

**THE SIGNIFICANCE OF IRFANI'S
EPISTEMOLOGY TO THE
PROBLEMATICS OF MODERN
CIVILIZATION
(Study on Seyyed Hossein Nasr's
Epistemological Thought)**

Sitti Nurliani, Wahyudin Halim, Indo Santalia
UIN Alauddin Makassar
Jln H. M. Yasin Limpo No 36 Samata Gowa
E-mail: indakhkhanazahrahsittinurliani@gmail.com;
wahyuddin.halim@uin-alauddin.ac.id;
indosantalia@gmail.com

Abstract: This article aims to discuss the significance of Irfani's Epistemology to the problems of Modern Civilization in the study of Sayyed Hussein Nasr's epistemological thinking, this research uses a qualitative research type with a philosophical approach and uses primary data sources in the form of Sayyed Hussein Nasr's original works and secondary data using books, scientific journals, research that discusses Sayyed Hussein Nasr's research both in Indonesian and foreign languages, and the analysis used is content analysis, through this research sacred knowledge or Scientia Sacra, As the basic concept of epistemology, Irfani Nasr seeks to restore metaphysics and spiritual traditions in human life. Responding to the problems of modernity, the most appropriate solution for Nasr is traditional knowledge contained in religions and spirituality as a treasure of eternal virtues. The concept of Irfani's epistemology is a form of traditional knowledge that can be a way for modern humans to treat the crisis of identity and the problems they experience.

Keyword: Significance, Epistemology Irfani, Modern Civilization

INTRODUCTION

Epistemology as part of philosophy reviews all matters relating to the origin, structure, methodology and validity of knowledge¹. In the context of the Islamic world, there are three known forms of epistemology, namely bayani, burhani and 'irfani². Bayani epistemology is a form of epistemology that emphasizes text authority as an indicator of truth. Burhani epistemology is knowledge obtained from demonstrative analogy which in this case gives the authoritative role of reason and senses contained in humans. Meanwhile, Irfani's epistemology is a form of epistemology with full emphasis on the instrument of the heart (qalb).³ Along with the development of philosophy, epistemology slowly finds its form as a separate field of knowledge, and becomes one of the important pillars in the development of science. Epistemology apart from being a way of acquiring knowledge, is also a means for humans to find wisdom through dialectics.

Knowledge is also a means for humans to find wisdom through dialectics.

¹ Tim Dosen Filsafat Ilmu Fakultas Filsafat UGM, *Filsafat Ilmu* (Yogyakarta: Liberty, 1996), p. 17.

² Muhammad Abid al-Jabiri, *Isykalilyat al-Fikr al-Arabi al-Mu'ashir* (Beirut: Markaz Dirasah al-Aranyah, 1989), p. 59.

³ Muhammad Taqi Mishbah Yazdi, *Philosophical Instructions: An Introduction to Contemporary Islamic Philosophy* (University of Binghamton: Institute of Global Cultural Studies, 1999), p. 50.

The epistemology problem of modern civilization can only be solved by Irfani's epistemology which refers to traditional wisdom as a treasure of eternal virtues. Mulyadi Kartanegara views Islamic epistemology as an alternative to Western epistemology which has dominated contemporary epistemological discourse, including in Indonesia.

According to Muhammad Taqi Mishbah Yazdi, modern Western epistemology continues to experience crises. In the span of 2.5 centuries, Western epistemology has not only failed to build a solid foundation, even the existing foundations are showing weakness day by day. In contrast to Islam which continues to show its firmness and experiences a bit of a crisis. Although there are several challenges in Islamic philosophy, it is clear that there is consistency in maintaining the basic doctrine that reason is the primordial basis for solving all problems, including metaphysical problems. As for the confrontation with various opposing views and all critics, instead of weakening Muslim philosophers, it actually matured their scientific enthusiasm.

