THE CONCEPT OF *NŪRAYN* IN LEARNING: A THEOLOGICAL BASIS OF TEACHER–STUDENT RELATIONSHIP IN EDUCATION

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Abstrak: *Terdapat dua isu yang saling berlawanan pada dominasi domain kognitif, yaitu pertama, lebih diutamakan untuk mendahulukan nilai-nilai afektif sebelum kognitif, dan kedua, narasi-narasi Emotional Quotient (EQ) dan Spiritual Quotient (SQ) dipromosikan untuk mendorong pentingnya Intelectual Quotient (IQ) dalam sistem pendidikan. Setelah melalui proses yang dinamis, usulan muncul untuk meningkatkan Kurikulum Berbasis Sekolah (KBS) menjadi Kurikulum 2013 (K13). Dalam K13, domain afektif dimunculan dalam bentuk Kompentensi Spiritual dan Kompetensi Sosial sementara domain kognitif dan psikomotorik dipertahankan. Secara teologis konsep yang ditawarkan ini sesuai dengan apa yang disebut Insan Kamil dan usaha untuk membangun tujuan-tujuan yang diharapkan tersebut terletak pada transformasi dari pengetahuan yang profan menuju perspektif teologi Islam yang dianggap suci. Ilmu pengetahun sebagai Cahaya Ilahi hanya dapat ditransformasikan oleh orang yang berhati suci (guru).*

ملخص : هناك مسألتان متعارضتان في هيمنة المجال المعرفي. أولا ، تقديم القيم العاطفية قبل الإدراك. ثانياً ، ترقية السرد العاطفي (EQ) والسرد الروحي (SQ) لتشجيع أهمية «الحكمة الفكرية» (IQ) في نظام التعليم. بعد اجتياز العملية الديناميكية ، ظهرت اقتراحات لتحسين المنهج الدراسي المدرسي (KBS) إلى المنهج الدراسي ٢٠١٣ . (K١٣) في المنهج الدراسي ١٣ (K١٣)، يظهر المجال العاطفي في صورة الكفاءة الروحية والكفاءة الاجتماعية بينما بقاء الحفاظ على المجالات المعرفية والحركية. إن المفهوم المقدم من الناحية اللاهوتية يتماشى مع ما يطلق عليه إنسان كامل، والجهد الرامي إلى بناء الأهداف المرجوة يكمن في تحويل المعرفة المهينة إلى منظور اللاهوت الإسلامي الذي يعتبر مقدسًا. العلم كالنور الإلهي ولا يمكن توصيله إلا من قبل المعلم الطاهر القلب.

Keywords: *Nūrayn*, Learning, Education, Student-Teacher, Relationship,

INTRODUCTION

In a specific lecture group, all students receive the same course materials, over the same period of time, and enjoy the same learning approach. However, the degree of their understanding of the materials often shows disparities. These disparities might be caused by intrinsic factors such as IQ difference, or extrinsic factors, such as experience and environment factors. However, without ignoring the various variables causing those disparities, the teachers' efforts to overcome those disparities become part of their ideal. Teachers try their hardest to make all students absorb all course materials taught. They realized that the success of their work is measured by the collective and average score of their students.They realized that having only a few of their students managing to absorb the lessons is an indicator of a less-successful learning process. Thus, a perspective that a learning process needs the hard work of those involved emerges. This determination can be seen in, for example, the various government programs created, including development of learning approaches. The research and development (R&D) process concerning the learning approaches nowadays has pointed teachers to the urgency of "Fun Learning Activities", that is the application of learning approaches, strategies, and methods in a fun psychological sitation. Strategies and methods filled with games and interactive techniques become a trademark of modern learning approaches. It is expected to create happy classroom atmosphere where teachers and students interact with no psychological burdensome. Everybody is happy, everybody laugh, everybody are eased and consequently learning materials will be easily flow into students.

This view of the urgency of "Fun Learning" is what shocked the writer when Hojjatollah Ebrahimian, Cultural Counselor of the Islamic Republic of Iran's embassy, stated that the approaches, strategies, and methods that he would use differs from what the writer had used in previous sessions. Rather than using interactive techniques, he instead hoped that the audience would act like his students back in Iran, who would listen silently while he speaks. While Ebrahimian did not explain his reasons, the writer was instantly reminded of the learning atmosphere experienced some 30 years ago, in a *Pondok Pesantren*. This train of thought then brings the writer to a comparison of the value of knowledge between the West and the East, between the instrumental function of knowledge that tends to be profane and the sacred essence of knowledge. Finally, the train of thought ended in a *maḥfūẓāt* from a questions and answers session between the Great Master of Sunni, Imam Shafi'i and his teacher Imam Waqi' about their belief of *al-'ilm nūr* (knowledge is ligt). This expression shows the existence of an agreement between the word of *shari'ah* and *tasawwuf*, because the term *nūr* (light) is a popular term in *tasawwuf* studies.

