FUNDAMENTALS OF QUR'ANIC EDUCATION CONCEPT
A Critical Conceptualization with Special Reference to Al-Kilâni's Thought

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Abstract

There is a firm correlation between the decline of Muslims in the stage of history and Islamic education system's lack of productivity in generating excellent outputs. This fact originates from Islamic education's weakness in avoiding the paradox of "historical determinism" tendency and "practical realism". This fact also has its roots in the dearth of critical Islamic education studies due to intellectual elites paying little attention to eminent investigations. Such problems had troubled al-Kîlânî, as a thinker and a practitioner of Islamic education, and prompted him to critically reflect how he could contribute and participate in solving crucial problems of Islamic education based on Quranic exegesis. Unfortunately, his critical reflection is still less appreciated by readers of Islamic education because his thoughts have yet to be broadly recognized. In his criticism, al-Kîlânî introduced the "triadic concept". He had painstakingly carried out an endeavor to link up a spiritual-transcendental vision with an anthropo-cosmological consciousness, which has in most part been dismissed from the viewpoint of modern science.

Keywords: Al-Kîlâni, Islamic Education, Triadic Concept of Education

Introduction

In general, the point of departure for Islamic education reform is grounded on the criticism of Islamic education system that has been much influenced by the modern Western education system, or the fear of stepping out of the shadows of Islam's ancient glorious legacy (al-Kîlânî 1998, 29). Thus, on the other hand, there have been numerous "westernized" tendencies found, while on the other, various inclinations of blindly following (*taqlid*) the *Salaf* generation persists. This had also been the starting point for Irsân al-Kîlânî in criticizing the reality of Islamic education and asserting the importance of establishing a solid fundamental frame of Islamic education based on two of the main teachings of Islam: Al-Qur'an and Hadith of the Prophet.

As indicated by a number of contemporary Muslim thinkers, most of the Islamic world is currently undergoing a crisis of development and progress. By exploring even deeper, it can be construed that the crisis originally stems from the crisis of intellectual elites who should have the capacity to conduct *ijtihâd* and establish a religious framework in order to encourage the *ummah* to progress. Yet, the intellectual elites would instead put all their efforts in carrying out *ijtihâd* over trivial matters and pay very little attention to the efforts of formulating a fundamental framework of text functionalization in actual life. As a result, religious *ijtihâd* had shifted from the efforts or endeavors of understanding the main objectives of sharia into endeavors of understanding technical requisites and products (Ḥusnuh 2004, 9-13). In this context, Islamic education is considered to lack potency in developing intellectuals with the potential of wielding extensive *ijtihad* capacity.

Such reality of Islamic education is inseparable from the philosophical perspective tendency that the Muslim community upholds because

there is indeed a strong link and a synergic relation between the theory and practice of education and the philosophical perspective (Maḥjûb 1987, 23). This means that a paradigmatic reform of the actual conditions of Islamic education makes it possible to initially reassess the basic philosophical assumptions of the Muslim community, particularly among the intellectual elites, so that a constructive fundamental framework that underlies the ideal conduction of Islamic education can thus be formulated. In other words, the success of efforts to revitalize Islamic education requires the formulation of a solid and constructive fundamental framework of Islamic education, which is an education conceptual framework that is formulated in a manner reflective of actual Islamic education-related problems through rational-critical analyses of various developing thoughts and experiments, and through productive interpretations of the sources of Islamic teachings, primarily Al-Qur'an (Rahardjo 2005, 34).

To date, the abundance of academic studies on Islamic education seems to fall short of its ideal expectations, a rough analogy would be "the grill is still too far from the fire". It is, hence, quite deservedly noted that some orientalists consider education theories presented by the Arabs to be very shallow and insignificant in terms of both quantity and quality because Islamic teachings do indeed pay little attention to matters of child education (S.I. Âli 2006, 3). According to al-Kîlânî, the tendency of current academic studies on education can be specified into two categories, namely: *first*, academic studies that focus on revealing Islamic education gems of the past and they have an idealization nuance; *second*, academic studies that are still very general, abstract, and highly "normative" making them seemingly onerous to apply (al-Kîlânî 1988, 68). Whereas S.H. Ali identified three types of weakness academic studies on education have, which are: underdeveloped, adoptive (*taqlidiya*), and partial (2014, 418). Based on the above, al-Kîlânî suggested the immediate need for conducting academic studies capable

of presenting a conceptualization of Islamic education that is responsive to the demands of the times, and capable of formulating the basic framework of Islamic education practices (1988, 70).