One of the figures who is concerned about discussing Irfani's epistemology as a solution to the problems of modern civilization is Seyyed Hossein Nasr. Through Irfani's epistemology, Nasr seeks to restore spirituality in modern human life. Nasr believes that the root of modern problems is the abandonment of spirituality, humans being separated from the Sacred, thus encouraging an exploitative attitude towards nature. The most appropriate solution for Nasr in

addressing the problems of modernity is traditional knowledge as a treasure of eternal virtues.

Seyyed Hossein Nasr is one of the contemporary Muslim philosophers who was born in 1933 in Tehran, Iran. Nasr was born and raised in a family of scholars. Nasr's professional expertise in the fields of philosophy and history of science cannot be separated from the influence of the Iranian intellectual environment, where he was born and raised, as well as the United States where he continued his studies. Nasr gave birth to various intellectual works as a representation of his high academic productivity. Some of his main works; *Knowledge and the Sacred*, *The Sacred Science*, *Man and Nature*; *The Spiritual Crisis of Modern Man*, which contains the elaboration of Irfani's epistemology as well as a detailed review of the problems of modern epistemology. Nasr is better known as a traditionalist thinker who later became the spokesperson for Islam in the international community.⁴

The problems of the modern world can be seen in the behavior and order of human life, especially in the order of culture and civilization.⁵ The character of the modern world emphasizes progressiveness (desire to continue advancing), and scientific (scientific characteristics). The over-optimism

⁴ William C. Chittick, *Preface* dalam *The Complete Bibliografi Seyyed Hossein Nasr from 1958 through April 1993*, ed. Aminrazavi and Moris (Kuala Lumpur: TP, 1994), p. xiii.

⁵ A. Qodri Azizy, *Melawan Globalisasi: Reinterpretasi Ajaran Islam Persiapan SDM dan Terciptanya Masyarakat Madani* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2003), p. 5-6.

of modern science is evident in the works of Enlightenment philosophers. At the end of the 18th century, there were enlightened actors from France; Marie Jean Antoine Nicolas Caritat or better known as the Marquis de Condorcet (1743-1794)⁶. Condorcet narrated his ideas in a monumental work entitled *Esquisse d'un tableau historique des progres del'esprit humain* (sketch on a historical picture of the progress of thought).

Nasr formulated a system of knowledge which he termed "Scientia Sacra". Scientia Sacra or Sacred Science is sacred knowledge based on traditionalism.⁷ Scientia Sacra is a concept rooted in Perennial Philosophy pioneered by Rene Guenon, Ananda Coomaraswamy, and Frithjof Schuon. When traced further, there is a primordial affinity between Scientia Sacra and the Irfani tradition in Islam. According to Nasr, scientia sacra can be reached through pure intellection using instruments of knowledge in the form of reason (rational) and heart (spiritual practice). Intellection in this case is different from the modern world view which interprets it as a ratio.

Nasr criticized the secularistic modern world view. Humans in the modern world are considered to only have three dimensions, namely physical, psychic and ratio, while the spiritual-metaphysical dimension is omitted. According to

⁶ Simon Blackburn, *The Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy*, terj. Yudy Santoso dengan judul *Kamus Filsafat; Buku Acuan Paling Terpercaya di Dunia* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2013), p. 174.

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Nasr, there has been a fundamental change in viewing nature in modern times. Initially, nature was valued as a partner in human life, now it is considered as a mere object of exploitation and enjoyed to the fullest extent of its possibilities. This phenomenon has a negative impact on all aspects of life. Humans and the universe as manifestations of God keep Divine values or qualities within themselves. In turn, the esoteric dimension (inner side) in the modern world has experienced a reduction.

Irfani's epistemology is important to discuss, bearing in mind that modernity has eroded humanity and the role of religion. Therefore, the discussion of irfanimesti epistemology is carried out with the aim of developing and re-preserving tradition. However, this really depends on the method used in reciting the Irfani tradition.

