

The Epistemology of Integrative Education: Reconstructing Abu al-Ḥasan al-ʿĀmirī's Thought on Islamic Education

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Abstract: *The epistemological dichotomy between religious and rational-empirical knowledge remains one of the most fundamental challenges confronting contemporary Islamic education. Against this backdrop, the thought of Abu al-Ḥasan al-ʿĀmirī (d. 381 AH/992 CE) — a fourth-century Muslim philosopher renowned for his integrative intellectual orientation — warrants serious scholarly re-engagement. This article aims to reconstruct al-ʿĀmirī's educational epistemology and to elaborate its relevance for the development of integrative Islamic education. Employing Hans-Georg Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics within a qualitative library research framework, the study undertakes a close reading of al-ʿĀmirī's works while engaging them in critical dialogue with an epistemology in education framework. The findings reveal that al-ʿĀmirī constructs an epistemology grounded in four complementary sources of knowledge: rational axioms (badihiyyāt al-ʿaql), empirical observation (tajribah), revelation (wahy), and practical capacity (quwwah ṣināʿah). Rather than treating these sources as hierarchically exclusive, he presents them as mutually reinforcing constituents of a unified epistemic framework. Within this structure, al-ʿĀmirī distinguishes between milliyyah sciences (religious) and hikmiyyah sciences (rational), while firmly rejecting any essential opposition between them on the grounds that rational truth and revealed truth ultimately share the same ontological source. His educational paradigm is subsequently elaborated through three interlocking concepts — taʿdīb, tarbiyah, and siyāsah — which collectively orient the educational process toward the actualization of the rational soul and the attainment of true happiness (al-saʿādah). The study concludes that al-ʿĀmirī's educational epistemology is not merely a historical-philosophical legacy, but offers a normatively significant and practically relevant conceptual framework for addressing the crisis of orientation in contemporary Islamic education.*

Keywords: Epistemology of Education, Abū al-Ḥasan al-ʿĀmirī, Islamic Philosophy of Education, Knowledge Integration.

Abstrak: *Dikotomi epistemologis antara pengetahuan keagamaan dan pengetahuan rasional-empiris masih menjadi salah satu persoalan mendasar dalam pendidikan Islam kontemporer. Dalam konteks tersebut, pemikiran Abū al-Ḥasan al-ʿĀmirī (w. 381 H/992 M), seorang filsuf*

Muslim abad keempat Hijriah yang dikenal memiliki orientasi intelektual integratif, penting untuk dikaji kembali secara serius. Artikel ini bertujuan merekonstruksi epistemologi pendidikan al-ʿĀmirī sekaligus menjelaskan relevansinya bagi pengembangan pendidikan Islam yang integratif. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kepustakaan kualitatif dengan pendekatan hermeneutika filosofis Hans-Georg Gadamer. Kajian dilakukan melalui pembacaan mendalam terhadap karya-karya al-ʿĀmirī, kemudian mendialogkannya secara kritis dengan kerangka epistemologi dalam pendidikan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa al-ʿĀmirī membangun epistemologi yang bertumpu pada empat sumber pengetahuan yang saling melengkapi, yaitu aksioma rasional (badīhiyyāt al-ʿaql), pengalaman empiris (tajribah), wahyu (wahy), dan kemampuan praktis (quwwah šināʿah). Keempat sumber tersebut tidak ditempatkan dalam hubungan hierarkis yang saling meniadakan, melainkan dipahami sebagai unsur-unsur yang saling menguatkan dalam satu kesatuan kerangka epistemik. Dalam kerangka tersebut, al-ʿĀmirī membedakan ilmu-ilmu millīyyah yang bersifat keagamaan dan ilmu-ilmu ḥikmiyyah yang bercorak rasional. Meskipun demikian, ia menolak adanya pertentangan mendasar antara keduanya karena kebenaran rasional dan kebenaran wahyu pada akhirnya bersumber dari realitas ontologis yang sama. Paradigma pendidikan al-ʿĀmirī selanjutnya dirumuskan melalui tiga konsep yang saling berkaitan, yaitu taʿdīb, tarbiyah, dan siyāsah. Ketiga konsep tersebut mengarahkan proses pendidikan pada aktualisasi jiwa rasional dan pencapaian kebahagiaan sejati (al-saʿādah). Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa epistemologi pendidikan al-ʿĀmirī bukan sekadar warisan historis-filosofis, tetapi juga menawarkan kerangka konseptual yang bernilai normatif dan relevan secara praktis untuk menjawab krisis orientasi dalam pendidikan Islam kontemporer.

Kata Kunci: *Epistemologi Pendidikan, Abū al-Ḥasan al-ʿĀmirī, Filsafat Pendidikan Islam, Integrasi Ilmu.*

INTRODUCTION

The problems besetting the world of education today can never be divorced from a fundamental question: what, precisely, do we mean by knowledge, and whence does it derive? It is this very question that lies at the heart of epistemology — one of the oldest branches of philosophy, and one that remains no less relevant today. Within contemporary discourse on the philosophy of education, educational epistemology is understood as the study of the relationship between knowledge, the process of learning, and the purpose of human formation. Every decision regarding what is taught, how it is taught, and why a given branch of knowledge is deemed important, is rooted in certain epistemological assumptions — whether these are held consciously or not.¹

The epistemology of education is the fundamental foundation in formulating the essence of knowledge, the source of its validity, and the purpose of education itself. In the discourse of contemporary educational philosophy, educational epistemology is often understood as the study of the relationship between knowledge, learning processes, and the purpose of human formation.² However, the development of modern education shows a tendency for epistemological fragmentation, especially in the separation between

¹ Di Dinda Nurviana dan M. Husnaini, "Epistemologi Pendidikan: Perspektif Barat dan Islam," *At-Thullab: Jurnal Mahasiswa FIAI UII* 7, no. 1 (2025): 173–196, <https://doi.org/10.20885/tullab.vol7.iss1.art12>

² J. Adam Carter and Ben Kotzee, *Epistemology of Education* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018); Barbara J. Thayer-Bacon, "Epistemology and Education," in *Handbook of Educational Theories for Theoretical Frameworks*, ed. Beverly J. Irby et al. (Bingley, UK: Emerald Publishing Limited, 2025), <https://doi.org/10.1108/978-1-61735-867-820251004>.

normative, rational, and empirical knowledge, which has an impact on the dichotomy of science and the crisis of educational orientation.³ This issue is not only a concern of Western philosophy of education, but also a serious problem in contemporary Islamic education that still grapples with the separation between religious science and rational-empirical science.

A number of previous studies have shown that epistemological problems in education are closely related to the perspective of science and the purpose of knowledge. The purpose of education, within the framework of educational epistemology, is understood not simply as the transfer of factual knowledge, but the formation of understanding, rationality, and intellectual virtue.⁴ Thinkers began to ask further: where does knowledge come from? How can we know that something is true? And how do humans build their understanding of reality? In the philosophy of education, the answers to these questions determine the direction of an educational system as a whole.⁵ Even the issue of education itself is always influenced by the underlying epistemological position because each educational paradigm has different assumptions about the nature of knowledge and how to acquire it.⁶ The problem is that these studies generally depart from the tradition of modern epistemology and very rarely dialogue with the treasures of classical Islamic philosophy. As a result, the potential contribution of classical Muslim thinkers in building an integrative educational epistemology has not been seriously explored.

The study of the epistemology of Islamic education shows that the discussion includes the source and validity of knowledge, the purpose of education, and how science should be developed in human life. The epistemological foundation of Islamic education is based on three verses at once: divine verses enshrined in the Qur'an and Sunnah, human verses in the form of human potential, and kauniyah verses that can be read from the reality of the universe.⁷ The three are interrelated and cannot be separated.

The Qur'an itself strongly encourages humans to think, read, research, observe, and meditate. At the same time, the Qur'an also affirms that all knowledge ultimately comes from Allah — so that the sharp separation between religious and general science actually has no solid foundation.⁸ It is this integrative character that distinguishes the epistemology of Islamic education from Western epistemology. Of course, this kind of integration does not automatically materialize. Islamic education needs to continue to carry out epistemological reconstruction in order to respond to the development of contemporary science without losing its identity. The combination of revelation and reason is seen as the foundation for producing knowledge that is true, responsible, and

³ R. W. Sari, L. Syahsiami, dan A. Subagyo, "Tinjauan Teoritis Integrasi Agama dan Sains dalam Pendidikan," *Realita: Jurnal Penelitian dan Kebudayaan Islam* 23, no. 1 (2025): 19–36, <https://doi.org/10.30762/realita.v23i1.483>

⁴ J. Adam Carter and Ben Kotzee, *Epistemology of Education*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018).