This perspective of knowledge as Divine *nūr* then shapes the attitudes and behaviors between teachers and students in Eastern traditions, including in Muslim society. Thus, the traditional learning process seen in Islamic studies' *ḥalaqah* tends to feel *khushu'* (serious, fully concentrated in asking for guidance from Allah SWT), because they believe that knowledge is part of God's secrets and exclusive rights, granted to anyone He wants. This is what to be defined as Theological Base of Teaching and Learning Process.

Moreover, this fundamental aspect of learning in the *nūr* perspective can become a linear solution for the Indonesian education community's worries about the overdominance of cognitive and psychomotor domains over the affective domain; a worry anticipated in the 1980s with the PSPB (History of National Struggles Studies) program proposed by the Minister of Education and Culture Prof. Dr. Nugroho Notosusanto as a medium to divert the cognitive orientation of the learning process into an affective orientation. On a similar note, the academic milieu of 1990s – 2000s were colored by the buzz around IQ-EQ-SQ (Intellectual, Emotional, and Spiritual Quotients), demonstrating the educational world's concern about developing all 3 forms of "smartness" simultaneously, rather than solely focusing on the intellectual side. And finally, the dynamics of KTSP (Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan / School-based Curriculum)), which drives teachers to the formula of SK (Competence Standard), KD (Basic Competence) and indicator formulations with operational verb variants, were also formed in a similar spirit. However, because KTSP is still based on Benjamin S. Bloom's theory and his 3 domains (cognitive, affective and psychomotor), it is not surprising that it is later corrected by the 2013 Curriculum, the current Indonesia Educational Curriculum, which expands the core competences that must be achieved by students include KI 1 (Spiritual Competency / Attitudes), KI 2 (Social), KI 3 (Knowledge) and KI 4 (Skill). In other words, the ideal that this nation wants to realize cannot be separated from the ideal social and spiritual attitudes. Education is not just a satisfaction of practical/pragmatic needs, but it has higher and deeper values.

The above conception is what pushes the writer to offer a possible implementation of *tasawwuf* thought as a theological basis that is the *nūrayn* learning approach to be used as a reference for teachers to improve the success of the learning process they supervise. The approach itself would make the entire mindset of teraching and learning would not be merely wordly activities, would not be activities teachers and students perform to acquire profane knowledge but they will perform *'ibadah ghayr maḥḍah* to pursue *riḍa* of Allah the Almighty. This may sounds normative and even naivette but religion itself is normative and man's religious duty is to make it real. And academically, scholars of

religion have a privellege to construct a sort of rational arguments. The earlier arguments provided in the introduction leads to curiousity two major questions including how the construction of *nūrayn* concept and how *nūrayn* concept takes form in teaching and learning process. This work attempts to answer these two important questions and provides more argumentative explanations to the better understanding of the logic behind the arguments.

THE PROFESSION OF TEACHER

Discourse about educators is part of the Greek philosophers' locus of concern. Paul Stonehouse, Pete Allison and David Carr champion the thoughts of Aristotle, Plato and Socrates; while each has their differences, none of them dispute the primacy of the educator profession. This profession requires a minimum qualification of "bachelor" because of its very heavy responsibility, to prepare the future generation.

In line with the above views, the Javanese tradition perceive the word "*Guru*"(teacher) as an acronym of "*digugu lan ditiru*", an interesting piece of tradition, due to the fact that the word "*Guru*" is not a native Javanese word, but instead a loan word from Sanskrit whose literal meaning is "heavy".

Interestingly, this word (*guru*) also has an operational meaning in the religious context of Hinduism, Buddhism, and Sikhism, which is in line with the traditional Javanese "acronym". The word "guru", as understood by most of Javanesse interviewed for this project, comes from the acronym of the Javanesse "*digugu dan ditiru.*" This concept of "*Guru*"as an acronym referring to someone followed and imitated implies that the profession of "*Guru*"/ teacher is a noble one, full of responsibilities. As illustrated in UU RI No. 14 Year 2005 about teachers and lecturers (Teacher and Professor Act), they have to be competent in four aspects: Pedagogic Competence, Social Competence, Personality Competence, and Professional Competence (Chapter 10 Verse 1). Armed with those 4 competences, teachers are trusted by the 2013 Curriculum to realize four Core Competences in their students, which are: Spiritual (KI 1), Social (KI 2), Intellectual (KI 3) and Psychomotoric (KI 4).

