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## SAID NURSI'S CONCEPT OF GOD AND NATURE: A CRITIQUE OF THE VIEWS OF ATHEISM AND NATURALISM

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### Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengkaji konseptualisasi Nursi tentang Tuhan dan Alam sebagai respon kritis terhadap Ateisme dan Naturalisme. Dalam pandangan mereka, alam adalah sistem yang mandiri dan beroperasi sendiri, sehingga Tuhan tidak memiliki tempat dalam mekanisme alam. Pandangan ini tidak terlepas dari paham sekularisme, materialisme, positivisme, dan saintisme yang mereka anut. Menjawab permasalahan tersebut, Said Nursi, seorang cendekiawan Islam, mencoba merespon konsep Tuhan dan Alam yang tidak sesuai dengan Islam, bahkan pandangan tersebut justru merendahkan alam itu sendiri sebagai ciptaan Tuhan. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dan menggunakan metodologi analisis kritis. Temuan dari artikel tersebut mengungkapkan bahwa Ateisme dan Naturalisme memiliki pemahaman yang salah tentang alam dan Tuhan. Dalam pandangan Nursi, alam bergantung pada Tuhan dan tidak bekerja sendiri. Said Nursi juga mengembangkan pemahaman teologis tentang alam, dengan menyatakan bahwa keberadaan Tuhan dapat disimpulkan dari kelahiran alam semesta. Nursi mengungkapkan bahwa alam semesta adalah sebuah buku besar dan karya seni Tuhan yang mengagumkan, alam semesta bagaikan cermin yang memantulkan keindahan Penciptanya. Nursi mengatakan bahwa membuktikan keberadaan Tuhan lebih masuk akal daripada argumen yang menolak keberadaan-Nya.

Kata Kunci: Said Nursi, Tuhan, Alam, Ateisme, Naturalisme

### Abstract

*This research examines Nursi's conceptualization of God and Nature as a critical response to Atheism and Naturalism. In their view, nature is an independent and self-operating system, so God has no place in the mechanism of nature. This view is inseparable from the secularism, materialism, positivism and scientism they uphold. Answering this problem, Said Nursi tried to respond to the*

*concept of God and Nature that was not in accordance with Islam, even the view actually degraded nature itself as God's creation. This study employs a qualitative approach and critical analysis methodology. The findings of the article reveal that Atheism and Naturalism have a false understanding of nature and God. In Nursi's view, nature depends on God and does not work alone. Said Nursi has also developed a theological understanding of nature, arguing that the existence of God can be inferred from the birth of the universe. Nursi revealed that the universe is a great book and a marvellous work of God's art, it is like a mirror that reflects the beauty of its Creator. Nursi said that proving God's existence makes more sense than the arguments that reject His existence.*

*Keywords: Said Nursi, God, Nature, Atheism, Naturalism*

## INTRODUCTION

The Renaissance, which took place in the Western world in the late sixteenth century, profoundly altered human self-perception and prompted individuals to reevaluate their understanding of the Ultimate Reality known as God. The alteration in perspective that transpired has led to a significant shift in the prevailing paradigm. This is demonstrated by the significant transition in Western civilization from geocentrism to heliocentrism, which has profoundly impacted theological, philosophical, and scientific discussions.<sup>1</sup> The shift in orientation that transpired during this period had a significantly wide-ranging and profound effect. While humans have regained their liberty and independence, they thereafter devote their life to the secular realm.<sup>2</sup> As a result, this newfound sense of self-governance and self-reliance prompted certain individuals to proclaim their liberation from the divine.

The prominent intellectuals of the 19th century were firmly convinced that religion would progressively diminish in significance and lose its importance.<sup>3</sup> By the conclusion of the century, a subset of individuals started to believe that if God was not deceased, it was the responsibility of logical and liberated individuals to terminate his existence.<sup>4</sup> This idea also confirmed a new theology in the modern century, namely the theology of "God is Dead" which emphasizes the

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<sup>1</sup> Howard Margolis, *Paradigms and Barriers: How Habits of Mind Govern Scientific Beliefs* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), p. 137.

<sup>2</sup> Koento Wibisono Siswomihardjo, *Ilmu Pengetahuan: Sebuah Sketsa Ilmu Mengenai Kelahiran Dan Perkembangannya Sebagai Pengantar Untuk Memahami Filsafat Ilmu* (Diktat Kuliah Filsafat Ilmu).

<sup>3</sup> Fauzan Fauzan, 'SEKULARISASI DALAM PANDANGAN HARVEY COX', *KALAM*, 6.2 (2017), 251 <<https://doi.org/10.24042/klm.v6i2.406>>.

<sup>4</sup> Karen Armstrong, *A History of God: The 4,000-Year Quest of Judaism, Christianity and Islam* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1994), p. 446.

characteristics of desacralization and secularization as a style of religious existence.<sup>5</sup>

In his work *The Secular City*, Harvey Cox elucidates that secularism encompasses more than just the removal of religion from daily life; it also entails a shift towards atheism and naturalism. He divided the impact of secularism into three; *Disenchantment of Nature*, where nature is only understood as material things so that spiritual and religious values are emptied in viewing nature. This is the beginning of the birth of Naturalism. *Disacrilization of Politics*, the exclusion of religious aspects in politics and the state. *Deconsecration of Values*, it is emptying of spiritual and religious values in life.<sup>6</sup> As a consequence of secularism, the distinction between religion and social life evolved into a dichotomy between religion and science. The dichotomy of religion and science results in a materialist view, so that science develops without religion.<sup>7</sup>

In addition, the rapidly developing modern science from the West not only brought progress, development, and evolution, but also brought a paradigm to society that only what can be observed is recognised. On many occasions, Al-Attas calls Western culture a secular Atheism culture, in the sense of not giving space to God in life and also in the world of science.<sup>8</sup> They perceive nature as autonomous, everlasting, and operating in accordance with its own system, so excluding God from the mechanics of the cosmos. Al-Attas stated that modern science has emerged and progressed from the philosophical belief that things originate from one another. All things that exist are a result of the advancement, growth, or transformation of what is dormant in everlasting substance. From this vantage point, the Earth seems as a self-sustaining and everlasting universe, operating in accordance with its own set of rules.<sup>9</sup>

The above view explains the reduction of reality in the universe which is the basis of scientific assumptions and states that what can be recognised as scientific

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<sup>5</sup>The idea of God's death was first echoed by Friedrich Nietzsche in a part of his book entitled *Die Fronliche Wissenschaft*, which he wrote in 1882. Harun Hadiwijono, *Teologi Reformatoris Abad Ke-20* (Jakarta: Gubug Mulia, 1993), p. 154.