⁵ Lani Watson, "The Epistemology of Education," *Philosophy Compass*, no. 11 (2016): 146–159, <https://doi.org/10.1111/phc3.12316>

⁶ Peter Ling, "An Epistemology of Education Research: Consequences for Reporting," *Educational Philosophy and Theory* 57 (2025), <https://doi.org/10.1080/00131857.2025.2475437>.

⁷ Hani Zahrani, Anwar Dhobith, dan Rubini, "Kajian Teoritis Epistemologi Pendidikan Islam," *Al-Manar: Jurnal Komunikasi dan Pendidikan Islam* 11, no. 2 (2022): 58–68.

⁸ Muhamad Restu Fauzi and Muhammad Chirzin, "Epistemological Views of Islamic Education in the Qur'an and Its Urgency in the Development of Islamic Education," *Nadwa: Journal of Islamic Education* 17, no. 1 (2023): 74–91, <https://doi.org/10.21580/nw.2023.17.1.15069>

relevant to modern society.⁹ In his work, he criticizes many misrepresentations (distortions) carried out by sectarian groups. He highly appreciates research and rational reasoning, and strongly rejects the attitude of taklid (blindly following).¹⁰

It is in this context that the thought of Abu al-Ḥasan al-ʿĀmirī (d. 381 AH/992 AD) becomes important to study. Al-ʿĀmirī is known as a Muslim philosopher who sought to integrate ratios, revelations, and social realities within a coherent epistemological framework. He lived in the midst of the intellectual passion of the Abbasid period — an era of massive translation and the development of rational traditions in Islam.¹¹ What is interesting about Al-ʿĀmirī is his integrative attitude towards science. For him, the religious sciences and the rational sciences are part of one system that supports each other. There is no reason to clash the two, because all branches of science ultimately boil down to one goal: truth and human benefit.¹² This view is very relevant to answer the dichotomy of knowledge that is still debated in Islamic education until now.

Al-ʿĀmirī occupies a fairly distinctive position in the matter of education. If the earlier philosophers tended to limit education only to children and early age, then al-ʿĀmirī goes further by asserting that education is not limited to children only, but also includes adults, even if they are elderly. According to him, every human being still needs education, regardless of age. The difference lies in the form and approach: children are taught virtues and encouraged to habituate good deeds so that they grow up with the right character, while adults need correct knowledge of the nature of virtues in order to be able to practice them consciously. Therefore, education in childhood is theoretical, while in adults it is manifested in the form of actions, since the ultimate goal of education is the real application of what is learned from childhood.¹³

Education according to al-ʿĀmirī is based on the religion of Islam. The ultimate goal is to form individuals who are able to direct their behavior in accordance with what Allah wills, in order to achieve His happiness and pleasure in this world and the hereafter. Education functions to improve the human condition, both personally and in the family and various forms of social relations, so that the happiness of the community as a whole is achieved. This is true happiness that aims to realize the perfection of each individual. Therefore, al-ʿĀmirī affirms that the responsibility for children's education rests with the family and the educator, as both play an important role in the most decisive phases of a child's life.¹⁴

⁹ Astrid Veranita Indah, "Epistemologi Pendidikan Islam: Analisis Konseptual Terhadap Integrasi Wahyu dan Akal Dalam Pembentukan Karakter Muslim," *Islamijah: Journal of Islamic Social Sciences* 6, no. 2 (2025): 180–198, <https://jurnal.uinsu.ac.id/index.php/islamijah/article/view/25600>.

¹⁰ Iman Kanani and Naeem Shafiei, "Abu al-Hasan Al-Amiri's Comparison of Doctrinal Pillars in Six Religions: In the Light of 'Al-I'lām bi-Manāqib al-Islām'," *Al Basirah* 14, no. 1 (2025): 40–57, <https://doi.org/10.52015/albasirah.v14i1.271>

¹¹ Sayed Emam, Amr Mohammed. "Mental Tendency of Abu Hassan Al-Amiri (381) through his book The Annunciation of Virtues of Islam". *Al-Takamul al-Ma'rifi* 2, no. 2 (December 27, 2019): 1–15., 2026. <https://jurnal.usas.edu.my/altakamul/index.php/altakmulfiles/article/view/50>.

¹² Marwa Ali Talib and Abdulkareem Salman Alshimari, "Educational Philosophy of Abu Hassan Al-Amiri," *Al-Adab Journal* 3, no. 144 (2023): 169. <https://aladabj.uobaghdad.edu.iq/index.php/aladabjournal/article/view/4068>.

¹³ Munā Aḥmad M. Abu Zayd, *Al-Insān fī al-Falsafah al-Islāmiyyah: Dirāsah Muqāranah fī Fikr al-ʿĀmirī*, 1st ed. (Beirut: Al-Muʿassasah al-Jāmiʿiyyah li al-Dirāsāt wa al-Nashr wa al-Tawzīʿ, 1994). 110–111.

¹⁴ Marwa Ali Talib and Abdulkareem Salman Alshimari, "Educational Philosophy of Abu Hassan Al-Amiri," 169. <https://aladabj.uobaghdad.edu.iq/index.php/aladabjournal/article/view/4068>.

Other studies of al-‘Āmirī also highlight his thoughts on religious relations, ratios, and social praxis. Bulaini emphasized that al-‘Āmirī viewed science and power as instruments for realizing religious values in human life, not as an end in itself.¹⁵ This view indicates that the epistemology of al-‘Āmirī is teleological, that is, it places knowledge as a means of shaping human beings and civilized societies. A more specific study of the epistemology of al-‘Āmirī can be found in Balee's research on the integration of knowledge. The study shows that al-‘Āmirī divides science into religious sciences (*al-‘ulūm al-millīyyah*) and rational sciences (*al-‘ulūm al-hikmiyyah*), but rejects the contradiction between the two by affirming the principle of epistemological integration.¹⁶ Meanwhile, Modarrir in his study of the human soul according to al-‘Āmirī shows that the epistemology of al-‘Āmirī rests on the understanding of reason and the rational soul as the center of knowledge and virtue. Al-‘Āmirī affirms that true knowledge is concerned with the perfection of the rational soul and the attainment of happiness through the subordination of the lower potentials to the intellect.¹⁷

Based on an examination of these previous studies, it can be concluded that although al-‘Āmirī's thought has been studied from various angles—religion, politics, the integration of science, and philosophy of the soul—studies that specifically place his thought within the framework of educational epistemology are still very limited. This will be the direction of the discussion in this article. Different from previous research, this article focuses on the study of how the concept of knowledge, sources of knowledge, and educational paradigms in the perspective of al-‘Āmirī can be formulated as the basis of integrative Islamic education epistemology.

The urgency of raising this theme is even stronger in the context of contemporary Islamic education which faces the challenge of scientific dichotomy and the crisis of orientation of educational goals. The educational epistemology of al-‘Āmirī offers an important conceptual contribution because it affirms the unity between revelation and reason, between science and value, and between knowledge and human formation. Thus, this study is not only historical-philosophical, but also has normative and practical relevance for the development of Islamic education today.

METHODS

This research is a qualitative literature research (library research) with the philosophical hermeneutic approach of Hans-Georg Gadamer. The material objects of this research are the works of Abu al-Ḥasan al-‘Āmirī, in particular *al-I‘lām bi Manāqib al-Islām* and *al-Sa‘ādah wa al-Is‘ād fī al-Sīrah al-Insāniyyah*, as well as secondary works that discuss al-‘Āmirī's epistemological thought and education. Meanwhile, the formal object of research is the epistemology of education, which is al-‘Āmirī's view of the nature of knowledge, the source of knowledge, the purpose of knowledge, and its implications for education. Literature research was chosen because of the textual-philosophical character of al-‘Āmirī thought, which requires an in-depth reading of classical texts and conceptual interpretations.

¹⁵ M Abu Bulaini, "Power and Religion in the View of al-‘Āmirī," *Journal of Basic Science and Technology* 11, no. 1 (2022): 24. <https://iocscience.org/ejournal/index.php/JBST/article/view/1768>.

¹⁶ Hussein Balee, "The Knowledge Integration for Abū al-Ḥasan al-‘Āmirī and Its Importance in Building Bridges between Sciences," *AQU Journal of Shari‘a Sciences and Islamic Studies* 2, no. 1 (2022): 197–220, <https://doi.org/10.52747/aqujssis.2.1.108>.