Bearing such perspective, al-Kîlâni aimed to carry out the intellectual undertaking of conceptualizing the fundamental framework of Islamic education that is expected to provide an actual contribution in formulating and developing Islamic education, in the Arab world and the Islamic world as well. Al-Kîlâni ideas and conceptual contributions have indeed been successful in drawing the attention of some researchers (Maya, 2012; Masri, 2017; Dalimunthe, 2017), although they remain relatively restricted as these concepts and ideas have yet to be broadly recognized, appreciated, and criticized as a substantial point of reference. According to al-Kîlâni, the exegeses of Qur'anic prescriptions are considered as the essential element in formulating the conceptual framework of Islamic education, bearing in mind that the approach of the future Islamic community, as affirmed by Rahardjo for instance, is established on constantly renewed exegeses of Al-Qur'an (2002, 2). Therefore, Al-Qur'an as a progressive revelation (Esack 2005, 54) should be able to continuously inspire the Islamic community in addressing matters of life.

Who is 'Irsân al-Kîlânî?

By observing Irsân al-Kîlânî's academic performance and educational background, it can be observed that he had met the necessary requirements to be included among the line-up of competent education experts. This is deservingly so because this Muslim thinker, who was born in Jordan in 1932, had successfully obtained his doctorate in the field of education from the University of Pittsburgh, acquired two master's degrees in the field of education and history of Islam from the University of Jordan and University of America in Beirut respectively, and he had also obtained a diploma in the field of history from the University of Cairo, Egypt (al-

Kîlânî 1986; al-Kîlânî 1988). Additionally, he had also for a long period of time been engaged in numerous professional positions and duties, both at national and international levels. Among the professional positions that he held were: Head of the Islamic Education Studies, Faculty of Education, King Abdul Aziz University; Professor of Education Fundamentals, Faculty of Education for Women, King Abdul Aziz University; Professor of Education Fundamentals and Islamic Education, Faculty of Education, Umm al-Qurâ University, Mecca; Director of UN Center for Islamic Studies and Research, New Yor; Visiting Lecturer of Arab Studies, University of Pittsburgh, USA; Visiting Lecturer at several education institutions in Jordan and America; Member the Association of Middle East Studies in North America (al-Kîlânî 1986; al-Kîlânî 1988). This prominent figure who had been given the Farabi International Award on the Humanities and Islamic Studies passed away on Thursday, the 29th of October, 2015 in his city of birth Ramtha, Jordan.

Al-Kîlânî's Fundamental Thoughts on Islamic Education

Various fundamental issues on education await intelligent responses capable of offering critical perspectives and effective solutions. In formulating a reform of thoughts on education through a critical perspective, al-Kîlâni firmly stated his commitment to constantly uphold two main sources, namely: Al-Qur'an and Hadith of the Prophet (1988, 71). He believed that both sources contain a clear reference of the framework to formulate a conceptual framework of education thoughts that are an integrated part of Islam's comprehensive perspective on mankind, nature, and life (1987, 25). He also affirmed the obligation of conducting a critical reflection on the dynamics of actual needs and demands of the surrounding environs, in local, regional, and global contexts, as well as on the results of education implementation created by various modern education thoughts (philosophy).

Al-Kîlânî wanted to establish his foundation of thoughts upon three main pillars, namely: revelation, reason, and empirical reality, in order to produce thoughts with "normative", scientific-rational, and empirical-realistic qualifications. Concerning the legacy of past Islamic thoughts, he utilized them as inspirational-explanatory references in elaborating the messages of revelation (1986, 246). This is why al-Kîlâni strongly criticized the standpoint of some Muslims who merely shadowed (*taqlid*) existing thoughts of former generations (*yuqallid al-âbâ' al-mâdlîn*). The thoughts of past generations are part of Islamic heritage that we need to critically appreciate so that we do not perceive and follow them blindly which may, in turn, impede the Islamic community's creativity and critical sensibility to flourish. Al-Kîlâni showed an appreciative-critical stance through his analysis on a diverse range of thoughts on education presented by Muslims of the past, such as al-Ghazali, Ibnu Taimiyah, and Ibnu Khaldun, in a systematical manner.