<sup>6</sup> Harvey Cox, *The Secular City* (New York: McaMillan Company, 1965), pp. 30–37.

<sup>7</sup> The idea that the rise of a rational worldview has undermined the foundations of faith in a world of the supernatural, the mysterious, and magi, was strongly influenced by Max Weber. Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, ed. by T. Parsons (London & New York: Routledge Classics, 2001), p. 121; Max Weber, *The Sociology of Religion* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1993), p. 110; Peter L. Berger, *The Sacred Canopy: Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion* (New York: Doubleday & Company, 1969), pp. 109-125.

<sup>8</sup> Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas, *Islam Dan Filsafat Sains* (Bandung: Institut Pemikiran Islam dan Pembangunan Insan, 2010), pp. 28–29.

<sup>9</sup> Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas, "Prolegomena to the Metaphysics of Islam," *Kuala Lumpur: International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization*, 1995. 114; Al-Attas, *Islam Dan Filsafat Sains*. 27

truth is what is proven empirically. Syamsuddin Arif added that science that has developed in the world today contains several understandings, such as empiricism, rationalism, naturalism, secularism, and scientism. Truth cannot be taken from something supernatural or that is not natural. Therefore, something supernatural will certainly not be accepted by science. Naturalism is also known as practical atheism.<sup>10</sup>

Modern naturalist theology manifested its radical ideas beginning with the humanist movement in Italy in the 14th century and the renaissance and aufklarung movements that followed. Their most prominent slogan is that natural things in humans themselves have sufficient value to serve as the basis and target for the recognition and mastery of human life.<sup>11</sup> The slogan is the main idea in humanism. Hamid Fahmy explains that if religious pluralism moves the centre of the orbit of the religious world to one God, humanism moves the orbit of everything from God to humans. God is no longer the centre and measure of everything.<sup>12</sup> Finally, humans are no longer God's creatures, but the result of evolution.

This perspective led to the emergence of a novel theological doctrine known as Atheism. Atheism and Naturalism share same origins as they both reject the belief in the presence of God and the notion that the cosmos was created by a divine being. This view, which is characteristic of the West, was propagated in the Westernisation programme. One of the main programmes of Westernisation was the discourse of atheism, which led to the dissolution of belief in God and nature.

According to Antony Black, Westernisation gave rise to a new relationship between Islam, then represented by the Uthmânî government, and the West.<sup>13</sup> Westernisation can mean the unity of ideas that form a lifestyle that enters the system in its totality.<sup>14</sup> In the same vein, westernisation is the process of transforming Western-derived values into other societies.<sup>15</sup> The process of Westernization originated in Turkey and then disseminated to other regions of the

<sup>10</sup> Tonny Ilham Prayogo, 'Ateisme Dalam Perspektif Barat Dan Timur', *Kalimah: Jurnal Studi Agama Dan Pemikiran Islam*, 17.1 (2019), 105 <<https://doi.org/10.21111/klm.v17i1.2943>>.

<sup>11</sup> Himyari Yusuf, 'TEOLOGI NATURALISME DAN IMPLIKASINYA TERHADAP PARADIGMA PERADABAN MANUSIA KONTEMPORER', *KALAM*, 7.2 (2017), 217 <<https://doi.org/10.24042/klm.v7i2.453>>.

<sup>12</sup> Hamid Fahmy Zarkasyi, *Misykat: Refleksi Tentang Westernisasi, Liberalisasi, Dan Islam* (Jakarta: Insist - MIUMI, 2012), p. 31.

<sup>13</sup> Antony Black, *Pemikiran Politik Islam: Dari Masa Nabi Hingga Masa Kini*, ed. by Abdullah Ali (Jakarta: Serambi, 2006), p. 496.

<sup>14</sup> Nurcholis Majid, *Islam: Kemodernan Dan Keindonesiaan* (Bandung: Mizan, 2008), p. 201.

<sup>15</sup> M. Dawam Rahardjo, *Intelektual, Inteligensia, Dan Perilaku Politik Bangsa* (Bandung: Mizan, 1996), p. 13.

Islamic continent. The reformers initiated a revitalization campaign to address the societal and ethical deterioration resulting from the Westernization of Islam. They held the belief that the primary cause of the Ummah's downfall was its departure from genuine Islam.<sup>16</sup>

In response to the issue, Said Nursi, a renowned Muslim scholar recognized as one of the most astute Islamic intellectuals of contemporary times, possesses a vision of revitalizing Islam as a vibrant faith and ensuring its relevance in the present age. Furthermore, Nursi resided in an era characterized by the pinnacle of materialism and atheism, during which the country formally adopted a secular atheistic ideology.<sup>17</sup> Subsequently, Nursi developed his thoughts and ideas contained in his work *Kulliyat Risalah Nur* to answer the views of naturalists and atheists towards God and nature. How does Said Nursi view the concept of God and Nature? Is Nature dependent on God? What is Nursi's critique of Atheism and Naturalism which states that Nature is perfect without God?

To show the novelty in this research, the researcher will explain the differences from several previous studies, including "Metode dan Pendekatan Pembuktian Wujud Tuhan: Studi Pemikiran Muhammad Iqbal dan Bediuzzaman Said Nursi"<sup>18</sup>, "Reposisi Konsep Ketuhanan: Tanggapan Muhammad Iqbal dan Said Nursi atas Perjumpaan Islam dan Sains"<sup>19</sup> and "The Concept of God According to Sa'id Nursi".<sup>20</sup> In some of these studies, there is no research that focuses on the concept of God and Nature according to Said Nursi and the relationship between the two. On the other hand, previous studies did not criticize the views of Atheism and Naturalism as researchers will discuss. Therefore, this research has differences and shows novelty from previous research studies.

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<sup>16</sup> Nur Hasan, 'Kritik Islamic Worldview Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas Terhadap Western Worldview', *Maraji' Journal of Islamic Studies*, 1.1 (2014), 115–45.

<sup>17</sup> Sukran Vahide, *Biografi Intelektual Bediuzzaman Said Nursi: Transformasi Dinasti Usmani Menjadi Republik Turki* (Jakarta: Anatolia, 2007). 15-17.