¹⁷ Bilal Modarrir, "Abū al-Ḥasan al-‘Āmirī (d. 381/992) on The Human Soul: A Philosophical Inquiry," *Philosophy and Sciences in Islamic Contexts* 9 (2025), 1–36. <https://philosmus.org/archives/4312>

Gadamer's hermeneutic approach is used as a methodological framework for understanding the texts of al-ʿĀmirī contextually and dialogically. According to Gadamer, understanding is not neutral, but is always influenced by the *pre-understanding* (*Vorverständnis*) of the interpreter and the historical tradition that surrounds the text (*Wirkungsgeschichte*).¹⁸ Therefore, this study not only seeks to reconstruct the historical meaning of al-ʿĀmirī, but also conducts a dialogue between the horizon of al-ʿĀmirī's thought and the horizon of contemporary educational problems through the concept of *fusion of horizons* (*Horizontverschmelzung*).¹⁹ With this approach, the educational epistemology of al-ʿĀmirī is understood as a living and relevant meaning, not just a static historical doctrine.

DISCUSSION

Al-ʿĀmirī's Intellectual Profile

His full name was Abū al-Ḥasan Muḥammad ibn Abī Dharr Yūsuf al-ʿĀmirī al-Nīsābūrī. Al-Shahrastānī places him among the later-generation Muslim philosophers of the fourth century AH,²⁰ while Abū Ḥayyān al-Tawḥīdī, in *al-Muqābasāt*, describes him as a prominent thinker, scholar, and moral philosopher of his age.²¹ Born in Khurasan, he resided five years in Rayy—forming an intellectual association with the vizier Ibn al-ʿAmīd—and later lived for a time in Baghdad before returning home, producing several commentaries on Aristotle along the way.²² Mona Abu Zayd ranks him alongside al-Kindī, al-Fārābī, and Ibn Sīnā as a transitional figure linking successive generations of Muslim philosophers.²³ He was born into a respected religious family in Nishapur, a lineage that produced several literary figures, hadith scholars, and jurists, including ʿAqīl ibn ʿAmr, who served as governor of Nishapur.²⁴

Around 318 AH, he relocated to Shamsiyan, near Balkh, to study under Abū Zayd al-Balkhī, a Persian polymath and al-Kindī's foremost student, through whom he inherited al-Kindī's characteristic openness to Greek and Persian traditions tempered by critical evaluation from an Islamic perspective.²⁵ Al-Balkhī himself was known for his extensive output in exegesis, theology, astronomy, and politics, with particular emphasis on reconciling philosophy and religious law—a thematic affinity also evident in al-ʿĀmirī's own works—and his period of study is estimated at no less than three years.²⁶ Known as

¹⁸ Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 2nd rev. ed., trans. Joel Weinsheimer and Donald G. Marshall (New York: Continuum, 2004): 303-305.

¹⁹ Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 317.

²⁰ Al-Shahrastānī, *Al-Milal wa al-Niḥal*, ed. Muḥammad Sayyid Kīlānī (Beirut: Dār al-Maʿrifah, 2003), 157.

²¹ Abū Ḥayyān al-Tawḥīdī, *Al-Muqābasāt* (Cairo: Maṭbaʿah al-Raḥmāniyyah, 1929), 165.

²² Al-ʿĀmirī, *Kitāb al-Iʿlām bi Manāqib al-Islām li Abī al-Ḥasan al-ʿĀmirī: Taḥqīq wa Dirāsah fī Muqāranat al-Adyān*, 1st ed. (Cairo: Muʾassasah Dār al-Aṣḥāh li al-Thaqāfah wa al-Nashr wa al-Iʿlām, 1988), 9.

²³ Munā Aḥmad M. Abu Zayd, *Al-Insān fī al-Falsafah al-Islāmiyyah*, 8. See also: Hussein Balee, "The Knowledge Integration for Abū al-Ḥasan al-ʿĀmirī and Its Importance in Building Bridges between Sciences," 199.

²⁴ Ṣāliḥ Khalīfat, *Rasāʾil Abī al-Ḥasan al-ʿĀmirī wa Shadharātuh al-Falsafiyah: Dirāsah wa Nuṣūṣ* (Amman: Manshūrāt al-Jāmiʿah al-Urduniyyah, 1988), 65.

²⁵ Al-ʿĀmirī, *Kitāb al-Iʿlām bi Manāqib al-Islām*, 9. See also: M. M. Y. Abduh, "Falsafat al-Imām Abī al-Ḥasan al-ʿĀmirī fī Bayān Manāqib al-Islām (Ruʾyah Manhajīyyah)," *Majallat Kullīyyat al-Dirāsāt al-Islāmiyyah wa al-ʿArabiyyah li al-Banāt bi Dumūhūr* 1, no. 4 (2019).

²⁶ Abū Sulaymān al-Sijistānī al-Manṭiqī, *Muntakhab Ṣiwān al-Ḥikmah* (Baghdad: Dār al-Kindī, 1979), 127. See also: Wisam Kh. Abdul-Jabbar, "Al-Kindi on Education: Curriculum Theorizing and the

the "philosopher of Nishapur,"²⁷ he led an itinerant life in pursuit of knowledge: from Khurasan to Bukhara and then al-Shāsh to study jurisprudence and theology, then to Nakhshab, where he associated with the Ismā'īlī philosopher al-Nasafī, married a local notable's daughter, and composed his *Sharḥ 'alā Maṭīq Aristū*, before studying logic and arithmetic under Abū Ja'far al-Khāzin in 353 AH.²⁸

Among his intellectual interlocutors were al-Anṭākī, Ibn Hindū, al-Rāzī, and al-Badīhī, while his purported connection with Miskawayh was rejected by al-Tawḥīdī and his relationship with Ibn Sīnā was primarily critical, centering on Neoplatonism and the concept of the soul.²⁹ His works span theology, philosophy, logic, ethics, psychology, and Sufism—including *al-Ibāna 'an 'Ilal al-Diyāna*, *al-I'lām bi-Manāqib al-Islām*, and *al-Sa'āda wa al-Is'ād fī al-Sīra al-Insāniyya*—reflecting his effort to integrate reason, revelation, and spiritual experience.³⁰ Yet the paucity of independent classical bio-bibliographical entries and the loss of much of his oeuvre render a comprehensive reconstruction of his thought difficult, leaving scholars divided over classifying him as Aristotelian, Platonist, Neoplatonist, or Persian- versus Arab-Islamic-oriented—though direct examination of his works suggests he was fundamentally an ethical and political philosopher of pronounced Arab-Islamic orientation.³¹

Sources of Knowledge in Al-'Āmirī's Epistemology

Al-'Āmirī follows the method of the philosophers in defining knowledge (*'ilm*), as well as its status as a precondition for genuine understanding. He puts this view forward quite emphatically, holding that knowledge, at its core, consists in the mastery of something exactly as it is, free from error and free from distortion.³² Al-'Āmirī regards knowledge as the principal means of attaining human perfection and true happiness. Knowledge, in his view, is not to be understood merely as a collection of information or technical skills, but rather as a process of perfecting the rational soul. For him, the value of a given branch of knowledge is determined by the extent to which it is able to guide human beings towards virtue and truth.³³

Al-'Āmirī explains that the sources of knowledge consist of four principal elements: self-evident rational axioms (*badīhiyyāt al-'aql*), experiment or empirical observation (*tajribah*), revelation (*wahy*), and prior aptitude for skill (*quwwah šinā'ah*

Intercultural Minhaj," *Curriculum Inquiry* 50, no. 3 (2020): 262–280, <https://doi.org/10.1080/03626784.2020.1809966>. And Ahmed Abd Al-Halim Attia, *Al-Fikr al-Siyasi wa al-Akhlaqī 'inda al-'Āmiri: Dirasah wa Tahqiq Kitab al-Sa'adah wa al-Is'ad fī al-Sīrah al-Insāniyyah* (Cairo: Dar al-Thaqafah li al-Nashr wa al-Tawzi', 1991).

²⁷ Al-'Āmirī, *Kitāb al-I'lām bi Manāqib al-Islām*, 10.

²⁸ Muhammad Muzadi Rizki, "Konsepsi Ilmu dalam Perspektif Abu al-Hasan al-'Āmiri," *Potensia: Jurnal Kependidikan Islam* 6, no. 1 (2020): 93–103, <https://doi.org/10.24014/potensia.v6i1.8639>.

²⁹ Al-'Āmirī, *Al-Sa'adah wa al-Is'ad fī al-Sīrah al-Insāniyyah*, ed. Muḥammad Mīnawī, 1st ed. (Tehran: Intishārāt Āyat Isyrāq, 2019), 41.