LITERATURE RIVIEW

1. Epistemology Irfani

Basically, irfani epistemology is something that is commonplace in all religious traditions. In fact, all forms of belief that have existed have an 'irfani' dimension. Along with historical developments, Irfani then underwent a term transformation and derivation of meaning. As emphasized by Seyyed Hossein Nasr, in the Greco-Alexandrian era, mysticism existed in the form of the Pythagorean and

Hermetic mystical teachings (related to the teachings of Hermes).⁸

Likewise the Peripatetic tradition developed by Muslim philosophers, the Illumination tradition which is closely related to perennial philosophy, the philosophy of Mulla Sadra's existence, to Modern Eastern philosophy, each of which is closely related to the mystical dimension. In the Islamic context, mysticism is interpreted as an esoteric dimension or called *tasawuf* which means the path of knowledge (*al-ma'rifah, irfani*).⁹ Haidar Bagir argued that the process of knowing in humans is more ontological-existential than epistemological. That is something marked by an existential encounter between the two elements involved in the process of knowing, rather than subject-object separation.¹⁰

The word *irfani* in Arabic is *masdar* from the word *'arafa* which gave birth to the word *ma'rifah* which means knowledge, but it is different from science (*'ilm*). In the *Lisan al-'Arabic* dictionary, *iirfan* is defined as *al-'ilm*. Whereas in Sufi terminology, the word *irfanidi* is used to indicate the highest type of knowledge that is presented in the heart through *kasyaf* (revelation) or inspiration. *Irfani* relates to

⁸ Seyyed Hossein Nasr dan Oliver Leaman, *History of Islamic Philosophy*, dengan terj. Tim Penerjemah Mizan (London dan New York: Routledge, 1996), p. 461.

⁹ Seyyed Hossein Nasr dan Oliver Leaman, *History of Islamic Philosophy*, dengan terj. Tim Penerjemah Mizan, p. 461.

¹⁰ Haidar Bagir, *Epistemologi Tasawuf; Sebuah Pengantar* (Bandung: Mizan, 2017), p. 37.

knowledge obtained directly from God (kasyf) or through spiritual exercise (riyâd}lah) which is carried out on the basis of h}ubb (love) or iradah (strong will). In contrast to science which refers to knowledge obtained through transformation (naql) or rationality ('aql).

Linguistically, the word irfani originates from the Greek word gnosis which means ma'rifah, al-'ilm and al-h}ikmah. In Europe, this Irfani knowledge is seen as a heretical and deviant religious movement (gnosticism). However, for some scholars of the history of religions in Europe, gnosticism is not only a movement related to Christianity, but as a general phenomenon known in the three Abrahamic religions (Islam, Christianity and Judaism). Therefore, gnosis must be distinguished from gnosticism. Because gnosis is more accurately seen as the knowledge of certain people, while gnosticism is a school that claims to be a religious movement built on the basis of higher knowledge than aqliyah (rational) knowledge, and claims to be based on esoteric knowledge which is not only related to matters of religious ritual, but everything that is secret and vague, such as magic, astronomy, chemistry and so on.¹¹

There are various perspectives regarding the origins of the Irfani tradition. First, the opinion that Irfani comes from Persia and the Zoroastrian religion, as stated by Dozy and Thoulk. The reason is that a large number of Magi in northern Iran retained their religion after the Islamic conquests and

¹¹ Al-Jabiri, *Bunyah al-Aql al-Arabi* (Beirut, al-Markaz al-Tsaqafi al-Arabi, 1993), p. 253.

many Sufis came from the Khurasan region. On the other hand, some of the founders of Sufism came from the Zoroastrian group, such as Ma'ruf al-Kharki and Bayazid Busthami. Second, there are those who argue that Irfani comes from Christianity, as stated by Von Kramer, Ignaz Goldziher, Nicholson, Asin Palacios and O'lery. Several reasons were put forward that there was interaction between Arabs and Christians during the Jahiliyya and Islamic times. In the following, we find aspects of similarity between Sufistic life in terms of teachings, procedures for training the soul (riyadah) and self-isolation (khalwat), with the life of Jesus and his teachings, also with the monks in terms of clothing and how to pray. Third, Irfani comes from India, as Horten and Hartman argue.