KNOWLEDGE AND ITS LEARNING PROCESS IN THEOLOGICAL CONCEPTION

In Islamic theological perspective, knowledge comes from Allah the Almighty. This is underlined by the angels in their dialog with Allah during the creation of Adam: "Holy art Thou! No knowledge we have except what Thou hast taught us". This implies not only that the real source of knowledge is Allah the Almighty but also narrates that we can comprehend knowledge through the will of Allah; and He only bestows to whom He wants.

Thus, knowledge can be generally divided into two types, based on how it is mastered: *kasbī* (through learning efforts) and *wahbī* (through the gifting of Allah). *Wahbī* itself is in turn divided into *sharī'ah* and *ma'rifah*, with *ma'rifah* referring to knowledge obtained through *kāshif* (the opening of the mystical veil, either through revelation or inspiration). This understanding of knowledge definition should be able to give the guideline for techers and students in their daily learning activities. The more compherenship of the understanding will lead to the better worldviews of human beings for their continuesly modern and digilazed world.

The last type of knowledge is what is known in the world of *tasawwuf* as al-*'Ilm al-ladunni*. The word "*laduni*" etymologically means "on My side", adopted from QS. Al-Kahfi / 18:65 which states that Allah is the One who would teach knowledge from His side. Thus, *laduni* knowledge is understood as a knowledge obtained by someone without the usual learning process. This knowledge is usually possessed by those close to Allah. To obtain it, one has to undergo spiritual processes. Acitivities and acts, which is still no guarantee that all seeking it would succeed, because all is ultimately dependent on Allah's will. For the *sufi,* obtaining knowledge in this way is not surprising, it is even something which is hoped for.

Beyond this matter of *laduni/wahbī* or *kasbī*, the *Sufis* imagine all knowledge ultimately deriving from the concept of knowledge as *nūr* (light). Almost all major figures in *tasawwuf* understand that knowledge is light, and the light itself comes from Allah, the Greatest of the Greatest Light (*Nūr 'alā al-nūr*). With this understanding of the position of the Almighty God by the learners, both teachers and students as they can be in the position of becoming a human being with better learning capacity, they may come to a greater achievement in therms of learning enlightment.

Al-Ghazali explained this matter with the theory of "*Misykāt al-Anwār /* Niche of Light". Al-Ghazali based his explanation on Q.S. Al-Nur [24]: 35. He explained the process of light (knowledge) radiating from God to humans. The light would be captured by the clean hearts, but sometimes the process is hindered by the stains on their souls, preventing a proper reception of the light. This interpretation is based on al-Ghazali's view that knowledge is something one obtains from Allah the Almighty, which becomes a part of their personalities. In other words, al-Ghazali leaned to the totality of subject in knowledge, behavior and attitude, which in unison illustrate their closeness with the source of knowledge. Because the source is the most pure, the subject's cleanness from "stain" is a prerequisite to receive and reflect the light of knowledge.

According to Suhrawardi and his "*Hikmat al-Isyrāq /* Philosophy of Light", knowledge can be divided into two, which are *al-'ilm al-ḥuṣūli* and *al-'ilm al-ḥ*

uḍūrī. Al-'ilm al-ḥuṣūli is one obtained through definitions, logic, and sensory perception, while *al-'ilm al-ḥuḍūrī* is one obtained by existence. To obtain it, first one must know themselves. Then, at the second stage, God's light would enter the humans' form. And last, at the third stage, they have to correctly reconstruct that knowledge, after which they would only reach enlightenment.

Al-Farabi with the Universal Emanation of Light theory, which is an adaptation of Plotinus' theory, adjusted for Al-Farabi's era. In this theory, there are 10 immaterial "intelligences" which give rise to diversity. These intelligences would produce diverse objects of thought. The arguments imposed by Farabi way seem to be demanding in terms of the objection of the human intelegences. Thus, human beings are potentially understood as creator that have greater opportunities in understanding this nature and its system throughout their pcocess of learning. Therefore, both teachers and students are subject to the obligation and responsibility of the exploration of knowledge for the seeks of their duties to be those who live in the universe.