<sup>18</sup> Maftukhin Maftukhin and Akhmad Rizqon Khamami, 'METODE DAN PENDEKATAN PEMBUKTIAN WUJUD TUHAN: Studi Pemikiran Muhammad Iqbal Dan Bediuzzaman Said Nursi', *ULUL ALBAB Jurnal Studi Islam*, 19.2 (2018), 290–314 <<https://doi.org/10.18860/ua.v19i2.5418>>.

<sup>19</sup> M Maftukhin, 'REPOSISI KONSEP KETUHANAN: TANGGAPAN MUHAMMAD IQBAL DAN SAID NURSI ATAS PERJUMPAAN ISLAM DAN SAINS', *Epistemé: Jurnal Pengembangan Ilmu Keislaman*, 2017 <<https://doi.org/10.21274/epis.2017.12.1.77-102>>.

<sup>20</sup> Achmad Reza Hutama Al Faruqi, Rif'at Husnul Ma'afi, and Filaila Nurfaiza, 'The Concept of God According to Sa'id Nursi', *International Journal Ihya' Ulum Al-Din*, 23.2 (2021), 194–209 <<https://doi.org/10.21580/ihya.23.2.7253>>.

## METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach, specifically library research,<sup>21</sup> and utilizes analytical and critical methodologies.<sup>22</sup> In the analysis method, the researcher will observe a research object in detail by describing and assembling these components for further study.<sup>23</sup> In critical method, researcher must first doubt what is obtained from research sources in conducting research.<sup>24</sup> Then questioning, comparing, and suspending conclusions before solid evidence is obtained.<sup>25</sup> The primary data source is *Kulliyat Rasail Nur* by Badiuzzaman Said Nursi along with several related journals, books and articles as secondary data. This study will use this work to analyze Said Nursi's critique on Naturalism and Ateism in an integrated and coherent manner. These data were obtained using content analysis techniques.<sup>26</sup>

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### The Intellectual Geneology of Said Nursi

In general, the period of Nursi's life is divided into three parts, namely *Sa'îd al-Qadîm* which is a long period of Said Nursi's life who struggled and was directly involved with political movements in the Ottoman government. The second period is *Sa'îd al-Jadîd* which is a period full of intellectual contemplation about the fate of the Muslim Ummah in dealing with modern ideologies with systematic efforts to erode faith. While the third period is *Said al-Tsâlits*, the period of Said Nursi whose whole life was entrusted to the development of Muslims by teaching the knowledge of the Quran to the public about the importance of faith for the establishment of eternal peace in the world and the hereafter.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>21</sup> Mestika Zed, *Metode Penelitian Kepustakaan* (Jakarta: Yayasan Obor Indonesia, 2004), p. 45.

<sup>22</sup> Mariano M. Ariola, *Principles and Methods of Research* (Manilla: REX Book Store, 2006); Gyung-Jin Park, *Analytic Methods for Design Practice* (London: Springer, 2006).

<sup>23</sup> Kenneth M. Sayre, *Plato's Analytic Method* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969). 22-25.

<sup>24</sup> Robert D. Denham, *Northrop Frye and Critical Method* (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1978); Arthur John Alfred Waldock, *Hamlet a Study in Critical Method* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1931). 1-10.

<sup>25</sup> Lorraine Greaves and Sandra Kirby Colleen Reid, *Experience Research Social Change: Critical Methods* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2017). 20-21.

<sup>26</sup> Hamzah Amir, *Metode Penelitian Kepustakaan* (Jakarta: Literasi Nusantara, 2020), p. 31.

<sup>27</sup> Ihsan Kasim Salih, *Said Nursi Pemikir Dan Sufi Besar Abad 20; Membebaskan Agama Dari Dogmatisme Dan Sekularisme Said Nursi* (Jakarta: Murai Kencana, 2003). 50

Said Nursi is a distinguished and insightful modern Islamic intellectual. He was born in 1293 H/1876 M under the name *Said bin Mirza*. Said Nursi hails from the village of Nurs, situated in the Khaizan region of Bitlis, located in eastern Anatolia. His father, Mirza, belonged to Naqsyabandiyyah Sufi order, and his mother's name is Nuriye. He was born in the late period of the *Uthmani* caliphate, under the rule of Sultan Abdul Hamid II.<sup>28</sup> Nursi started seeking knowledge from the age of nine. His penchant for studying makes it easy for him to master a lot of knowledge. This then becomes the background of his frequent move of learning from one place to another. The places he visited to study were Tagh, Birmis, Nurshin, Arvas, Muks, Gewash, and Buyazet. In these various places, Said Nursi met with teachers who influenced him in science.<sup>29</sup>

At the age of 14, Nursi was nicknamed "*Molla*" because he was able to complete his studies in six months, which usually takes fifteen to twenty years.<sup>30</sup> Nursi also had the habit of attending recitations from one place to another, which made him more developed than his fellow students. By the time he was 16, Said Nursi had memorised and mastered *turats* (traditional) books.<sup>31</sup> Furthermore, Said Nursi demonstrated proficiency in contemporary disciplines. The title *Badiuzzaman* was given to Said Nursi as a form of recognition by scholars and scientists in Turkey for his glory in mastering all kinds of knowledge. With the depth of knowledge he achieved, Nursi then wanted to teach, develop, and combine religious knowledge with modern science to Muslims, especially in Turkey.<sup>32</sup> In Nursi's view, he considered that the decline of Islam at that time was due to Muslims being allergic to the progress of modern science so that in the end Muslims were kept away from the progress of the times. This view then encouraged Nursi to establish a school with a system that combines religion and modern science in Anatolia.<sup>33</sup>

Regarding Said Nursi's thought about Islam, his thought closely aligns with his father who was a member of the Naqshbandi Sufi order. Said Nursi's life also received a lot of spiritual guidance from Sheikh Abdul Qadir al-Jailani, although

<sup>28</sup> Ihsan Qasim ash-Shalihi, *Risalah Kebangkitan: Pengumpulan Makhluk Di Padang Mabsyar*, ed. by Fauzi Faisal Bahreisy (Jakarta: Anatolia, 2011). V.