Several opinions regarding the birth of the Irfanidi tradition above show that there is no direct contact between the Irfani tradition and Islam. But substantively, philosophers and Sufis tend to conclude that the Irfani tradition is the spirit of Islam itself. In further analysis it was found that: First, the irfani tradition originating from Persia and the Zoroastrians, clearly does not have a solid foundation, because the development of irfani is not just the efforts of Ma'ruf al-Kharki and Bayazid Busthami. Many Arab Sufis lived in Egypt, Syria and Baghdad, such as Dzun al-Nun al-Mistri, 'Abd al-Qadir Jailani, Ibn 'Arabi, 'Umar ibn Faridl, and Ibn Athaillah al-Iskandari. They are even figures who have a big

influence on Irfani's development in the future.¹² The emergence of Ma'ruf al-Kharkî and Bayazîd Busthamî was after the time of the Prophet, the Companions and the first generation of Sufism who were considered to have a higher degree of wisdom.

2. Modern Civilization

Problems; The term problem/problematics comes from the English word "problematic" which means problem or problem. Problem is a problem that must be solved or a gap between reality and expectations.¹³

Modern Civilization; The word civilization can be understood as the result of observation, experience so as to form an idea or idea of thought, in general civilization is a very large and comprehensive social entity that exceeds the individual itself. The form of civilization includes materials such as pyramid buildings, castles, Al-Hamra Palace, etc., while immaterial such as Buddhist teachings, Hindu teachings, Greek philosophy etc. While the word modern comes from the Latin which means modo means way and ernus means showing the current period or the transition period between traditional to modern.¹⁴ What the author means by modern civilization in this thesis is the civilization that began in the

¹² A. Khudori Soleh, *Wacana Baru Filsafat Islam* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2004), p. 197

¹³ Nurcholis madjid, *Agama dan Dialog Antar Peradaban* (Jakarta: Paramadina, 1996), p.xiv.

¹⁴ Nanang Hartono, *Sosiologi Modernisasi: Telaah Kritis Tentang Teori, Riset dan Realitas* (Yogyakarta: PT. Tiara Wacana, 2011), p. 86

13th century AD, which was marked by the secularization of knowledge by the spread of Aristotelianism and Averroism in the West. In more detail, modern civilization begins with 2 major events, namely the Renaissance (rebirth) in Italy in the 13th-14th centuries AD and Aufklärung (enlightenment) in Europe in the 16th-18th centuries AD. Among the series of events that occurred in modern civilization, namely: Renaissance, with its figures: Machiavelli, Giordano Bruno, Francis Bacon. Rationalism, with its characters: Rene Descartes, Baruch de Spinoza, Leibniz, Blaise Pascal. Empiricism, with its characters: Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, George Berkeley, David Hume. Aufklärung (Enlightenment), with its characters: Voltaire, Montesquieu, JJ Rousseau. Idealism, with its characters: Immanuel Kant, Fichte, Schelling, Hegel.

3. Biography of Sayyed Hussein Nasr

Seyyed Hossein Nasr was born in the city of Tehran, Iran, on April 7, 1933. His father was a well-known scholar in Iran and also a teacher and doctor during the Qajar dynasty named Seyyed Valiullah Nasr.¹⁵ It was an honor for Nasr to be born and live in an intellectual country, a land of mullahs; the birthplace of prominent Muslim philosophers, mystics, scientists, and poets throughout history.

¹⁵ William C. Chittick, "Preface" dalam *The Complete Bibliografi Seyyed Hossein Nasr from 1958 through April 1993*, ed. Aminrazavi and Moris (Kuala Lumpur: TP, 1994), p. xiii.