³⁰ Munā Aḥmad M. Abu Zayd, *Al-Insān fī al-Falsafah al-Islāmiyyah*, 8.

³¹ M. Cüneyt Kaya, "Bir Āmirī Okuyucusu Olarak Molla Sadrā," *Felsefe Arkivi* 62 (2025): 77–95, <https://doi.org/10.26650/arcip.020625>. See also: Ahmed Abd Al-Halim Attia, *Al-Fikr al-Siyasi wa al-Akhlaqī 'inda al-'Āmiri: Dirasah wa Tahqiq Kitab al-Sa'adah wa al-Is'ad fī al-Sīrah al-Insāniyyah* (Cairo: Dar al-Thaqafah li al-Nashr wa al-Tawzi', 1991), 26.

³² 'Abd al-Ilāh 'Abd al-'Azīz al-Tuwayjirī, "Al-Usus al-Ma'rifiyyah li-Muqāranat al-Adyān 'inda al-'Āmirī," *Majallat Kulliyat al-'Ulūm al-Islāmiyyah*, no. 64 (2020), https://jcois.uobaghdad.edu.iq/index.php/2075_8626/article/view/1304.

³³ Bilal Modarir, "Abū al-Ḥasan al-'Āmirī (d. 381/992) on The Human Soul: A Philosophical Inquiry," 2-3.

mutaqaddimah). These four instruments together indicate that knowledge does not derive from a single channel, but rather from the interplay of reason, empirical experience, transcendent guidance, and human practical capacity. Within this framework, revelation serves to furnish orientation in matters of value and metaphysical truth, whilst reason and experiment function to comprehend and verify reality in rational and empirical terms.³⁴ One of the central aspects of al-ʿĀmirī's epistemology is his recognition of the plurality of the sources of knowledge. He asserts that revelation and reason are not two mutually opposed sources, but rather complementary ones. Revelation supplies universal principles of truth and orientation in matters of value, whilst reason serves to comprehend, elucidate, and actualise that truth within human life.³⁵

With regard to the acquisition of knowledge, al-ʿĀmirī distinguishes three ways in which human beings come to know: uncritical imitation (*taqlīd*), persuasion (*iqnāʾ*), and demonstration (*burhān*). Of the three, demonstration occupies the highest position, since it rests upon sound rational proof and true axiomatic premises. Al-ʿĀmirī insists that the demonstrative method is the most demanding of the three, for its validity depends entirely on the truth of the fundamental premises employed in the process of reasoning.³⁶ Or this reason, he holds that every lover of knowledge and wisdom is duty-bound to engage in thorough, analytical reasoning before laying claim to genuine insight (*maʿrifah*). This is because the most firmly grounded scholars are precisely those who affirm nothing until it has passed through a process of careful scrutiny and refinement, and the wisest of speakers are those who utter nothing until it has been thoroughly reflected upon. Of all people, it is the lover of wisdom who stands in greatest need of composure and steadfastness of heart, for the burden of wisdom makes itself felt immediately, whereas its rewards are only reaped in time to come. Yet whenever such a person turns their gaze towards the fruits that wisdom yields, the burden of seeking it is rendered light, such that they will never be found complaining of the weariness involved in its pursuit. This emphasis reflects al-ʿĀmirī's rational-critical epistemological orientation, and his rejection of knowledge that is merely imitative or rhetorical in character.³⁷

Epistemologically, al-ʿĀmirī brings together rationalism and empiricism by asserting that knowledge is acquired through reason and the senses simultaneously. Sensory knowledge relates to concrete objects (*maḥsūsāt*), whereas rational knowledge concerns universal concepts such as genus and species. Within this framework, *quwwah ṣināʾah* is understood as a practical-intellectual capacity that directs human action towards goodness and perfection. Al-ʿĀmirī explains that every skill, judgement, deed, and choice is invariably directed towards an end regarded as good and more excellent, even though the form such an end takes may vary — sometimes consisting in an action itself, and sometimes in an outcome or benefit derived from it.³⁸

Unlike positivistic approaches that confine knowledge to the empirical domain alone, al-ʿĀmirī maintains that knowledge encompasses rational, moral, and spiritual dimensions all at once. Knowledge divorced from ethical purpose, he argues, loses its meaning and risks undermining both individual and social order. Al-ʿĀmirī's epistemology is thus normative and teleological in character, in that it treats purpose as

³⁴ Munā Aḥmad M. Abu Zayd, *Al-Insān fī al-Falsafah al-Islāmiyyah*, 69.

³⁵ Hussein Balee, "The Knowledge Integration for Abū al-Ḥasan al-ʿĀmirī and Its Importance in Building Bridges between Sciences,"

³⁶ Munā Aḥmad M. Abu Zayd, *Al-Insān fī al-Falsafah al-Islāmiyyah*, 69.

³⁷ Al-ʿĀmirī, *Al-Amad ʿAlā al-Abad*, ed. E. K. Rowson (Beirut: Dār al-Kindī, 1979), 159.

³⁸ Al-ʿĀmirī, *Al-Saʿādah wa al-Isʿād fī al-Sīrah al-Insāniyyah*, 67.

an inherent element of knowledge — knowledge, in other words, must direct human beings towards the perfection of the soul and towards the highest happiness.³⁹ In keeping with this, al-ʿĀmirī explains that the concept of reward presupposes the concept of punishment as its counterpart. Within the framework of divine justice and wisdom, the most perfect recompense is realised through the resurrection of human beings on the Day of Judgment, when the spirit is restored to its respective body. At that point, the body will have undergone purification and perfection, rendering it capable of receiving recompense in accordance with the state of its soul. Souls that are pure will attain a higher degree of perfection and bliss, whereas souls that fail to attain purity will receive consequences commensurate with their condition. Al-ʿĀmirī thus regards bodily resurrection and the life of the hereafter as an integral part of the process of human perfection, and, at the same time, as a manifestation of divine justice constituting the ultimate end of the soul's journey.⁴⁰

Al-ʿĀmirī's epistemology is thus not merely theoretical in character, but is also oriented towards practice and the ethical purpose of knowledge. This becomes apparent when al-ʿĀmirī opens his discussion of the classification of the sciences by drawing attention to the two principal faculties possessed by human beings — the theoretical faculty and the practical faculty — together with the close relationship between them. In his view, the aim of human reason in pursuing the path of knowledge is to know the truth and to act in accordance with it. It is on this basis that al-ʿĀmirī defines knowledge as the mastery of something exactly as it is, correctly and without error, as has already been explained.⁴¹

He insists that knowledge and action constitute two inseparable aspects of one another. The theoretical faculty cannot attain perfection without the practical faculty, and the converse holds equally true. The most perfect human being, according to al-ʿĀmirī, is one who possesses both the deepest knowledge of the truth and the greatest capacity to translate that truth into corresponding action. In other words, human perfection lies in the unity of correct knowledge and correct action. On the basis of this principle, al-ʿĀmirī criticises the Bāṭinī sect, who hold that a person who has attained a certain level of knowledge is no longer bound by the obligations of pious deeds and worship. He rejects this view unequivocally, holding that knowledge is the very foundation of action, and states:⁴²

"Knowledge is the principle underlying action, and action is the perfecting complement of knowledge. The noblest branches of knowledge are sought solely for the sake of bringing about righteous deeds."

Al-ʿĀmirī further asserts that, were human nature confined merely to the acquisition of knowledge without the cultivation of action, the practical faculty would become something superfluous or merely incidental. Were this truly the case, the absence of practical capacity would do no harm whatsoever to the development of nations or to the management of human affairs. Indeed, such a view would ultimately entail entrusting all righteous deeds to those who possess no understanding of them. Were matters

³⁹ H. Zuhri, "Abū al-Ḥasan Muḥammad bin Yūsuf al-ʿĀmirī's View on Religion," *Ulumuna: Journal of Islamic Studies* 20, no. 1 (2016): 69, <https://doi.org/10.20414/ujis.v20i1.803>.

⁴⁰ Al-ʿĀmirī, *Al-Amad ʿAlā al-Abad*, 126.

⁴¹ Al-ʿĀmirī, *Kitāb al-Iʿlām bi Manāqib al-Islām*, 80.