Al-Kîlâni considered that all this time, modern Islamic thoughts had just reached a competence level of "sensing the problem" (*al-iḥsâs bi al-mushkilah*), and it has yet to step further to a competence level of "formulating and solving the problem" (*taḥdîd wa taḥlîl al-mushkilah*) (1988, 66). While quoting the word of Allah in Qur'an, 13: 11 (*Indeed, Allah will not change the condition of a people until they change what is in themselves*), al-Kîlâni presented his assessment that the awareness of Islam's backwardness and decline had indeed appeared in modern Islamic thoughts, yet they remain limited to *sensing the problem*. Numerous Muslims have, thus, remained unaware that the root of the problem actually lies in the incapability of the education system in the modern Islamic world to produce education output figures capable of *formulating and solving the problem*. In response to that reality, the Islamic community has become polarized into two inclinations: a stance of *taqlîd* toward thoughts of the past and a westernized standpoint (1988, 66; 1998, 29). In this context, based on the above three main

pillars (triadic concept), al-Kîlâni intended to realign the erroneous mindset that had pervaded the Islamic community for so long, which is the flawed mindset that ---borrowing Shahrûr's term--- had resulted in spreading two kinds of inferiority complex (*'uqdah dûniyyah*) among the Islamic community: inferiority complex to the West and inferiority complex to the *Salaf* (Shahrûr 1994, 222). This is the Islamic community's consciousness and psychological condition (*mâ bi anfusihim*) that is interlinked with the frailty of the education system in the Islamic world.

Concurrently, al-Kîlâni suggested the need to overcome such crisis in Islamic education by creating a synergic combination of two "system-methodology" from the circle of prophets (the Prophet Muhammad in particular) who have developed the "targets and objectives of life" or sources of values, and from the circle of scholars who have developed the "instruments and means for life" (rationalization and techniques) (1988, 10). This implies a symbiotic-functional relationship between religion (the teachings of the prophets) and science/knowledge (the legacy of scholars), wherein the transient world and afterlife orientation are the only effective solution for addressing the acute problem confronted by Islamic education. Therefore, any attempt to separate religion from science is considered to be a manifested reduction and diminution of religion's meaning, whereas any attempt to separate science from religion is considered to be a manifested destruction of the role of science.

As of late, the symbiotic-functional relationship between religion and science is more popularly known with the term integration-interconnection of science and Islamization of science (Kuntowijoyo 2006, 8-9), which is directed at addressing problems of separation, segmentation, and tensions occurring between religion and science (religionists and scientists), in which each side claims to be the rightful owner of authoritative truth. Al-Kîlâni viewed such condition as being incongruent to Islamic

requirements as it originated from a myopic-narcissistic understanding of religion and science, and has led to a multiplier effect in the degradation of Islamic education (1988, 57).

As a consequence of separating science from religion, the scientific framework employed by modern scholars has undergone "secularization", leaving scientific analyses to merely revolve around facts, thereby ignoring the dimension of meaning with the rationale that science is free of values (Kartanegara 2002, 86). We can observe the secularization of scientific analyses as manifested, among others, through the presence of a stance negating nonphysical reality, which al-Kîlâni had called "religious truth" (*haqâ'iq dîniyyah*). Epistemologically speaking, this kind of reality originates from a revelation-based truth and it can only be discerned by the "metaphoric mind" that is capable of piercing through the metaphysical world and linking facts to meanings. In the perspective of al-Kîlâni, the human mind, which functions as an epistemological instrument, has two domains, namely: the domain of the logical mind and the domain of the metaphorical mind. Both have their own distinctive progression: the logical mind is more discursive-analytical, while the metaphorical mind is more intuitive-holistic (1988, 241-244). The segmentation of the mind into two domains indicates the position of al-Kîlâni's thoughts that acknowledge intuition as an epistemological instrument. Nevertheless, he still considered "intuition" as a capacity of *idrâk 'aqliyyah*, it is, hence, not regarded as something "irrational" or "mystical". Such segmentation of the mind is in line to the concept of the mind presented by S.H. Hossein Nasr. According to Nasr, there are rational and intellectual understandings simultaneously contained within the mind. The human mind with its two domains can be used as an instrument in achieving "religious" truths that are found in revelations as supra-rational truth (1991, 54-55).

