' verse 3 "*fain khiftum alā tuqsitū fi al-Yatāmā fahkihū mā tāba lakum min an-Nisā'*". According to Syahrur, the polygamy verse is closely related to the condition of orphans.<sup>42</sup> So if a man is polygamous and does not act righteously towards his orphaned child, then his marriage is failed. Based on this verse, it is not young women who are polygamous but widows who have children. Syahrur's view is that he wants to try to limit polygamy to only widows who have children. Syahrur believes that widows who do not have children should not be married (as a second, third, or fourth wife) and that their status is like that of a young woman. Therefore, the theory of conditions of being, processing, and becoming is very important in Islamic studies. Syahrur's thoughts are only based on the Quran and not based on the hadith of the Prophet as an explanation of the Quran.

The condition of being means that a man must be aware of his existence before behaving and acting. It means that a man must think about the consequences of polygamy so that he will pay attention to the process before committing to polygamy. That is the process that must exist in both men and women. A man who is going to engage in polygamy must consider righteousness before deciding to engage in polygamy. A man must provide righteousness to his wife. Allah stated that humans cannot do righteousness. After truly being able to understand righteousness, a man who wants to engage in polygamy must marry a widow with children and give righteousness to the wives and the children. It means that a polygamous man

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<sup>40</sup> Syaikh Shafiyurrahmān Al-Mubākfūri, *Sirah Nabawiyah* (Jakarta: Al-Kautsar, 2009), 563-565.

<sup>41</sup> Rohmansyah, "Analisa Pendekatan Bahasa Dan Historis Terhadap Poligami Dalam Hadis Nabi," *Kalimah*, Vol. 17, no. 1 (2019): 59-74.

<sup>42</sup> Yowan Tamu, "Poligami Dalam Teori Hermeneutika Muhammad Syahrur," *Mutawatir: Jurnal Keilmuan Tafsir Hadis*, Vol 1, no. 1 (2011): 71-95.

must provide righteousness to his wives physically and mentally, as well as provide a living and education to his children.

## E. Conclusion

One's paradigm greatly influences the epistemology of Islamic studies. It cannot stand alone, just like the epistemology of Islamic studies built by Muhammad Syahrur, which is very much determined by four important things: *mihwar* (philosophical discussion), theological/divine, human-related anthropology, and nature. Based on these four basic principles, it can be concluded that Muhammad Syahrur's epistemology is as follows: First, in the development of human science (religious and social fields), Syahrur offered three theories of scientific epistemology, namely *al-Kainūnah* (condition of being), *As-Sairūrah* (condition of process) and *Al-Hairūrah* (condition of becoming). These theories empowered Syahrur's understanding. He started studying the Quran regarding the Sunnah of the Prophet which discusses Allah, social, the interaction of al-Tanzi al-Hakim, the Sunnah of the Prophet, and fiqh regarding women (wills, inheritance, leadership, polygamy, and clothing). In terms of polygamy, Syahrur put forward two conditions for polygamy, namely: (1) polygamous women are widows who have orphans, and (2) a man must have concerns that he cannot do justice to his wife and orphans; This worry is important so that the man can provide righteousness to both of them. If the man fails these conditions, then the polygamy will be failed. Third, Islamic studies on polygamy are the implications of Syahrur's three epistemological theories. This means that everything must look at the conditions of the situation that will be carried out, the condition of process that must be passed, and the conditions of being that must be accepted and maintained intact as a logical consequence of what is happening. [.]

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