<sup>29</sup> Vahide, *Biografi Intelektual Bediuzzaman Said Nursi: Transformasi Dinasti Usmani Menjadi Republik Turki*. 30

<sup>30</sup> Akhmad Rizqon Khamami, 'Kontribusi Gerakan Nurcu Dalam Kebangkitan Islam Di Turki', *Islamica: UIN Sunan Ampel*, Vol. 10.1 (2015), 10–19. 5

<sup>31</sup> Habiburrahman El Shirazy, *Api Taubid: Cahaya Keagungan Cinta Sang Mujaddid* (Jakarta: Republika, 2014). 202

<sup>32</sup> Salih, p. 14.

<sup>33</sup> Vahide, *Biografi Intelektual Bediuzzaman Said Nursi: Transformasi Dinasti Usmani Menjadi Republik Turki*. 25

Nursi never met him in person, but Nursi seems to have a mystical relationship with him.<sup>34</sup> Furthermore, Nursi recognised that there were several great teachers who shaped the characteristics of his religious thought. These individuals included Seyyid Nur Muhammad, Sheikh Abdurrahman Tagi, Sheikh Fehim, Sheikh Muhammad Kufrevi, Sheikh Emin Efendi, Molla Fethullah, and Sheikh Fethullah Efendi.<sup>35</sup> Nursi drew unique insights into various religious sciences from each of these teachers, which played a crucial role in shaping his intellectual and spiritual life.

One of Said Nursi's monumental works is *Risālah al-Nūr*. It is an interpretation of the Quran which focuses on matters of faith which is the greatest work of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi. The main source of his work uses the Al-Qur'an and Ḥadith. It was compiled and written by Said Nursi himself and sometimes it was written by his students which he then double-checked. Its thickness reaches approximately 6000 pages. *Risālah al-Nūr* has been written in several parts. His writing took place in an atmosphere of society and threats against Islam which were very bitter in order to save the people's faith at that time.<sup>36</sup> On this basis, Said Nursi's goal in writing *Risālah al-Nūr* was to dispel the doubts of Western-educated people about the Quran and the Islamic religion because many Turkish students have swallowed knowledge of secular Atheism western thought. Said Nursi was determined to make people aware that they would not be eroded by Western culture. In *Risālah al-Nūr* to students and Muslims in Turkey, Said Nursi worked closely with his students. His book was copied as much as possible in manual writing and distributed to various direction and places.<sup>37</sup>

At that time, the writings of *risalah nur* were increasingly being spread and accepted by the Turkish population because of the efforts of Said Nursi and his students through government support. Furthermore, after the Kemal Ataturk dynasty was vanished, Said Nursi resided with his devoted disciples to provide guidance and instruction on the da'wah approach of *Risālah al-Nūr*. Subsequently,

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<sup>34</sup> Sukran Vahide, *The Author of The Risale-i Nur: Bediüzzaman Said Nursi* (Istanbul: Sozler Publications, 1992), p. 43.

<sup>35</sup> Ihsân Qâsim al-Sâlihî, *Badî' Al-Zamân Sa'îd Al-Nursi: Nadrah 'âmmah 'an Hayâtih Wa Atsârib* (Al-Maghrîb: Matba'at al-Najâh al-Jadîdah, 1999), p. 23.

<sup>36</sup> Wan Jaffree Wan Sulaiman, *Mujaddid Islam Bediüzzaman Said Nursi* (Kedah: Hizbi, 1987). 3.

<sup>37</sup> Salih. 24-25

Said Nursi passed away on March 23, 1960 AD, which coincided with the 25th of Ramadhan 1379 H. Said Nursi was interred in Ulu Jami' on March 24, 1960 AD.<sup>38</sup>

Based on this brief biography, it can be inferred that Said Nursi was an Islamic luminary and intellectual who was born and resided during the period of transition from caliph to republic at the conclusion of the Ottoman Empire. He was a dedicated intellectual who actively advocated for the integration of Islam as a comprehensive lifestyle, despite the challenges posed by Western colonialism and the impact of secular ideologies propagated by Western intellectuals.

### **Atheism and Naturalism: Definition and Issues**

Atheism is a philosophical view that affirms the nonexistence of God or rejection of theism.<sup>39</sup> It can be defined broadly as the lack of belief in the existence of God in relation to the natural origins of the universe. The term Atheism comes from the Greek word *atheos*, and this term is always used to refer to anyone whose beliefs conflict with religion. According to Kamus Filsafat, Atheism is the absence of belief in a special God and the doubt of a supernatural existence which is supposed to affect the universe. In Arabic, the term Atheism becomes *ilhadiyyah* which means "deviate" because the opposite is something that is known, in this case it is still in line with Kamus Filsafat which has the meaning of denying one God and the nature contained in it.<sup>40</sup>

Furthermore, the view of Atheism breeds skepticism towards the phenomenon of paranormal existence due to a lack of empirical evidence. Skepticism is an understanding that views something as always uncertain, meaning that someone's disbelief or doubt about something that is not necessarily true.<sup>41</sup> According to Badawi, the principle brought by atheists is the tendency to use reason (rationalism) as the ruler and the first and last determinant where no one has the right to refuse and annul his decision on everything.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Vahide, *Biografi Intelektual Bediuzzaman Said Nursi: Transformasi Dinasti Usmani Menjadi Republik Turki*. 342-345

<sup>39</sup> William L. Rowe, 'Atheism', in *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (London: Routledge) <<https://doi.org/10.4324/9780415249126-K002-1>>.

<sup>40</sup> Lorens Bagus, *Kamus Filsafat* (Jakarta: Gramedia Pustaka Utama, 2002). 95

<sup>41</sup> Ichwan Hakiem, 'Aliran Skeptisisme', *Blogspot*, 2013 <<http://elmuzer.blogspot.com/2013/03/aliran-skeptisisme.html>> [accessed 24 July 2023].

<sup>42</sup> Abdurrahman Badawi, *Sejarah Ateis Islam*, ed. by Sarah Stroumsa (Jakarta: LKiS Printing Cemerlang, 2003). 56.

In the book *History of God*, Karen Armstrong said, after experiencing a long phase of the dark ages in Europe, Western civilization then developed a philosophy of secular science that rejected the existence and presence of God in all aspects of life. God is seen as something that interferes with human freedom.<sup>43</sup> The same thing was conveyed by Charles Robert Darwin in his book "*The Origin of Species*" which concluded that God had no role in creation.<sup>44</sup> According to them, God did not create living things, but all that was caused by natural conditions naturally (Evolution). So that the nature of it all aims towards the secularization of science.