⁴² Al-ʿĀmirī, *Kitāb al-Iʿlām bi Manāqib al-Islām*, 75.

conducted along such lines, human nature, in the performance of righteous deeds, would appear to stand in no need of genuine knowledge at all.⁴³

It is thus hardly surprising that al-ʿĀmirī emphasises that knowledge must culminate in the common good, achieved through cooperation and mutual assistance. Knowledge is not intended merely for the individual's intellectual satisfaction, but must be realised in the form of tangible contribution to society. A person of learning is expected to be a source of benefit, rather than a burden upon society. He warns that if knowledge is not translated into action, its practical excellence will vanish, and the very superiority of knowledge itself will become invisible. Indeed, neglect of the applied dimension of knowledge may disrupt the proper governance of society and the development of nations (*'imārat al-bilād wa siyāsāt al-'ibād*).⁴⁴

The Integration of *al-Milliyyah* and *al-Hikmiyyah* Sciences

Abū al-Ḥasan al-ʿĀmirī was known in his time as a figure deeply versed in wisdom, or philosophy. This philosophical grounding exerted a strong and positive influence upon his intellectual outlook, such that he came to be regarded as one of the foremost Islamic philosophers, both in respect of the soundness of his creed and the force of his argumentation. This is understandable, given his conviction that the various branches of knowledge form an integrated whole, and his belief that revelation is in harmony with sound reason and does not stand in contradiction to it. For this reason, he did not designate the rational sciences as "philosophical sciences", but rather referred to them as the "sciences of wisdom" (*'ulūm al-ḥikmah*), on the grounds that wisdom belongs, by right, to the believer.⁴⁵

For al-ʿĀmirī, religion is by no means confined to serving as a mere framework of belief; rather, it must be affirmed from the outset that the very notion of scientific knowledge emerged alongside the emergence of religion itself. This, however, does not mean that al-ʿĀmirī separated philosophy from religion or set the two against each other in a dichotomy. He continued to employ philosophical assumptions in his understanding of religious teaching. This approach is clearly evident in the manner in which al-ʿĀmirī explains the concept of faith (*al-īmān*). In his view, faith is a firm conviction possessing a truth that has been duly tested and verified. There can be no faith without truth. A firmly grounded faith must therefore be accompanied by a rational construction of truth. In al-ʿĀmirī's terminology, this is termed *al-quwwah al-'āqilah* (the rational faculty), rather than merely *al-quwwah al-mutakhayyilah* (the imaginative, or hypothetical, faculty).⁴⁶

In *al-I'lām bi-Manāqib al-Islām*, al-ʿĀmirī classifies knowledge into two principal categories: first, the *milliyyah* sciences, and second, the *ḥikmiyyah* sciences, which may be set out as follows. First, the *milliyyah* sciences. By this term, al-ʿĀmirī refers to the religious sciences of Islam. This is evident in his explanation of the various disciplines falling under this category, such as the science of ḥadīth, jurisprudence (*fiqh*), theology (*kalām*), and literary refinement (*adab*). He traces these sciences back to the prophets, stating: "The possessors of the religious sciences are the chosen ones, and they belong to the ranks of the saints (*awliyā'*)."⁴⁷ He then distinguishes between the prophet and the sage

⁴³ Al-ʿĀmirī, *Kitāb al-I'lām bi-Manāqib al-Islām*, 88.

⁴⁴ Marwa Ali Talib and Abdulkareem Salman Alshimari, "Educational Philosophy of Abu Hassan Al-Amiri," 172.

⁴⁵ Hussein Balee, "The Knowledge Integration for Abū al-Ḥasan al-ʿĀmirī and Its Importance in Building Bridges between Sciences," 204.

⁴⁶ H. Zuhri, "Abū al-Ḥasan Muḥammad bin Yūsuf al-ʿĀmirī's View on Religion," 82-83.

in his statement: "Every prophet is a philosopher, but not every philosopher is a prophet" — thereby affirming the superiority of the religious sciences.⁴⁷

Al-'Āmirī goes on to set out the branches falling under this division, beginning with the religious sciences, which he groups into three forms of expertise (*ṣinā'āt*): first, sensory expertise; second, rational expertise; and third, expertise combining the sensory and the rational. He then explains that sensory expertise is the domain of the ḥadīth scholars, rational expertise is the domain of the theologians, whilst expertise combining the senses and reason is the domain of the jurists (*fuqahā'*). He further situates language as a supporting instrument underlying all these forms of expertise, through which one is able to attain and master them.⁴⁸

It may thus be understood that al-'Āmirī classifies the science of ḥadīth under sensory expertise, since the ḥadīth scholar makes use of the five senses in gathering everything pertaining to this discipline — narrations, chains of transmission, and the like — whether through hearing, sight, or other senses. Theology (*kalām*), by contrast, is a discipline that employs rational capacity, or what are known as logical premises; it is therefore classed among the rational sciences, which do not rest upon the senses. Jurisprudence (*fiqh*), meanwhile, is placed under combined expertise on account of the jurist's need to employ the senses and subsequently to organise and process the deliverances of the senses by means of reason. Language functions as a supporting instrument across all these forms of expertise, being a tool required alike by the ḥadīth scholar, the theologian, and the jurist. Al-'Āmirī expresses high regard for the ḥadīth scholars as guardians (*ḥuffāz*) of the authenticity of the Prophet's legacy, meticulous in scrutinising transmitters and painstaking in their collection of sound ḥadīth. He likewise holds the Muslim theologians (*mutakallimūn*) in esteem for their role in setting doctrine straight through robust rational argumentation, as well as for their wise methods of preaching, in accordance with the principles of wisdom (*ḥikmah*), fair exhortation (*mau'izah ḥasanah*), and disputation in the best manner (*mujādalah bi allatī hiya aḥsan*).⁴⁹

The second category comprises the *ḥikmiyyah* sciences. By the "sciences of wisdom", al-'Āmirī means the rational sciences, which some researchers have termed the "philosophical sciences". He divides these, following the same pattern, into three forms of expertise: sensory, rational, and combined. He explains that sensory expertise is the domain of the natural scientists (*ṭabī'iyyūn*), rational expertise is the domain of the metaphysicians (*ilāhiyyūn*), and combined expertise is the domain of the mathematicians (*riyāḍiyyūn*).⁵⁰

Al-'Āmirī then points out the link between the three skills, namely the science of logic, which he places as the instrument for all of them. He also argued that there were types of knowledge that were reprehensible and should not be studied by the general public, because the harms of their use outweighed the benefits, such as magic, illusions, spells, and alchemy, according to the context of the time.⁵¹

Al-'Āmirī then points to the science that links these three forms of expertise together, namely logic, which he positions as the instrument underlying all of them. He further

⁴⁷ Al-'Āmirī, *Kitāb al-I'lām bi Manāqib al-Islām*, 80.

⁴⁸ Al-'Āmirī, *Kitāb al-I'lām bi Manāqib al-Islām*, 81.

⁴⁹ Muhammad Muzadi Rizki, "The Conception of Knowledge in the Perspective of Abu al-Hasan al-'Amirī," 100.

⁵⁰ Al-'Āmirī, *Kitāb al-I'lām bi Manāqib al-Islām*, 81.

⁵¹ Al-'Āmirī, *Kitāb al-I'lām bi Manāqib al-Islām*, 82.

holds that there exist certain reprehensible branches of knowledge unfit to be studied by the general public, since their potential harm outweighs their benefit — such as sorcery, illusion, incantations, and alchemy, understood within the context of his own era.⁵²

Within the framework of the *ḥikmiyyah* sciences, al-ʿĀmirī divides the expertise of the mathematicians into five branches: arithmetic, geometry, astrology, [musical] composition, and mechanics. The expertise of the natural scientists, meanwhile, encompasses the whole range of created phenomena that come into being through the perfect exercise of divine power and the process by which the natural world is shaped through divine subjugation. He divides these phenomena into atmospheric occurrences, such as rain and thunder; occurrences relating to minerals, such as gold and silver; and occurrences involving both the atmosphere and minerals together, such as plants and animals.⁵³

According to Hussein Balee, the interrelation among the various sciences was rendered integrated with one another by al-ʿĀmirī; the theory of integration adopted by Abū al-Ḥasan al-ʿĀmirī is closely bound up with the context of his time, when certain circles denied the importance of studying particular branches of knowledge, regarding them as being in conflict with the religious sciences. For this reason, he insists, throughout his works, upon the urgency of studying the various disciplines of knowledge. He states that the sciences of wisdom had come under attack from a group known as the *ḥashwiyyah*, who regarded them as opposed to the religious sciences, and who held that whoever devoted himself to them and pursued them in depth would suffer loss both in this world and in the hereafter. They went so far as to add that these sciences were nothing more than empty expressions, misleading terminology, and meanings adorned to excess, such that the common people were thereby deceived and the shallow-minded led astray.⁵⁴