Ibnu Arabi with the *Waḥdat al-Wujūd* theory provides more arguments. Ibnu Arabi divided knowledge into two types, which are *al-ma'rifah* and *al-'ilm*. *Al-ma'rifah* is a knowledge known exclusively in one's soul, while *al-'ilm* is the intellectual or wide understanding knowledge. According to Ibnu Arabi, all knowledge can be obtained through six sensory perceptions, the typical five senses and the sixth sense, intellect. This muslim theosof who lived in 12th century in Spain believed that knowledge is not only obtained by the operation of five senses but over the top knowledge can also be dictated by God, through intellectual.

IRFANI THEORY AS AN IMPLEMENTATIVE BASE FOR THE LEARNING PROCESS

Based on those theological, mainly *tasawwuf,* concepts concerning the obtainment of knowledge above, Abdul Munir Mulkhan discovered a new theory in the process of learning, which he called as *Ma'rifat Quotient* (**MaQ**). This theory emerged from a concept of Islamic epistemology, *irfānī*. This theory can be used as a foundation for a concept of development, but Mulkhan has not given a detailed effective solution for the learning process which fits to his theory. Thus, this **MaQ Theory** has not reached the practical field in its implementation to the learning process itself.

The *irfānī* theory is often used as the epistemological foundation in *tasawwuf*. *Tasawwuf irfānī* is understood as a revelation of the essence of truth (*ma'rifah*) from Allah the Almighty. This *tasawwuf irfānī* is not obtained through theories on behavior, like in the case of *tasawwuf akhlāqī* or *tasawwuf falsafi*. *Tasawwuf irfānī* is an effort to obtain knowledge through a pure heart, which can engage

in a mental/*baṭinī* dialogue with Allah the Almighty, so that Allah the Almighty would put knowledge in the hearts of His servants. In short, the essence of truth is revealed through inspiration.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THEOLOGICAL CONCEPT "*NŪRAYN* APPROACH" IN TEACHING AND LEARNING PROCESS

From the above discussion, it can be concluded that in *tasawwuf,* the heart plays a very essential role in obtaining wisdom (*ma'rifah*). Not all hearts can reach *ma'rifah*, only those are pure from all stains can reach it. This is because a pure heart (in the *sufi's* perspective) can pierce the realm of *malakūt.* To cleanse their heart, the *Sufis* must undergo spiritual trainings (*riyaḍah*), then gradually pass through various phases (*maqāmāt*) and situations (*ḥāl – aḥwāl*), ending in knowledge of Allah the Almighty.

In essence, humans have been armed with the potential to receive *ma'rifah*, which lies in the heart. According to Ibnu Arabi, the heart is where *kasyaf* and *ilham* enters. In short, the heart serves as a tool for *ma'rifat,* acting like a mirror reflecting (*tajallī*) the mystical values.

Thus, it can be understood that the heart is key in obtaining knowledge. When the heart is pure, knowledge can be obtained easily. From this understanding, one can draw a schematic of the knowledge-receiving process from Allah the Almighty to a servant He wants, as follows:

Nūr of Allah

Emanation and Reflection from Teachers

Student

Receiver of Emanation Student
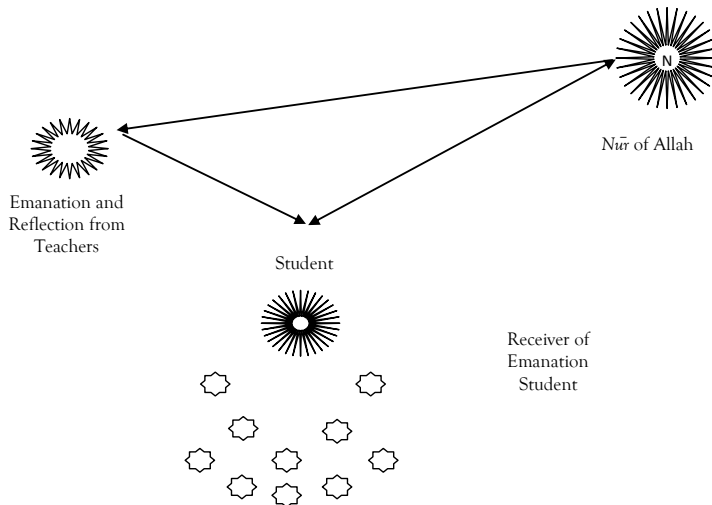
The above scheme can be explained as follows:

1. Knowledge is emanated by Allah (*nūr 'alā nūr*) to a mirror in the form of a human called, "teacher". This teacher receives the light to be reflected to their students to be received, through their hearts.