Western secular philosophy of science rests on reason alone and rejects revelation as the source of knowledge of all natural creation. The concept of thinking about God by the West is based on the concepts of "exist" and "not exist," in this case it has the consequence "exist" means being born in the world and having real substances and characteristics. Whereas "not exist" has a lost concept from a world that is not in the form of matter and does not have certain properties.<sup>45</sup> The result of this is the marginalization of God's existence into a more irrational realm.<sup>46</sup> So far, supporters of Atheism prioritize reason in viewing science through material understanding. Richard C. Lewontin stated that materialism is absolute because atheists cannot accept the personal presence of the Divine. So, materialists embrace the only alternative that exists, it is the evolution. Therefore, Atheism considers the origin of life to be caused by objects or matter.<sup>47</sup>

Like Atheism, Naturalism has in common that it is only based on rational reason alone with empirical evidence. In general, the main points of Naturalism theology can be understood considers that besides having definite laws, this universe also has perfect nature and there is no need for the intervention of the creator or God.<sup>48</sup> Furthermore, this universe occurs and becomes by itself according to character or based on the law of causality.<sup>49</sup> Relevant to the view before, Kattsoff also explained that according to Naturalism, the universe and

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<sup>43</sup> Karen Armstrong, 346

<sup>44</sup> Charles Darwin, *The Origin of Species* (New York: Prometheus Books, 1991). 235.

<sup>45</sup> H.M. Rasyidi, *Filsafat Agama* (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1970). 50.

<sup>46</sup> Muhammad Hasan Qadr, *Al-Qur'an Dan Sekularisme: Agama Dan Politik Di Antara Pengalaman Religijs Dan Falsafah Kenabian*, ed. by Ammar Fauzi Heryadi (Jakarta: Sadra International Institute, 2011). 49.

<sup>47</sup> Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania, 'Yang Manakah Yang Lebih Masuk Akal?', *Website*, 2011 <<https://wol.jw.org/id/wol/d/r25/lp-in/102011403>> [accessed 24 July 2023].

<sup>48</sup> Zubaidi Mastal, *Perkembangan Teologi Modern: Materialisme Dan Sekularisme* (Lampung: IAIN Raden Intan, 1992). 34.

<sup>49</sup> Louis Leahy, *Filsafat Ketuhanan Kontemporer* (Yogyakarta: Kanisius, 1993). 19.

humans move or walk by themselves and everything is eternal. Naturalism also openly rejects the existence of the supernatural or super-natural and understands the universe as a mechanistic order that can move by itself.<sup>50</sup>

Shortly, the main theological ideas of Naturalism and Atheism are an understanding that is anti-God. The essence of this view is that there really is no such thing as God, the existence of God does not make sense and cannot be proven rationally and empirically.<sup>51</sup> At a glance the description of the main points of thought mentioned above, philosophically it can be interpreted that; the existence of humans and the universe no longer requires involvement or has nothing to do with God, because humans and the universe without God's intervention can live properly and can run as they should.

### Said Nursi's Argument on Proving the Existence of Allah SWT

Bediuzzaman Said Nursi has formulated a theological comprehension of nature, wherein he has elucidated that theology encompasses a vast majority of the same domain as natural science.<sup>52</sup> Bediuzzaman effectively established the Existence of God, Allah SWT, by presenting comprehensible narratives, analogies, explanations, and logical evidence. He demonstrated that the truths of religion are not contradictory to the discoveries of modern science, but rather, the materialistic interpretation of those discoveries is illogical and nonsensical. Indeed, Bediuzzaman demonstrated in the *Risale-i Nur* that the awe-inspiring revelations of science on the workings of the universe provide evidence that supports and strengthens the principles of religion.<sup>53</sup> In general the arguments made by Nursi are included in the category of teleological arguments. He uses a variety of delivery styles including, among others, stories, dialogues, analogies, arguments for impossibility, and arguments for the order of nature using the latest developments in science. In addition, Bediuzzaman also uses *asma 'al-husna* to reinforce the argument he is conveying.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> Louis Kattsoff, *Pengantar Filsafat*, ed. by Soejono Soemargono (Yogyakarta: Tiara Wacana, 1992). 117.

<sup>51</sup> Mastal. 35.

<sup>52</sup> Mohammad Dawood Sofi, 'Knowledge—Toward Bridging Religious and Modern Sciences: Bediuzzaman Said Nursi's Approach', *Journal of Islamic Thought and Civilization*, 03.02 (2013), 13–20 <<https://doi.org/10.32350/jitc.32.02>>. 17.

<sup>53</sup> Bediuzzaman Said Nursi, *The Damascus Sermon* (Istanbul: Sozler Publications, 1996). 9.

<sup>54</sup> Maftukhin and Khamami. 300-302.

To present and elucidate the truth of God as the creator through arguments that align with the scientific advancements of the era. The majority of his arguments were directed towards Atheists and Naturalists. One of them in his argument that uses the form of a story, Nursi often brings up several imaginary characters. Often he uses stories about two friends. These characters are rarely named. The first figure usually represents the perspective of Bediuzzaman, while the second figure represents the Atheist perspective.<sup>55</sup>

In one story session, Nursi tells the story of two friends, each representing two philosophical perspectives on nature. The first person represents the theist group's thinking along with the theory of creation, while the second person represents the atheist group along with the theory of evolution. Atheism is a philosophical perspective that encompasses the ideologies of materialism and naturalism. One time these two friends got lost in a strange city. They see the city neatly arranged. The theist admires the city in order and order. He thought, there must be someone who arranged all that. This city definitely has a leader. The magnificent houses must have their makers, and the beautiful palace certainly has an architect. Let's meet them, invite the theist. The atheist said: "Show me the proof of the existence of the ruler and ruler of this city." The theist, as a representation of Bediuzzaman's thoughts, then revealed a number of arguments about the existence of a city regulator by citing and mentioning some evidence.<sup>56</sup> Bediuzzaman wants to reveal that God is the ruler and regulator of nature through that story. The technique of using stories like this is intended to be easily understood, even by those who only have limited intellectual capacity and do not believe in the existence of Creator.