The segmentation of the mind into two domains that al-Kîlâni introduced is relatively "unique" in comparison to the proclivities of Muslim

thinkers in general. As an example, Munir Mursi (1977) and Naquib al-Attâs (1995, 37-38), while discussing the topic of "knowledge acquisition in Islam", clearly differentiated between rational (*'aqliyyah*) and intuitive (*ḥadsiyyah*) knowledge. In his elaboration, Mursi regarded intuitive knowledge as a type of supra-rational (*mâ fawqa al-'aql*) knowledge. Meanwhile, Kartanegara (2002) also tends to construe intuition as rather different from the mind; he considers intuition as being something that originates in the heart, like al-Attas' opinion. If we were to delve even further, al-Kîlâni's concept of the mind actually stems from various results of scientific findings on the brain (the physical form of the mind), which conclude that the workings of the human brain may be specified into two categories: the left hemisphere and the right hemisphere of the brain. In its further development, the results of these studies had garnered support and enrichment from the latest studies in the field of psychology and neuropsychology which presented three types of human intelligence, namely: intellectual quotient (IQ), emotional quotient (EQ), and spiritual quotient (SQ) (Zohar & Marshall 2001; Agustian, 2001).

The Qur'anic Scientific Viewpoints of al-Kîlânî

The function of Al-Qur'an as a guide also applies to the construction of science and knowledge by providing guidance on principles of Islamic science founded on the pillars of ontology, axiology, and epistemology. Herewith, Al-Qur'an is able to become a source of inspiration in formulating the scopes, objectives, and means employed in the efforts of revealing reality. According to al-Kîlâni, Al-Qur'an has established the fundamental framework of scientific insight in Islamic education, specifically in the initial part of Qur'an, 96: 1-5 (the first five verses) (1988, 211-213), namely:

Recite in the name of your Lord Who has created. Created man from a clinging substance. Recite, and your Lord is the Most Generous. Who taught by the pen. Taught man that which he knew not

In the above verses, human knowledge (*al-ma'rifah*) is stated as recitation/reading (*al-qirâ'ah*) which covers two major fields, namely: the recitation/reading of the "book of creation" and the recitation/reading of the "written book". Human knowledge is, thus, a matter of *hushûlî* (acquired knowledge) that is in line with the dynamic process it engages in the attempt of revealing the shrouds of reality. A quick comparison of al-Kîlâni's viewpoint more or less indicates a similarity to an elaboration on epistemology in the Quran presented by Hasan Langgulung (1991) and Bruno Guiderdoni (2004), bearing in mind that they share the same understanding concerning the concept of knowledge/science in Al-Quran as a process entailing activities of reading/reciting, analyzing, and examining conducted by human beings on the two manifestations of Reality (*âyâtullâh*). Concerning the matter, Quraish Shihab (1997) asserts that "reading" in its broad definition is the key to achieving all knowledge, both *kasbî* and *ladunnî*.

A reading the "book of creation" includes reading about the genesis, life, and the end of creation, reading about the spectacle of the universe, and reading about social phenomena (al-Kîlânî 1988, 213). Whereas, reading the "written book" covers two levels, namely: "literal reading" and "interpretative reading". Al-Kîlâni saw the need to synergize the variety/level of reading and free the human mind (rationality) from various hegemonies that may avert man from reading His signs (*Âyât*), which are either written or lavishly displayed in the spectacle of the universe (*al-âfâq wa al-anfus*). The ultimate end that is intended to be achieved in the process of reading is indeed the recognition of Allah, namely the recognition of His creative actions, His characters, and the phenomena of His arrangement in creating the universe. What al-Kîlâni meant by the recognition of Allah, in this case, is not in a narrow "theocentric" sense, but a recognition of Allah that is capable of becoming an effective means to realize the objective of human creation, which is *ibadah*.

Al-Kîlâni's thoughts on such philosophy of knowledge remind us of Kuntowijoyo's Prophetic Social Science (*Ilmu Sosial Profetik* – ISP) which is characterized to contain values of humanization, liberation, and transcendence. Through the idea of ISP, Kuntowijoyo (1996) had taken apart the conceptual matrix of science that contains Islam's historical mission, which is a transformative mission within the framework of prophetical and ethical aspiration of "humanization", "liberation", and "transcendental awareness". In order to realize these things, Kuntowijoyo saw the need to reorient epistemology toward a mode of thought and mode of inquiry that is grounded on the basic assumption that the sources of knowledge/science are the reason, empirical reality, and also a revelation. This is where al-Kîlâni (1988) seems to be in accordance with Kuntowijoyo's opinion (1996) because they both affirmed that the three instruments of epistemology, namely revelation, reason, and empirical reality, do indeed complement each other.