There is no difference in views regarding the religious background of Nasr's family, which from the beginning adhered to the traditional Shia school of thought as the Islamic theological sect that is mostly adhered to by the Iranian population. Even though there was a revolution in Iran in 1979, Shiaism still dominates and has even survived to this day. This is due to the fact that Shiaism has been developing there for a long time and has the full support of many prominent and influential scholars¹⁶

Nasr's educational history began in his family environment. His father was quite aware of Nasr's need for education from an early age. Before moving to America in order to formally study modern science at the age of 13, Nasr received a traditional education in Iran. This traditional education is obtained both formally and informally. His informal education was obtained from his family, especially from his father regarding philosophical and theological matters. In addition, Nasr also obtained his intellectual inspiration through his participation in reading and listening to responses to discourses discussed by people who visited his father. This learning process occurred when Nasr was only twelve years old. Meanwhile, his formal traditional education was obtained at the Tehran madrasa. Apart from that, Nasr was also sent by his father to study at an educational institution or madrasa in Qum which was directly cared for by

¹⁶ Mehdi Aminrazavi, "Persia" dalam *Ensiklopedi Tematis Filsafat Islam* (ed.) Seyyed Hossein Nasr dan Oliver Leaman (Bandung: Mizan, 2003), jilid II, p. 1376-1380.

Allamah Thabataba'i in order to study philosophy, theology, tasawuf, and the science of the Qur'an. So that Nasr, who is classified as intelligent, masters a number of scientific fields, especially Islam, has fulfilled his intellectual needs since childhood.¹⁷

There are interesting things in the pattern of religious teaching in the Shia school, namely the use of methodological and systematic teaching patterns, such as; the formal method of religion, the intellectual method and intellectual reasoning, the intuitive method or spiritual revelation.¹⁸ These three methods are stages of learning to understand aspects of Islamic teachings in Shia.

At this time, Nasr was thirteen years old and this coincided with a time when Western modernization was increasingly entering the Eastern world. Nasr's father Seyyed Valiullah Nasr was quite aware of this unfavorable situation so he immediately took action. The thing that must be done is to save his son from being affected by it, by equipping Nasr with traditional science tools from an early age before learning other sciences. Besides that, the desire to stem the flow of modernization had to be done by studying it in his home world, so Seyyed Hossein Nasr was sent to study in the West, to be precise in the United States.

¹⁷ Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *An Intellectual Autobiography* h. 9.

¹⁸ M. Thabathaba'i, *Islam Syiah* (Jakarta: Graffiti Press, 1989), h. 95-129.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses qualitative research with a philosophical approach in order to obtain a dynamic discourse of epistemological criticism. This research uses a philosophical approach (philosophical approach), and is supported by a sociological approach (sociological approach) and historical (historical approach). This is because the character who is the object of research is still alive, and must always relate his thoughts to the sociological context. Meanwhile, the complex construction of Nasr's thought can be obtained by tracing his historical background and describing his ideas in several literatures. This study uses content analysis (content analysis). Several aspects can be found in the analysis process such as the phases of the character's life journey and thoughts, changes in thought that occur due to certain causes, meaningful disclosure of the context of the character's thoughts, and various other aspects that will emerge in line with the demands of a mature research. Furthermore, on the results of the existing analysis, grouping of data is carried out with the stages of identification, classification, categorization which are arranged logically and systematically.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Modern civilization has become the object of the harshest criticism from Seyyed Hossein Nasr. The modern world, which has degraded the mystical dimension to reality, for Nasr, is not an achievement of civilization to be proud of,

as modern society believes. The modern world is more worthy of being categorized as a universal catastrophe and culminating in the threat of human survival. This disaster can be seen from the destruction of the ecological balance, modern industries that use fossil fuels have released pollutants into the air in large quantities which have triggered global warming. Is there a way out of this catastrophe? One way out that Nasr offers is through an irfani epistemology, which is able to correct the epistemological basis of modern civilization.