In addition to using stories, Nursi also uses dialogue. One of the dialogue to prove God as the owner of the universe, Bediuzzaman became the mediator between the conversation of two people who arrived in a city. They saw that the doors of the house were unlocked and valuables were everywhere. The first person picked up valuable things because he thought the house did not have an owner. Whereas the second person argues, they both must respect and show respect to the owner by not picking it up because there must be an owner of the object even though it is unknown somewhere. However, the first person insisted on his

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<sup>55</sup> Mehmet Ozalp, 'God and Tawhid in Classical Islamic Theology and Said Nursi's Risale-i Nur' (University of Sydney, 2016). 216-220.

<sup>56</sup> Bediuzzaman Said Nursi, *The Words* (Istanbul: Nesil, 2005). 15-19.

attitude on the grounds he did not see a single person. Then the second person makes an argument about the owner. From the dialogue between the two people, Nursi wanted to tell us that the universe also has an owner, and that is proof of the God existence.<sup>57</sup>

Said Nursi also uses an analogy to refute the view of Naturalism which says that everything is born by itself and the universe is a mechanical system. Nursi employs an analogy in his writings to illustrate the concept of the cells within the human body. The human body consists of cells that tirelessly perform their functions. The cell knows its position so that the body can function. All cells know where to stay. The cells needed by the eye are in their location. Cells don't fight over positions. In addition, if it is said the human body formed by itself, then there must be a mold that can produce body cells. Because there is no mold, the human body must be a product of a Creative Figure. Only God the creator who can create such a wonderful system in human body.<sup>58</sup>

The impossibility argument is one of Said Nursi's techniques to reverse the opponent's argument. Bediuzzaman attacked Atheism dan Naturalism which threw away spiritual and supernatural explanations in the creation of nature. Bediuzzaman tried to break the argument of Naturalism by displaying some impossibilities. For example, to refute the notion that "cause" is considered to be the creator of things and creatures, Nursi offers an analogy about pharmaceutical shops filled with drugs. In addition to having their respective properties, each drug has its own healing qualities. The healing quality of the drug is obtained from certain ingredients at the right dose according to an accurate prescription. If mixed haphazardly, the drug will actually become poisonous. Therefore it is impossible if the mixing and dosage of drugs occur accidentally without the intervention of an expert who regulates the composition. Likewise, it is also impossible if living things on earth were created by chance when it turns out that every living thing is composed of various chemical elements with very precise measurements. These living things, which are composed of various chemical elements, must have been produced by the owner of all-knowing knowledge.<sup>59</sup>

The next step, Nursi uses the argument of nature's order. To illustrate it, Bediuzzaman used the story of a traveler who walked through the universe to test

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<sup>57</sup> Nursi, *The Words*. 20

<sup>58</sup> Bediuzzaman Said Nursi, *The Flashes* (Istanbul: Nesil, 2004). 298.

<sup>59</sup> Nursi, *The Flashes*. 103.

everything in collaboration with one another so as to create order. The traveler found several things: earth, stars, atmosphere, planets, rivers, oceans, mountains, meadows, trees, and animals. When the traveler descended into the lower sky, he found the atmosphere serves to maintain the survival of living things on earth. Air to breathe. Airspace to transmit a number of sound waves simultaneously without chaos. The wind helps sow the seeds of plants. Rainwater watering plants with an accurate speed so that plants are not damaged and can live. Of course rainwater is not able to know the needs of earth creatures, therefore the benefits of this water can only be concluded as part of God's merciful nature.<sup>60</sup> The natural order argument can be succinctly described as the divine arrangement. The logical form can be summarized as follows: natural order is found; This order requires certain qualities such as all-powerful; none of the entities in this nature has these characteristics; Therefore, it must only God possesses these properties.<sup>61</sup>

Nursi thinks that the consistency of natural phenomena is a divine miracle. Nature is a holy book in physical form.<sup>62</sup> Nature is a book that contains laws about how God works. In addition, nature itself is a work of art. Nature could not make himself as the creator of the art itself. Nature does not become its creator. Nature is a passive recipient. Bediuzzaman's conclusion, because all naturalist and atheist group theories about the origin of the universe cannot provide a satisfying explanation, it seems impossible, with the existence of God which is a certainty.<sup>63</sup> Nursi acknowledges that demonstrating the existence of God is generally regarded as a more feasible task than proving the absence of God. The existence of God is more rational than the arguments that deny God's existence. He stated that there is no god but Allah SWT, the Necessary Being, whose existence is testified by the heavens and everything they encompass. This testimony is based on the profound truth of subjugation, administration, ordering, and cleansing. Employment, a profound and flawless reality, that must be adhered to.<sup>64</sup>

### The Quran and Nature as a Manifestation of God's Sign

<sup>60</sup> Badiuzzaman Said Nursi, *The Rays* (Istanbul: Nesil, 2004). 149

<sup>61</sup> Cafer S. Yaran, *Islamic Thought on the Existence of God: With Contributions from Contemporary Western Philosophy of Religion* (Washington: Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 2003). 33.

<sup>62</sup> Akhmad Rizqon Khamami, 'Membangun Peradaban Dengan Epistemologi Baru: Membaca Pemikiran Said Nursi', *TSAQAFAH*, 2015 <<https://doi.org/10.21111/tsaqafah.v11i1.253>>. 65

<sup>63</sup> Nursi, *The Flashes*. 305.

<sup>64</sup> Badiuzzaman Said Nursi, *Staff of Moses* (Cairo: Sozler Publications, 2004). 98.

According to Said Nursi, the universe and the Qur'an are revelations, but the rejection of Atheism and Naturalism causes a mismatch to Islam. In essence, Science and the Qur'an never contradict, even the Qur'an protects and encourages science. Said Nursi expounded in the *Risale-i Nur* that there exists no conflict or division between science and religion; instead, genuine advancement and contentment for humanity may alone be attained through this path, the path of the Qur'an.<sup>65</sup> Said Nursi not only states that there is no separation between science and religion but also has the view that all knowledge ultimately brings us closer to Allah, “..each science you study continuously speaks of God, the Creator, and makes Him known in its own tongue.”<sup>66</sup>

In Said Nursi's view did not rely only on rational calculations based on speculation alone, but also on deductive logic based on scientific evidence and observation. He distinguishes between the physical meaning of things as material matter (*mana-yi ismi*) and the transcendent meaning where matter is a sign and manifestation of God (*mana-yi harfi*). Meanwhile, according to Nursi, Materialism occupies the wrong position because of their reliant on material (*ismi*), while the true nature of things is a shadow of the nature and name of God (*harfi*).<sup>67</sup>