Rooted on al-Râzi and Ibnu Taimiyah's line of reasoning, al-Kîlâni illustrated the alignment between the three instruments of epistemology with the statement: the revelation is comparable to a light/a shining glow, the reason is comparable to sight, and the use of reason and senses to think, contemplate, and analyze is *al-nadhar* which is suggested by Al-Quran (1988, 291). The process of *al-nadhar* as an intellectual activity within the shining glow of revelation spirit is the most plausible path to take for someone to be able to reveal and synergize "religious truth" (*haqâ'iq dîniyyah*) and "natural truth" (*haqâ'iq kawniyyah*), by appreciating the presence of *significance* and *direction* (the presence of meaning) in natural truth, which is the presence of finality, both at the level of immanence and transcendence (see Qur'an, 3: 190-191; see, Leahy 2006, 37).

Al-Kîlâni presented a number of standard phenomena from natural truth that are taken as an objective-meaningful reality indicating religious truth and concurrently serving as the conceptual foundation of scientific perspective (1988, 226-231), they are:

Oppositional Relation (al-zawjiyyah). This standard can be found in both material and immaterial creation phenomena. The phenomenon of oppositional relation or pairing is inherent within God's creation of the universe.

Causality (al-sababiyyah). This standard determines causal relations in a series of events occurring within this universe. Hence, it is inappropriate to directly associate everything with God, although He is indeed the Causa Prima since this would be similar to turning a blind eye to the "causal system" (see, Nasr 1970; al-Jâbirî 1993; Abu Zayd 1994).

Unity and diversity (al-waḥdah wa al-tanawwu'). The lack of awareness concerning this standard phenomenon can actually lead to our lack of appreciation toward heterogeneity and diversity existing around us.

Growth and evolution (al-taṭawwur). This universe was not created instantaneously by God without undergoing a "process", it has, on the contrary, been running in a path of "dynamics" and "changes" (see, Knight 2007, 80).

Complementary between metaphysical and empirical. This means that our faith in matters of ghaibiyyât needs to be supported by evidence provided in empirical reality, and empirical knowledge should be capable of leading to reinforce our insight of faith toward all things metaphysical.

Order and regularity (al-qânûn). There is a standard principle of order and regularity found in this universe, wherein everything does not happen "by chance" or randomly. It is science's duty to discover these principles and utilize them for the interest and betterment of mankind.

Through such point of view, al-Kîlânî firmly intended to include the transcendental

dimension into the cosmological perspective, which to some schools of modern science and philosophy has been negated (Rachman 2001, 188) as may be observed in the deism and materialism value system of modern civilization (Purwanto 2009, 188-191). He attempted to link the transcendental-metaphysical insight to cosmological rationality so that the established perspective relating to nature would be able to present a spiritual-theistic awareness. The natural truth discovered would ultimately end in an acknowledgment and a positive affirmation of religious truth. When viewed from a typological perspective of the relation between science and religion introduced by I.G. Barbour (2002), the measures al-Kîlâni had taken may be categorized as the integration of religious and scientific insights, because he tried to find a systematic and extensive partnership and a meeting point between the two. This integration is prompted by the affirmation that Allah is the source of knowledge/truth manifested in the *kawnî* and *qawlî* verses or signs. Therefore, knowledge/truth revealed by human being should not only be "factual", but also "meaningful", and this is an insight of knowledge that is capable of making a man become aware of the function that evidence of the universe's reality serves to affirm the existence of Allah.

The Critical Nuance of al-Kîlânî's Thoughts on Islamic Education

Education has a variety of basic foundations that are religious, socio-cultural, psychological, and philosophical in nature. The basic religious foundation of Islamic education is undoubtedly al-Qur'an and al-Hadith (S.I. Âli 2007, 28). Based on this religious foundation, education is defined as an activity aimed at fulfilling an Islamic obligation, although it may be carried out by employing varying approaches such as traditionalist and modernist approaches; textual and contextual approaches. The same basic religious foundation may, thus, utilize different approaches resulting in a diverging conceptual formulation of Islamic education.