This is likewise affirmed by Abduh, who notes that Abū al-Ḥasan al-ʿĀmirī begins his enquiry by laying down a set of principles that set out his theory of integration. These principles may be summarised as follows. Al-ʿĀmirī holds that God created human beings with an innate disposition (*fiṭrah*) to love knowledge, yet with differing natures and inclinations towards particular branches of it. This very diversity, he argues, points to a harmony between the diversity of human beings and the classification of the sciences. Reason must therefore assess each branch of knowledge according to its benefit, rather than rejecting it outright. Al-ʿĀmirī rejects the notion that the sciences of wisdom (philosophical/rational sciences) stand in opposition to the religious sciences. In his view, the two derive from one and the same truth: the sciences of wisdom rest upon sound rational proof, whilst the religious sciences themselves contain principles capable of being demonstrated by reason. It follows that there can be no conflict between rational truth and the demands of faith. Mastery of the sciences of wisdom, indeed, becomes a means of perfecting one's humanity: reasoning about the nature of reality, uncovering the wisdom behind creation, establishing rational argument, and freeing oneself from blind imitation. The religious sciences, for their part, likewise enjoin rational reflection upon

⁵² Hussein Balee, "The Knowledge Integration for Abū al-Ḥasan al-ʿĀmirī and Its Importance in Building Bridges between Sciences," 206.

⁵³ M. M. Y. Abduh, "Falsafat al-Imām Abī al-Ḥasan al-ʿĀmirī fī Bayān Manāqib al-Islām (Ru'yah Manhajiyyah)," 99.

⁵⁴ Hussein Balee, "The Knowledge Integration for Abū al-Ḥasan al-ʿĀmirī and Its Importance in Building Bridges between Sciences," 201.

God's creation as a path to true insight (*ma'rifah*), as reflected in the divine utterance praising those who reflect upon the universe.⁵⁵

Al-'Āmirī maintains that the theological component of the sciences of wisdom is a discipline whose end cannot be attained except through the power of pure reason. This is what he terms *lubb*, namely an independent branch of expertise devoted to investigating the first causes underlying the existence of all things, and thence tracing the existence of the Single Truth that constitutes the ultimate end of every enquiry, arrived at through rational reasoning and a sound path of argumentation. There can be no doubt that success in this domain represents the highest realisation of eternal happiness. Even so, this attainment is difficult to reach except after one has gathered together a range of other forms of knowledge as means towards it. It is for this reason that the earlier generations — as al-'Āmirī records — did not consider a person truly wise unless he had succeeded in attaining this particular form of knowledge. Given that this knowledge is the fruit of the theological sciences within the domain of wisdom, it is impossible for any conflict or hostility to arise between the sciences of wisdom and the religious sciences.⁵⁶

Al-'Āmirī likewise puts forward his critique of a certain group given to extremism and deviation in their understanding of the function of worship. Such people hold that the religious sciences have no need of rational illumination and do not depend upon rational reasoning, and that acts of worship amount to nothing more than legal stipulations and formal terminology. In their view, every religious community derives benefit from religion only insofar as it regulates worldly life and averts the causes of one's own ruin. Al-'Āmirī firmly rejects this position. In his view, if religion possesses a genuine underlying reality, it cannot possibly be divorced from integration with reason, nor can the ordering of its teachings be separated from rational reasoning.⁵⁷

For al-'Āmirī, moreover, the purpose of knowledge is transformative and ethical in character: it serves to set human conduct aright, to guide it, and to keep it from going astray. This rests upon his conviction that knowledge derives from the very same underlying reality as virtue (*faḍīlah*), such that the pursuit of knowledge is, at bottom, likewise a process of discovering and putting into practice the values of virtue. Al-'Āmirī encourages the study of the various disciplines of knowledge, being mindful of the diversity of human natures and inclinations. In his view, the limitations of any single individual in meeting all of his own needs render the specialisation of knowledge a social necessity. Each individual or group masters a particular field of knowledge, which then complements the others and confers benefit upon them in turn. The diversity of the sciences, accordingly, represents a natural response to the diversity of human potential and to collective human need.

Ta'dīb, Tarbiyah, and Siyāsah: The Foundations of Al-'Āmirī's Educational Paradigm

Al-'Āmirī's educational thought is articulated through three key concepts: *ta'dīb*, *tarbiyah*, and *siyāsah*. These concepts provide the foundation for reconstructing his

⁵⁵ M. M. Y. Abduh, "Falsafat al-Imām Abī al-Ḥasan al-'Āmirī fī Bayān Manāqib al-Islām (Ru'yah Manhajiyah)," 100.

⁵⁶ Achmad Khudori Soleh, "Quantum Integration Model for Religion and Science," *Afkar: Journal of Islamic Faith and Thought* 25, no. 2 (2023): 257–290, <https://mjs.um.edu.my/index.php/afkar/article/view/48952>.

⁵⁷ Al-'Āmirī, *Kitāb al-I'lām bi Manāqib al-Islām*, 87.

educational paradigm, encompassing both individual development and the broader social order.

Ta'dīb refers to the educational process through which a teacher guides individuals to practise virtuous actions consistently until they become enduring habits and moral character. By contrast, *siyāṣah* concerns the regulation and governance of individual and social affairs in ways that promote the common good. Although both aim to improve human conduct, they differ fundamentally in their approach. *Ta'dīb* directly fosters the internalisation of moral values through habitual practice, leading to individual perfection and well-being. *Siyāṣah*, however, pursues the same objective indirectly through policies, regulations, and institutional governance established by legitimate authority to create conditions conducive to collective welfare. Thus, *ta'dīb* operates as a personal and transformative educational process, whereas *siyāṣah* functions as a structural and systemic framework at the societal level.⁵⁸

Tarbiyah, meanwhile, is defined by Al-ʿĀmirī as the process of nurturing and guiding learners through educational methods that cultivate *adab* in everyday life.⁵⁹ These three key terms complement each other and form an integral educational framework, covering aspects of individual character formation (*ta'dīb*), the regulation of social life (*siyāṣah*), and the pedagogical process that connects the two (*tarbiyah*). The integration of the three reflects Al-ʿĀmirī's view that education forms not only a good person, but also a member of society who contributes to the common good.

Al-ʿĀmirī does not understand *adab* as a mere ethics, but as an integrated concept of reason and ethics. He explained that *adab* is a person's ability to conquer himself to obey those who deserve to give him good and benefit, as well as keep him away from evil and danger. More broadly, *adab* also according to Al-ʿĀmirī means knowledge of how to encourage others to obey well to those who regulate their affairs. Furthermore, Al-ʿĀmirī divides *adab* into two types: theoretical *adab* (*adab naẓarī*) and practical *adab* (*adab ʿamalī*). Theoretical manners—which Aristotle called "manners" and by Plato called "wisdom"—is knowledge acquired through reason on how to improve the conditions of life.⁶⁰

Education in the perspective of Al-ʿĀmirī cannot be understood as a neutral or mechanical process, but must be placed within a framework of clear and valuable meaning. This framework is teleological—that is, oriented towards the achievement of an ultimate goal that is the essence and peak of human development. Al-ʿĀmirī places education within the framework of the purpose of human life which is teleological in nature. According to him, the main goal of human life is to actualize the potential of reason from potential state to actual. This actualization does not stop at intellectual prowess alone, but is directed at the recognition of the truth.⁶¹ In al-ʿĀmirī's metaphysical horizon, the supreme truth leads to the knowledge of God.

In addition, *Ta'dīb* is an education that runs on the truth in regulating pleasure and sorrow, in joy and sorrow, so that a person is able to refrain from undue pleasure, be patient with sorrow as it should be, rejoice in what is worthy of joy, and be sad in what is worthy of sorrow. He does not rejoice in something that is not worthy of being happy, nor does he grieve over something that is not worthy of sorrow. This applies not only to what we have mentioned, but to all circumstances and events, so that their movements

⁵⁸ Al-ʿĀmirī, *Al-Saʿādah wa al-Isʿād fī al-Sīrah al-Insāniyyah*, 278.

⁵⁹ Al-ʿĀmirī, *Al-Saʿādah wa al-Isʿād fī al-Sīrah al-Insāniyyah*, 278-279.

⁶⁰ Al-ʿĀmirī, *Al-Saʿādah wa al-Isʿād fī al-Sīrah al-Insāniyyah*, 279.