To replace the wrong understanding of Atheism and Naturalism, Nursi offers spiritual awareness based on the Qur'an in understanding nature. One thing that needs to be underlined here is the inseparable ontological relationship between God and His servants, between the Creator and His creation. This means that the existence of nature cannot be separated from the existence of Allah SWT, who is the center of existence. In relation to God, Nursi understands that the universe is the manifestations (*tajalliyāt*) of Allah. Meanwhile, in relation to nature, Nursi understands nature as the strongest sign or proof of the existence of Allah SWT.<sup>68</sup>

First, the universe is a mighty book. Comprehending the intricacies of the universe is akin to comprehending the Qur'an, a divine scripture bestowed by Allah. For Nursi, the universe is the mighty book, while al-Qur'an is an interpretation or explanation; “Praise be to God, Whom, according to the Qur'an of Mighty Stature, which is its expounder, this mighty book known as the universe praises

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<sup>65</sup> Nursi, *The Damascus Sermon*. 12.

<sup>66</sup> Nursi, *The Words*. 169.

<sup>67</sup> Ibrahim M. Abu-Rabi, *Islam at the Crossroads: On the Life and Thought of Bediüzzaman Said Nursi* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2003). 11-12.

<sup>68</sup> Nursi, *The Flashes*. 415 & 608.

and extols with all its chapters and sections, all its pages and lines, all its world and letters - the Most Pure and Holy One, Whom it praises and extols through making manifest His attributes of beauty and perfection."<sup>69</sup> He asserted that the universe is a holy book that reflects God's shadow. He called this holy book of the universe as a revelation in the form of physical nature.<sup>70</sup> Therefore, conducting a scientific inquiry is considered a reading of this revelation. By using these methods, Said Nursi was able to explain the order of nature as evidence of the existence of a Creator.

Second, Nature is not an ordinary book created by God, it is a wonderful work of art, superb and great. Thus, this book is very full of meaning; *"The imaginary and insubstantial thing that Naturalists call Nature, if it has an external reality, can at the very most be work of art; it cannot be the Artist. It is an embroidery, and cannot be the Embroiderer. It is a set of decrees; it cannot be the Issuer of the decrees. It is a body of the laws of creation, and cannot be the Lawgiver. It is but a created screen to the dignity of God, and cannot be the Creator. It is passive and created, and cannot be a Creative Maker. It is a law, not a power, and cannot possess power. It is the recipient, and cannot be the source."*<sup>71</sup>

Third, the universe is a mirror that reflects the beauty of God's attributes. Nursi stated that the universe and every creature in it is a mirror in knowing the Creator, in straightforward language, he explained *"Thus, hundreds of other sciences like these make known the Glorious Creator of the universe together with His Names, each through its broad measure or scale, its particular mirror, its far-seeing eyes, and searching gaze; they make known His attributes and perfections"*.<sup>72</sup> Thus, nature that reflects the beauty of God's name basically has a sacred meaning and dimension in itself with the main aim of getting to know the Creator, Allah SWT.

Said Nursi is deeply concerned about the resurgence of Islamic faith among Turkish citizens, while intelligent naturalist philosophers aggressively criticize the Qur'an and vehemently reject its truth, dismissing anything beyond their comprehension as superstitious or non-existent, and grounding their beliefs solely in nature.<sup>73</sup> However, it is a reality that they are unable to comprehend the true nature of the Qur'an and its indications, Nursi said *"O you mistaken unfortunate! Your foolishness exceeds anything imaginable! Lift your head out of the swamp of Nature*

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<sup>69</sup> Nursi, *The Rays*. 654-655

<sup>70</sup> Badiuzzaman Said Nursi, *Signs of Miraculousness* (Istanbul: Sozler, 1994). 16.

<sup>71</sup> Nursi, *The Flashes*. 244.

<sup>72</sup> Nursi, *The Words*. 171.

<sup>73</sup> Vahide, *The Author of The Risale-i Nur: Bediüzzaman Said Nursi*. 6-7.

*and look beyond yourself! See an All-Glorious Maker to Whom all beings from particles to planets testify with their different tongues and Whom they indicate with their fingers! Behold the manifestation of the Pre-Eternal Inscraper, Who fashions the palace and Who writes its programme in the notebook! Study His decree, listen to the Qur'an! Be delivered from your delirious raving!"<sup>74</sup>*

The emergence of Atheism and Naturalism has become a threat to Islamic society. Nursi with his ideas tried to stem the understandings that damage Muslims. Here, researchers agree with the thoughts initiated by Bediuzzaman Said Nursi. This is due to the needs of Muslims today for the importance of understanding and studying Islam so that they are not trapped in the wrong way of thinking, even believing in the entirety of what is brought by Western thinkers. Said Nursi's critique of Atheism and Naturalism paved the way for Muslims to understand the dangers facing Islam today. Said Nursi fought against it with logical and rational arguments but still based on the Qur'an. This is in accordance with the understanding of Atheism and Naturalism which uses reason as the main motor and empirical as its object, so this understanding must be resisted in the same way. Said Nursi offered a resolution for understanding the essence of God's existence and his connection to the universe. Said Nursi employed the Qur'an as a conduit to comprehend the essence of nature and the role of God as its creator.

### **Said Nursi's Criticism on Atheism and Naturalism**

Said Nursi's criticism on Atheism and Naturalism is inseparable from the secularization that spread in the Ottoman Empire. In the view of Atheism and Naturalism; God, angels, and all supernatural things which cannot be proven in the senses, are considered to be non-existent and not exist. Nursi said that the perceived conflict between certain aspects of modern science and the fundamental principles of Islam hindered the widespread acceptance of these scientific ideas in the past. Scientists and philosophers resisted Islam due to their lack of knowledge and understanding. For instance, they mistakenly believed that the two angels, *Thawr* and *Hut*, who are tasked with overseeing the earth, were physical creatures in the form of a large bull and fish, but in reality they are composed of spirit. There

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<sup>74</sup> Nursi, *Staff of Moses*. 164

exist other instances similar to this particular one. Upon discovering the truth, even the most dogmatic philosopher is obliged to yield to it.<sup>75</sup>