Human civilization with an extraordinary level of sophistication is also represented by previous intellectual civilizations such as ancient Egyptian, ancient Chinese, Babylonian, Greek and Islamic civilizations. According to Nasr, the glory of these civilizations was marked by the attainment of the highest treasury of knowledge. For Nasr, if viewed from the harmonization vision, modern civilization is classified as the poorest civilization, this is mainly due to its two epistemological bases, namely rationalism and empiricism. Without going through these two verifications, a reality is considered non-existent and is not important to discuss. This is the biggest accident in the modern world which reduces the treasure of knowledge to the lowest level (sensory reality). Modern civilization is stuck on sensory knowledge, knowledge propositions that are considered meaningful are propositions that can be verified actually. So ethical and metaphysical propositions are considered meaningless, because they cannot be factually verified.

Seyyed Hossein Nasr is here to answer the distortions of this modern world by offering holistic knowledge, returning knowledge to its true sublime degree. If in the philosophical tradition, this knowledge system is called perennial philosophy or irfani in Nasr's thought, with its object and focus emphasizing tradition,¹⁹ wisdom and metaphysics.

Nasr argued that irfani is the spirit of all knowledge; the reality with which modern humans can return to their khittah as God's primordial creatures. to reality, which is rooted in the heart of every religious tradition. This knowledge is a sacred treasure passed down directly by God to human generations since the beginning of civilization. According to Nasr, the birth and development of this science of wisdom first came from the prophetic tradition, holy humans, and it continues to develop in the hands of the wise and even philosophers. This sacred knowledge is eternal and will stand throughout human civilization.

In its development, the Irfani tradition has several times changed terms such as; Suhrawardi with Hudhuri Science, Rene Guenon who called it Primordial Tradition, and Frithjof Schuon who called it by other names; Religio Perennis, Religion of the Heart, Sophia Perennis, al-Hikmah al-Khalidah and Sanatana Dharma. While Nasr himself called

¹⁹ Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Traditional Islam in the Modern World* (New York: Columbia University, 1987). P.46

it Scientia Sacra or sacred knowledge. Even though they have different terms, they refer to the same meaning.

All agree that spirituality is a spiritual need as explained by Nasr through Irfani's epistemology. Irfani is present in all spiritual traditions; lies at the heart of all religions throughout human civilization. The object or focus of Irfani's epistemology can be in the form or meaning of *ad-din* in the broadest sense, which includes all aspects of religion and its ramifications. Also called *as-sunnah*, that is what is based on sacred models that have become traditions as this word is generally understood. It can also be interpreted as *as-silsilah*, namely the chain that links each period, episode or stage of life and thought in the traditional world to the source.²⁰ In a way, this tradition is like a tree whose roots are planted through revelation in the divine nature and from which stems and branches grow throughout the ages. Or like holy truths that are enduring, firm, eternal wisdom, and the continuous application of its principles in the context of all spaces and times.²¹

Traditional Islam views humans not as creatures imprisoned by reason in the mere sense of ratio as understood in the Renaissance era, but as sacred beings, who are none other than traditional humans. Holy man, according to Nasr; live in a world that has both an origin and a center. He lives

²⁰ Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Islam Tradisi di Tengah Kancab Dunia Modern* (Bandung: Pustaka, 1994), P. 4.

²¹ Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Intelektual Islam* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 1997), p. 18.

in full consciousness from the origin containing his own perfection and seeks to emulate, re-possess and transmit his original purity and wholeness.

Irfani's epistemology as a solution to the problems of modern civilization justifies the existence of a divine knowledge that is fundamental and universal across religions and across history. The Irfani tradition does not deny the importance of rites and social aspects of each religion but teaches that behind it there is an original tradition, so that it can become an alternative perspective in the study of religions. Previously, in the West, it was not unheard of for approaches to the study of religions to develop, in fact, they had developed and been established for a long time, especially among orientalist who were trapped in historicism. Nasr considers this condition to be risky, because religions will lose their transcendental meaning, be uprooted from their divine and universal traditional roots, so that it will not be a solution but instead distance religion from its center and add to the misery of the modern world.