The critical feature of al-Kîlâni's ideas on education can be observed through the rationalistic slogan that he had carried and that fundamentally underlies his frame of mind, as an affirmation of human intellectual capability. However, at the same time, he had explicitly positioned revelation as the crown of his thoughts and asserted it for the agenda of social reconstruction. The spirit of transcendence, humanization, and liberation, when thoroughly observed, is indeed not the exclusive thoughts of al-Kîlâni alone. Other leading figures on Islamic education, such as S.I. Ali (2006) and M.J. Ridlâ (2002), have also clearly formulated the basic philosophical framework of Islamic education that contains similar features as stated in the following:

Faith and submission to the will of God established upon the rational intelligence of man;

Limiting/determining ethical-moral responsibility of each individual and placing that in a "specific" relation between God and His subject;

The insight of istikhlâf (the mandate given as steward) in the relation between man and "worldly" affairs;

The insight of "contract" (al-'ahd) in the arrangement of social community relations.

In a slightly different wording, al-Kîlâni formulated general objectives of Islamic education based on Al-Qur'an and Hadith of the Prophet, which include: (a) recognizing God and asserting the relationship between God and man on the principles of God's *rubûbiyah* and man's *'ubûdiyah*; (b) developing/directing the behavior and attitude of individuals (learners) toward harmony with the guidance of Islam; (c) training of learners to be capable of fulfilling life's necessities/demands; (d) birthing of an Islamic community that upholds the principles of Islamic sharia and faith; (e) directing the Islamic community to be willing to carry the

banners of Islam the world over, as a chosen and superior community; and (f) instilling the belief in unity and equality of mankind (1987, 34-36). This means the function of education is not merely limited to preparing individuals but also creating social awareness as well; not only limited to religious matters but also worldly matters as well. When explaining the substance of Qur'an, 62: 2 written below:

It is He (Allah) who has sent among the unlettered a Messenger from themselves reciting to them His verses, and purifying them and teaching them the Book and wisdom – although they were before in clear error.

Al-Kîlâni presented four scopes of Islamic education, which are: (a) the scope of Islamic faith-oriented toward reinforcing faith by contemplating His verses; (b) the scope of self-purification, in terms of body, mind, and soul; (c) the scope of developing intellectual capacity and enriching Islamic knowledge; and (d) the scope of developing professional capacity (*al-ḥikmah*) (1987, 37-59). Therefore, the scope of Islamic education is the same as the scope of the Prophet's message, a prophetic mission that humanizes, liberates, and transcends mankind through various processes of awareness-raising and empowerment. As a result, Islamic education should not only tackle normative issues, which are not confronted with empirical-sociological problems, keeping in mind that it is clearly inseparable from the dynamics of the socio-cultural context in order to realize the Divine ideal (S.I. Âli 2006, 37-38).

Al-Kîlâni highly appreciated the capacity of the human mind (reason) in exploring reality, although the mind still requires the guidance of revelation (1988, 291). Hence, he explicitly launched a project integrating the three epistemological instruments: revelation, reason, and empirical reality (the senses). All knowledge is Islamic knowledge because there are times wherein knowledge is directly provided by revelations such as religious knowledge, and there are times in which knowledge is the result of

explorations carried out by reason and the senses as instigated by revelations and manifested in social and natural sciences. According to al-Kîlâni, the main failure of the Western world's epistemological perspective lies in its denial of revelation as an epistemological instrument, whereas the failure of the Islamic world lies in its glorification of revelations that ignores the development of reason and the senses (1988, 247). Hence, al-Kîlâni considered the Islamic world as being *proficient* in conducting readings of *âyât al-kitâb* [although they are not of the productive kind], yet it is confronted with the impediment of conducting readings on verses (signs) relating to *"al-âfâq wa al-anfus"*.

The perspective that all knowledge is Islamic knowledge is a manifestation of the appreciative-critical position of science/knowledge. This position instills openness to oneself selectively starting from the substantive perspective in observing the dynamics of science/knowledge brought about by human civilization all over the world. Such attitude had once surged through the mentality of the Islamic community during its golden era in the past, and it had led to successfully produce fascinating cultural-intellectual achievements. The scientific treasures of the Hellenistic, Persian, and other cultural traditions were regarded as a perennial heritage of wisdom that should be taken over and developed through processes of translation, elaboration, and innovative creation. At the time, the process of cultural adoption had been an inevitability in the advancement of Islamic civilization and it encouraged the development of hybrid cultures and cosmopolitan communities during the golden age of Islam, which was indicated by existing values of inclusivism, humanism, tolerance, and democracy (Kartanegara 2007, 80-91).