⁶¹ Al-ʿĀmirī, *Al-Saʿādah wa al-Isʿād fī al-Sīrah al-Insāniyyah*, 272.

and all their actions proceed as they should, at the proper rate, at the proper time, and in the proper manner.⁶²

Practically, the purpose of education in the definition of *ta'dīb* is to form an independent human being, where independence is defined as the ability to master oneself. According to al-'Āmirī, a self-controlled person is one who is able to refrain from pleasure, endure sorrow, be balanced in times of sorrow and joy, and face all mental turmoil and trajectory without allowing him to determine his actions except after passing through the consideration of reason. Because, most damage actually arises from actions that follow inner impulses that have not been filtered and justified by reason.⁶³

This framework shows that the learning method according to al-'Āmirī should always be directed to the final goal (*al-ghāyah*), which is the formation of a human being who knows the truth in its entirety—both rational, moral, and spiritual.⁶⁴ Education that loses this orientation will be reduced to mere technical training, without contributing to the ultimate happiness (*al-sa'ādah*).

Al-'Āmirī in *al-Sa'ādah wa al-Is'ād fī al-Sīrah al-Insāniyyah* affirms:⁶⁵

"I also argue that the upholding of happiness depends on the educator and the regulator (leader), then on the good obedience of the educated and nurtured person. The essence of all this is continuity and patience, both from the educator and from the educated side. I argue that the happiness we have described is absolute happiness. As for happiness that is limited, it is manifested through existing circumstances and is attained at a time according to the conditions that are taking place, as well as through the ultimate deed to the extent that the circumstances allow. But the main deed will not be fixed and steady without the moral virtue and character that accompanies it, and without the presence of the main educator and good obedience

al-'Āmirī's discussion of education departs from a fundamental philosophical question: what does man live for? The answer is to achieve happiness. However, happiness has different levels and qualities. He distinguishes two main types: absolute happiness and limited happiness. Absolute happiness is the state in which a person obtains the most of all physical, mental, and external goodness, accompanied by good fortune and harmonious circumstances throughout his life. In this condition, he always does the most important thing in every time and situation. Limited happiness is a state when a person does not achieve the most important good, but still does his best according to his capacity and circumstances.⁶⁶

From this, a distinction emerges between the two objects of happiness that are the goals of education: human happiness (*al-sa'ādah al-insāniyyah*) and rational happiness (*al-sa'ādah al-aqliyyah*). The subjects of human happiness are the body, the animal soul which is orgasmic, and the rational soul which is deliberative—that is, the soul that has knowledge of deeds. The subject of rational happiness is the theoretical rational soul, that

⁶² Al-'Āmirī, *Al-Sa'ādah wa al-Is'ād fī al-Sīrah al-Insāniyyah*, 289.

⁶³ Al-'Āmirī, *Al-Sa'ādah wa al-Is'ād fī al-Sīrah al-Insāniyyah*, 281-282.

⁶⁴ Sayyid Ahmad Fādilī, "I'tidāl bi Mathābah-yi Muqawwim-i Farhang dar Tamaddun-i Islāmī az Manzar-i Abū al-Hasan 'Āmirī," *Jāmi'ah-Pazhūhī* 1, no. 1 (2025): 97–114, https://societyresearch.iict.ac.ir/article_728778.html

⁶⁵ Al-'Āmirī, *Al-Sa'ādah wa al-Is'ād fī al-Sīrah al-Insāniyyah*, 57-58.

⁶⁶ Juhana Mattila, "Happiness in Classical Arabic Philosophy," in *Moral Psychology in History: From the Ancient to Early Modern Period*, ed. Virpi Mäkinen and Simo Knuuttila, The New Synthese Historical Library 79 (Cham: Springer, 2024), https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-71202-9_11.

is, the soul that demands knowledge for the sake of knowledge itself, not for any other purpose, other than the activity of rational development of what it knows.⁶⁷

The goals of education, therefore, are dual and hierarchical. At the first level, education must form a human being who is able to manage his physical and psychological dimensions (body, orgasm, anger) through a practical rational soul (*al-'aql al-'amalī*), so that he becomes an individual with noble character, justice, and good functioning in society. This is human perfection. At a higher level, education must lead the theoretical rational soul (*al-naḥs al-nāṭiqah al-naẓarī*) to its ultimate attainment, i.e. the contemplation (*ta'aqqul*) of the pure universal truth. This is the rational perfection that according to him is angelic. Although each is perfect in its domain, if the two are compared with each other, then human perfection becomes lacking. The important goal of education is to bring man as close as possible to this rational perfection.⁶⁸

However, the road to both happiness is not smooth. This is due to the complex and tension-filled structure of the human soul. Al-'Āmirī, quoting *Ḥakīm al-Islām* i.e. al-Kindi who describes man as a battleground between opposing elements.⁶⁹

"In him there is a spirit that confronts a soul that is inclined to evil; intellect confronted with passions; the element of angels facing demons; knowledge that deals with ignorance; inspiration in the face of whispers; premonitions that are confronted with prejudice; and memories that are confronted with oblivion."

This internal conflict is rooted in the pluralistic composition of the human soul.

As is known in the treasures of the soul among Muslim philosophers, Al-'Āmirī follows Plato in the division of the soul, the human soul is divided into three: the soul of the soul (*al-naḥs al-shahwāniyyah*), which desires physical pleasures; the soul of anger (*al-naḥs al-ghaḍabiyyah*), which desires power and honor; and the rational soul (*al-naḥs al-nāṭiqah*), which loves truth and goodness.⁷⁰

Among these three elements, the rational soul occupies the highest position. In contrast to the orgasmic soul and the anger soul which are closely related to physical needs, the rational soul has the ability to understand a universal, inevitable, and eternal reality. As long as man lives, the rational soul remains in contact with the body and carries out its functions through the body. However, its existence does not depend entirely on the body. Because it has an independent nature, the rational soul does not experience destruction when the body experiences death. It is on the basis of this characteristic that al-'Āmirī explains the possibility of the continuation of human existence after separation from his body and forms the basis for his view of life after death.⁷¹ According to al-'Āmirī, pure reason serves to remind the rational soul of the transience of worldly life and direct it to eternal life. Meanwhile, revelation gives a picture of the ultimate perfection that is the ultimate goal of the soul and shows the way to achieve it. Through true religion, the soul is gradually guided towards that perfection until it obtains the reward that has been promised by God. Therefore, the intrinsic perfection of the soul cannot be realized without its connection to the revelation and realization of divine promises in the hereafter.

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⁶⁷ Al-'Āmirī, *Al-Sa'ādah wa al-Is'ād fī al-Sīrah al-Insāniyyah*, 52.

⁶⁸ Al-'Āmirī, *Al-Sa'ādah wa al-Is'ād fī al-Sīrah al-Insāniyyah*, 53.

⁶⁹ Al-'Āmirī, *Al-Sa'ādah wa al-Is'ād fī al-Sīrah al-Insāniyyah*, 75.

⁷⁰ Al-'Āmirī, *Al-Sa'ādah wa al-Is'ād fī al-Sīrah al-Insāniyyah*, 76.

⁷¹ Hacer Ergin, "Āmirī'de Ölüm ve Ahiret Düşüncesi," *Journal of Analytic Divinity* 2, no. 2 (2018): 7–17, <https://doi.org/10.46595/jad.370207>

⁷² Al-'Āmirī, *Al-Amad 'Alā al-Abad*, 126.

This conception has important implications for education. Education is necessary so that the rational soul is able to control and direct the two lower forces of the soul, namely orgasm and anger. Without proper educational guidance, man is at risk of being overpowered by animal impulses that distance him from true human goals. In this context, al-ʿĀmirī quotes Empedokles to describe the two possibilities that the rational soul can experience. When subjected to animal souls, the rational soul will become dark, wild, reprehensible, and lose its light. On the contrary, when it succeeds in mastering and subduing these animal tendencies, the rational soul will shine, be purified, and attain its glory. Therefore, education is essentially a process of fostering a rational soul in order to be able to lead the entire structure of human personality towards moral and intellectual perfection.⁷³ Education, thus, aims to ensure the triumph of the rational soul. The goal is to create "a good person who is able to control himself," and conversely, avoid creating "a bad person who is able to control himself." This self-mastery (*ḥukm ʿalā al-naḥs*) is an absolute prerequisite for all forms of happiness and virtue.⁷⁴

This process of self-mastery is very difficult because of the force of habit (*ʿādah*). Al-ʿĀmirī quotes Plato who states that a person who has become accustomed to corrupt habits will not be able to move on to a more primitive state. Even if he is aware of it and wants it, he is still inclined to go to things that harm him with the knowledge of those dangers, to move away from that which is beneficial with the awareness of its benefits, and to choose that which pollutes him with the knowledge of its evil, because corrupt habits have taken hold of him.⁷⁵ Thus, in the view of al-ʿĀmirī, education is an inevitable demand from the early stages of childhood, starting from the family, whether the educator is within the family or outside the family. Al-ʿĀmirī emphasized the importance of the existence of educators for children, because human beings are born in neutral conditions, and then absorb their morals from the environment around them. The environment is first of all, the family, then the community.