It is undeniable that Cartesian ideology in the West has been so deeply rooted that any approach built to minimize the problem can fail. It was not wrong then when Nasr firmly stated that the pinnacle of human stunting was modern civilization and not the pinnacle of success as it has been perceived so far. The modern tradition which has lost its attachment to the Supreme Absolute has led to exploitative tendencies that position humans as subjects who are free to exploit nature which is positioned as mere objects. This

understanding can have fatal consequences because it views the universe (including God and fellow human beings) as mere objects. The object in this case is the behavior or actions as freely as possible by humans without ethical considerations for those other than themselves. Thus, modern humans have lost their identity as God's primordial creature; and is like a locus without content, empty of the presence of God, and just as natural as any other. What Thomas Hobbes said that humans are born with natural instincts like animals, so they have the potential to commit crimes, is one step closer to the situation of modern society. If so, modern humans are no longer at the human level but more at the animal level.

Although basically all creatures are the locus and manifestation of God, the most perfect locus is the perfect human being with the highest level of closeness to God. The Irfani tradition refers to him as a perfect human being (*Insan al-Kamil*) with the character of his existence always reflecting all the names and attributes of God in all the breaths and movements of his life. This predicate of a perfect human being is generally in the category of prophets and noble people other than prophets who live divine values through prophetic traditions (*irfani*).

In fact, the root of the deviation of the modern world lies in the tendency to let go of knowledge from its divinely primordial roots. This has been explained clearly in the previous chapter with all the consequences of the problem of denying the roots of this tradition. Irfani's epistemology which contains primordial traditions is an alternative for the

modern world, returning to the heights of knowledge towards a calm and bright soul. The degradation of knowledge which is carried out with various consequences such as moral rejection, hatred of wisdom, spiritual dryness, mental restlessness and so on, displays the character of modern society like animals. One fact that is quite contrasting also in modern science (science) is the inconsistency in its epistemic system, namely rejecting the spiritual and metaphysical but accepting magical reality, which is actually part of the metaphysical construction of magic.

This can be seen clearly from the cultural constructs that develop in modern society which are all historical, empirical and sensory. Everything is viewed according to the history that shaped it, so that there is a difference that is becoming more and more prominent. Differences become achievements that are fought for and thus uproot the element of equality which is the meeting point of cross-traditions. When the similarities die and the differences are turned on, it will open up space for debate and result in more open hostilities. An example that can be seen is the existence of certain schools of thought in religious sects which place great emphasis on differences, causing a lot of unrest in religious communities. Another example, for example, is the tendency of people to always want to be different from other people in all things. Equality seems to have become a primitive habit that is no longer in accordance with the current situation. For Nasr, this is the influence of modern ideology that flows in all sides of today's human tendencies without realizing it. So that

to recover from the diseases of the modern world can only be reached by educating the public about the nature of equality contained in 'Irfani's epistemology.

In the Irfani tradition, the series of rules that form it are summarized, including; 1). Esoteric dimension as spirit over exoteric; the esoteric in singleness embodies the exoteric variant. 2). Basing the unification in the name of spirituality. 3). Experiential content (direct religious experience) and not just theoretical which tends to be demonstrative. 4). Emphasizes the awareness that all entities are part of a larger "something" (Absolute Reality). 5). Believing in God's presence across any tradition, religion and spirituality. 6). Believing that tradition, culture, religion, politics and ego must be transcended.

CONCLUSION

That Irfani's epistemology has a starting point and a different starting point from western epistemology. The urgency and originality of Nasr's thoughts on the sacred knowledge tradition lies in his efforts to elaborate on sacred knowledge from the eastern tradition; especially the Islamic tradition and to formulate an argumentation framework to support the urgency of this sacred knowledge, which is expected to be able to offer and provide solutions to the crises of Western humanity, specifically, and humanity as a whole. Thus Nasr seeks to elaborate and convey the truth of the Eastern tradition by using contemporary language.

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