2. Allah wants to grant knowledge (light/*nūr*) to His servants that He chooses. This knowledge granted is the knowledge asked by and wholeheartedly pursued by the servant. For *al-'ilm al-ḥuṣūli*, the knowledge would arrive through intermediaries (teacher or nature), while for *al-'ilm al-ḥuḍūrī*, the knowledge would be directly inserted to the servant's heart through *kasyaf* or *ilham*. For *al-'ilm al-ḥuṣuli*, the teacher is a mirror that reflects the light, as long as both the teacher and the students' hearts are clean.

3. If the knowledge arrives and is received by the students, it will be processed in their hearts through four processes, which are: *ṣadr, qalb, fuād* and *lubb*. After reaching *lubb*, the knowledge would radiate again, creating a light illuminating its surroundings. Thus, both Allah's and humans' (the students') lights would shine over nature together. This is what the writer called "*Nūrayn*" (twin lights).

These twin lights would illuminate each other, thus brightening their surroundings. The radiation of these two lights requires a long process, which is what is called the learning process in *tasawwuf*. This process is acknowledged as very effective, and has proven itself able to produce amazing *sufi* intellectuals.

Through the epistemological study of *tasawwuf irfani*, there are many elements that can be developed, in relation to the learning process. In this case, one can take a simple illustration of the difference between *Ṣadr, Qalb, Fuād* and *Lubb* by Hakim al-Tirmizi. When connected with the process of knowledge entering someone's self, these processes can be easily explained. Borrowing Hakim al-Tirmizi's theory, the process started with *Ṣadr* (the outer most "layer" of the heart), then the knowledge enters and is processed in *Qalb*. When in *Qalb*, the knowledge is still unstable, teetering between acceptance and rejection. Only after a long process of consideration can the knowledge become a useful one in *Fuād*, which processes the accepted knowledge into something useful. Here is where someone's knowledge starts to show its results. Then, after the knowledge has truly embedded itself in *fuād,* it will enter the deepest part, *lubb*. All knowledge that has reached *lubb* would then become part of the spontaneous habit, directing one to the essence of truth.

Knowledge that has arrived and resided in *lubb* would be able to illuminate its surroundings, making them feel its results. On the contrary, those that failed to reach this stage would be meaningless and useless. This concept is what the writer calls "*Nūrayn*", derived from the concept of knowledge as light.

When knowledge is compared with light, coming from Allah the Almighty, it can be said to move like a light radiating from Allah, the Light Beyond All Light. In humans, this ligt would only be received by heart, more specifically, a pure heart. Like a mirror, the heart is composed of 4 layers, which are: *Ṣadr,*

Qalb, Fuād and *Lubb.* In order for the light to reach *Lubb*, all 4 layers must be cleansed of stains in the form of *rann* (sins). If one's heart is filled with *rann*, the light would be blocked from entering. Thus, to keep one's heart clean, one needs to try and clean it with *tazkiyat al-nafs.* This is so that if the heart has shined, the light would twin, representing the light of Allah and humans.

CONCLUSION

It is clear that the learning process, in Islamic perspective, involves Allah's power, an intermediary human, and a receiving human. Allah would emanate His light of knowledge to those He chooses, through the intermediation of some of His servants (teachers), serving as His tools in delivering His knowledge. Then, through that intermediary, Allah's knowledge would arrive to the students, as the subject who wants (as in the literal meaning of the word, "*murid*"/student). Thus, both teachers and students must cleanse their heart, so that the knowledge can be radiated and received well. When studied further, essentially this concept has a very effective implication for the learning process. This concept contains prerequisistes that must be fulfilled by both students and teachers in order for the process to proceed without problems. However, this theory is still a simple hypothesis which needs further studies. The exploration of the potential materials on new knowled production supported by human needs and worldview understanding is more encouraged for further studies of this work. As the conclusion of this work is not beneficial to the works of teachers and students unless they understand the basic concept behind the arguments provided in earlier chapters, this article needs elaboration of the willingness of teachers and students as they are the key actors in teaching and learning process. The positive attitudes of both teachers and students are; therefore, need more exploration as they are also becoming parts of the important elements of learning outcomes in the process of modern educational concepts.

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