In *Kitāb al-Iʿlām bi-Manāqib al-Islām*, al-ʿĀmirī emphasizes that the existence of an educator who directs and controls children's behavior is needed, because children are not yet able to improve their own behavior, are not able to sort out what should be done, and do not have the ability to weigh between words and deeds. Educators play the role of controllers who guide children to adulthood, as well as teach them how to learn.⁷⁶

Relevance to Contemporary Integrative Islamic Education

The novelty of this study lies in reconstructing al-ʿĀmirī's thought as an integrative educational epistemology rather than merely as a theory of the classification of knowledge, which has been the dominant focus of previous scholarship. This study demonstrates that the integration of *badīhiyyāt al-ʿaql* (self-evident rational principles), *tajribah* (empirical experience), *waḥy* (revelation), and *quwwah ṣināʿah* (practical and technical competence) constitutes a comprehensive epistemological framework that unites rational, empirical, normative, and practical dimensions of knowledge. Through Gadamerian philosophical hermeneutics, al-ʿĀmirī's educational thought is reconstructed as a coherent paradigm in which these sources of knowledge function complementarily rather than hierarchically. This reconstruction extends the significance of al-ʿĀmirī's

⁷³ Al-ʿĀmirī, *Al-Saʿādah wa al-Isʿād fī al-Sīrah al-Insāniyyah*, 59.

⁷⁴ Al-ʿĀmirī, *Al-Saʿādah wa al-Isʿād fī al-Sīrah al-Insāniyyah*, 61.

⁷⁵ Al-ʿĀmirī, *Al-Saʿādah wa al-Isʿād fī al-Sīrah al-Insāniyyah*, 289.

⁷⁶ Marwa Ali Talib and Abdulkareem Salman Alshimari, "Educational Philosophy of Abu Hassan Al-Amiri," 169.

intellectual legacy beyond the historical discourse on Islamic philosophy, positioning it as a conceptual foundation for developing an integrative model of Islamic education capable of responding to contemporary educational challenges.

Within the context of contemporary Islamic education, al-ʿĀmirī's epistemology offers concrete implications for curriculum development, pedagogy, and educational objectives. *Badīhiyyāt al-ʿaql* supports the cultivation of logical reasoning, philosophical inquiry, and critical thinking as essential intellectual competencies. *Tajribah* encourages inquiry-based learning through observation, experimentation, research, and reflective experience, enabling learners to connect theoretical knowledge with real-world contexts. *Wahy* provides the ethical and transcendental orientation that ensures educational activities remain grounded in Islamic values and directed toward human flourishing. Meanwhile, *quwwah šināʿah* emphasizes the development of practical skills and professional competence for meaningful social contribution. These epistemological foundations are further reinforced by *taʿdīb*, which prioritizes the formation of moral character and adab, and by *siyāsah*, which promotes educational governance based on justice, public welfare, and social responsibility. Collectively, these principles provide a holistic philosophical framework for integrating intellectual, moral, spiritual, and practical dimensions within contemporary Islamic education.

Table Contemporary Educational Implications of al-ʿĀmirī's Integrative Epistemology

Concept in al-ʿĀmirī's Epistemology	Educational Function	Implications for Contemporary Islamic Education
<i>Badīhiyyāt al-ʿaql</i>	Self-evident rational principles	Strengthening logic, philosophy, analytical reasoning, and critical thinking in curriculum and classroom learning.
<i>Tajribah</i>	Empirical experience	Promoting inquiry-based learning, observation, experimentation, field research, and reflective learning experiences.
<i>Wahy</i>	Revealed knowledge	Providing ethical guidance, spiritual orientation, and transcendental educational goals grounded in Islamic values.
<i>Quwwah šināʿah</i>	Practical and technical competence	Developing vocational skills, problem-solving abilities, innovation, and social contribution through experiential practice.

From this it can be understood that the educational paradigm according to Al-ʿĀmirī as other classical Muslim thinkers consider Education to be a process of habituation (*taʿwīd*). In the view of Abu al-Ḥasan al-ʿĀmirī, education is essentially a process of habituation (*taʿwīd*) that shapes human character and actions. He adopted and developed Aristotle's view that habits are formed through actions that are done repeatedly in the same pattern. Good deeds, if habituated, will produce good, while bad deeds will breed bad. Al-ʿĀmirī affirms that moral qualities are not born of excesses or shortcomings, but rather from intermediate attitudes, which can only be achieved through constant practice and habituation.⁷⁷

In explaining the affective dimension of education, al-ʿĀmirī also draws on Plato's idea of pleasure. He distinguishes between commendable pleasure and despicable

⁷⁷ Al-ʿĀmirī, *Al-Saʿādah wa al-Isʿād fī al-Sīrah al-Insāniyyah*, 289.

pleasure. The pleasures that deserve to be felt are everything that is beautiful and beneficial, because it is in harmony with upright character and good habits. However, al-‘Āmirī adds that the relationship between character and habit is not always in line. Under certain conditions, human nature can be straight while habits are broken, or conversely, habits can be straight while habits are damaged. Therefore, education is not enough to rely only on human natural potential, but must consciously form good habits so that character can be directed towards goodness.⁷⁸

Al-‘Āmirī emphasizes that habituation has a very great influence on human life. Through habit, something that was originally heavy becomes light, that which is difficult becomes easy, and that which is hated can turn into a likable. Habits make humans able to do heavy work, face fear, and survive difficult conditions, such as scorching heat or cold air. Even human physical and psychological abilities—such as endurance, perseverance, and patience—are formed through constant habituation. Thus, education in the perspective of al-‘Āmirī is not merely a process of knowledge transfer, but a continuous practice that shapes the disposition of the soul and behavior, so that goodness is not only known, but also carried out spontaneously and consistently.⁷⁹

CONCLUSION

The epistemology of education according to Abū al-Ḥasan al-‘Āmirī departs from an integral view of science and human purpose. Science is understood as a means of perfecting the rational soul that directs humans to virtue and happiness. Education is placed as a process of human formation as a whole, covering the intellectual, moral, and spiritual dimensions in a single value-oriented unit. With this framework, knowledge is not separated from ethical goals and practical responsibilities.

In the epistemological realm, al-‘Āmirī acknowledges the diversity of sources of knowledge, including reason, empirical experience, revelation, and human praxis. All of these sources, if their potential is actualized, will work synergistically in producing valid and meaningful knowledge. The relationship between reason and revelation is positioned in harmony, so that the dichotomy between rational science and religious science loses its conceptual basis. This principle of integration provides the foundation for a complete and coherent epistemology of Islamic education. From the epistemological side of education, al-‘Āmirī emphasizes the relationship between science and charity as a benchmark for the value of knowledge. Education is understood as a tiered process according to the development of the intellect and soul, starting from the habituation of manners in the early days to the deepening of rationality at the advanced stage. This paradigm is manifested through the integration of *ta’dīb*, *tarbiyah*, and *siyāsah* which leads to the formation of intellectual, civilized, and capable human beings who are able to contribute to the social order. The framework gives strong relevance to the development of Islamic education that is oriented towards the formation of individuals and civilizations.

This study has two main limitations: the study relies only on the two primary works available, while many of al-‘Āmirī’s works have not been discovered or have not been ordained; And the hermeneutic approach always carries the risk of reading classical texts through the lens of contemporary problems that are not necessarily fully relevant to their historical context. To this end, it is necessary to present a comparative study with contemporaries such as al-Fārābī and Ibn Miskawayh, as well as to dare to translate al-

⁷⁸ Al-‘Āmirī, *Al-Sa’ādah wa al-Is’ād fī al-Sīrah al-Insāniyyah*, 290.

⁷⁹ Al-‘Āmirī, *Al-Sa’ādah wa al-Is’ād fī al-Sīrah al-Insāniyyah*, 346-347.

ʿĀmirī's philosophical framework into a curriculum model or operational learning design — because any brilliant idea only comes to life when it comes down to the classroom.

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