The project of integrating science and religion prompted by al-Kîlâni is not only in the axiological domain but in the epistemological as well. This means that value and meaning are not only associated with the insight of scientific ethics, but both are inherent in an

epistemic paradigm and are closely united within the construct of science. Thus, labeling the construct, processes, and products of science as being neutral/free from value and meaning would no longer be appropriate. The construct, processes, and products of science should *contain* Islamic values and meanings. Al-Kîlâni had, thus, argued that the epistemological insight as a paradigm of Islamic science, in addition to having similarity with epistemology in general, has a distinctive feature indicating its Islamic character. If we were to conduct a comparative analysis, al-Kîlânî's insistence in establishing the "identity" of Islam's scientific epistemology, particularly vis-à-vis Western scientific epistemology, is seemingly similar to S.H. Nasr's sincerity when contrasting Western sciences to Eastern sciences. In this context, both al-Kîlâni and Nasr (1991, 152-163) seem to mutually affirm the existence even the meaningfulness of Islamic epistemology as an alternative solution to Western epistemology. Nevertheless, both differed in presenting their ideas and thoughts, because al-Kîlânî spoke more to the Islamic world, while Nasr spoke more to the Western world.

In short, there are fundamental differences between Western and Islamic epistemology, which can be observed at least in terms of their scientific methodology and scope (Kartanegara 2007, 4-8). In terms of scope, Western science/knowledge is limited to empirical objects, hence what is considered as something we can understand are "everything that can be observed or perceived by the extent of our senses". Western scholars reject the ontological status of non-empirical objects and refer to them as pseudoscience; they had even separated the ethos of scientific inquiry from ethics and dimensions of humanism (Hilmy 2009, 155-156). This is different from the perspective of Muslim scholars who consider that not only can we understand empirical objects, but non-empirical substances can also be understood, by using our mind, senses, and intuition. To Western scholars, the scientific method is, thus, restricted to sensory perception/observation

that is supported by logical reasoning, whereas according to Muslim scholars the scientific method includes: the five senses, the mind, and intuition (including revelation) (Guessoum 2011, 55).

Muslim scholars see the three scientific methods not only as equally valid but also mutually complementing since each of them are acknowledged to have their respective limitation. The elaboration on the concept of *al-nadhar* in the previous passages reinforces in acknowledging the existence of each method, their limitations, and the importance of combining the three. The dominance of rationalism and materialism in modern civilization has relegated religious values and metaphysical realities to the periphery of modern man's consciousness resulting in the spread of an acute spiritual crisis (Kartanegara 2007, 112-113). In this case, rationalism and materialism are ideologies that underlie the rejection of intuition/revelation as a scientific method.

Conclusion

In order to further understand al-Kîlâni's thoughts on education, they need to be placed in the perspective of a "grand theory" or paradigm, which is the dialectical relation among logical reasoning, revelation, and empirical reality. This is subsequently coupled with critical openness toward classic Islamic legacies and modern Western thoughts that are oriented as alternatives and solutions to actual problems confronted by the Islamic community. The influence of such paradigm is significantly apparent in al-Kîlâni's great effort at exploring the teachings of Al-Qur'an through an educational exegesis approach, an approach model that is still in its initial stages, to formulate a more favorable concept and theory of Islamic education. In this case, intellectual elites are challenged to maximize their independent reasoning (ijtihâd) and education that can hone the community's sensibility toward impending problems and enhance their capacity to resolve them.

Within that given context, al-Kîlânî's great efforts should be regarded as a great contribution in expanding the horizon of Quranic exegesis that has so far been dominated by Islamic law (fiqh) and theological perspectives, thereby resulting in a more profound sense of judgment rather than an education pattern in line to Qur'anic prescription. However, the approach of education exegesis developed by al-Kîlâni often leaves the impression of being justificatory due to the abundance of its explanations that are global in nature and they have yet to be applied thematically. Al-Kîlâni's conviction that Al-Qur'an and Hadith of the Prophet are sources of knowledge implies that revelation must serve as an authoritative reference in the effort of formulating the conceptual framework of education, and it also entails that Al-Qur'an is not merely a "source of law". Positioning the holy scripture merely as a source of law, due to the substantial influence the fiqh perspective wields, has devalued its paradigmatic function affluent in transformative and inspirational prescriptions for the sake of the ummah.

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