The followers of Atheism and Naturalism ignores the transcendent interpretation by exaggerating the essence of nature that does not need God. Therefore Nursi considers the Atheism and Naturalism can never be accommodated in Islam.<sup>76</sup> In Nursi's view, he believes that followers of Atheism and Naturalism have a wrong understanding of nature. Their mistake, according to Nursi, lies in the conceptualization of nature as a closed system that is *self-sustaining* and the loss of its *contingent* nature. In Nursi's view, nature depends on God (*contingent*); nature does not work alone (*self-sustaining*). He clarified that the concept known as "Nature" among Naturalists, which is intangible and unreal, can, at most, be considered a work of art; it cannot be the creator. The object in question is related to embroidery, but it cannot be the one who performs needlework, known as the Embroiderer. The entity in question is a collection of official orders, and hence lacks the authority to issue these orders. The text represents a compilation of laws governing creation and does not possess the authority to enact legislation. The screen is merely a human creation that does not possess the divine qualities of God, and hence cannot be considered the Creator. The being is passive and artificial, and lacks the ability to be a Creative Maker. The law is a legal principle that does not have the ability to exert power. The recipient is incapable of becoming the source.<sup>77</sup>

To understand Bediuzzaman's thoughts further, we need to know the following two terms that Bediuzzaman raised: *mana-yi ismi* (emphasizing the physical meaning) and *mana-yi harfi* (emphasizing the transcendent meaning).<sup>78</sup> Nursi explained that all natural phenomenas, besides having an immanent physical meaning (*mana-yi ismi*), also have a transcendent meaning (*mana-yi harfi*) that refers to the Creator of the natural law itself, God. Through these arguments, Said Nursi perceives nature and science as a compilation of indications of the existence of the Divine. He elucidates that by studying and contemplating, that is,

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<sup>75</sup> Nursi, *The Damascus Sermon*. 33

<sup>76</sup> Şükran Vahide and Ibrahim M. Abu-Rabi, *Islam in Modern Turkey: An Intellectual Biography of Bediüzzaman Said Nursi* (New York: SUNY Press, 2005). 195.

<sup>77</sup> Nursi, *The Flashes*. 244.

<sup>78</sup> *Mana-yi Harfi* refers to the Qur'anic perspective that objects symbolize something beyond themselves, namely indicating their Creator and His Names and attributes. This concept likens the relationship between objects and their meaning to that of a letter or word representing its writer. In contrast, *Mana-yi Ismi* suggests that objects alone represent themselves. Nursi, *The Words*. 757.

by perceiving things as symbols of something beyond themselves, one can appreciate the artistry of the Creator and exclaim, "How skillfully the Maker fashioned these, how excellently He executed them!" rather than simply remarking, "How beautiful they are!". By seeing the universe from this perspective, one can observe the inscriptions of the Pre-Eternal Inscraper, His orderly and wise design, and glimpses of purpose and art, which will dispel any uncertainties and lead to the realization that the sciences can serve as a means to attain knowledge of God. However, if you consider things in terms of their inherent nature, stating that "the thing looks to itself," and apply this perspective to the cosmos, regardless of the depth of your scientific understanding, it will still be considered a state of ignorance. Meaningless truths lose their value in incompetent hands. There are numerous witnesses to this.<sup>79</sup>

In Said Nursi's opinion, the basic problem of Atheism and Naturalism is their neglectful attitude towards the interpretation of nature's transcendent and overestimating the meaning of immanence.<sup>80</sup> Nursi also stated that an atheist society is a society that is sick because of the loss of spirituality and such a society will be destroyed. He stated that due to philosophical inquiry and scientific study, as well as the enticing distractions of a corrupt society and its intoxicating desires, misguided philosophy has contributed to the stagnation and passivity of the world. It has also intensified ignorance and obscured clarity, leading to the neglect of the Creator and the afterlife.<sup>81</sup>

From there, he strongly opposed Atheism, Naturalism and Western thought because of their thinking based on rationality and scientism. But, he proposes a scientific model based on religion and will help create harmony between science and divinity or between rationality and revelation which has the power to produce better results for humans.

In fact, rationality and revelation or science and religion cannot be contradictory, because they both express something that seems different but from the same truth. The combination between moral and spiritual, revelation and science will be a basis of true civilization. The intellect should be enlightened by the study of science, while the heart should be illuminated by the faith.<sup>82</sup> Nursi

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<sup>79</sup> Nursi, *The Words*. 757.

<sup>80</sup> Khamami. 57-59.

<sup>81</sup> Nursi, *The Words*. 451

<sup>82</sup> Ali Muhammad Bhat, 'Qur'anic Scientism in Bediuzzaman Said Nursi's Risala', *QIJS (Qudus International Journal of Islamic Studies)*, 5.1 (2017), 1 <<https://doi.org/10.21043/qijis.v5i1.1856>>. 8.

asserted that religious sciences (*ulum-u-diniya*) are the illuminating force of conscience. The illumination of the intellect is the realm of civilized sciences (*funun-u-medeniya*). The reconciliation of both entities reveals the objective reality. The student's talents are enhanced by the study of these two disciplines (*ulum-u-diniya* and *funun-u-medenye*). However, when these disciplines are isolated, superstition arises from the former, and corruption and skepticism emerge from the latter.<sup>83</sup>

Muslim societies exhibit a tendency to disregard the advancements in science and technology, resulting in their relative underdevelopment compared to Western society across various domains. However, the advent of contemporary science and technology has led Westerners to relinquish their beliefs, moral principles, and spiritual ideals, thereby plunging them into a state of despair, misery, and spiritual turmoil. The one solution to overcome this predicament is to embrace a positive reality derived from divine revelation, which transcends the confines of materialism, atheism, and naturalism. Nursi provided an explanation. Islam not only promotes the material advancement of individuals, but also emphasizes their moral and spiritual growth and development. This combination serves as the foundation of genuine civilization. Due to its foundation on the ideas of force, conflict, and aggressiveness rather than truth and justice, Western Civilization is characterized by a prevalence of negative aspects over positive ones. In order for humanity to ensure its survival, it must adopt Islam, as it recognizes the necessity for a genuine civilization based on the undeniable truth revealed in the Holy Qur'an and the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). This civilization emphasizes progress and allows for the advantageous utilization of its benefits.<sup>84</sup>

## CONCLUSION

Said Nursi, an Islamic scholar, endeavored to articulate "Qur'anic" concepts in order to address the societal changes that transpired between the late the nineteenth centuries. In Said Nursi's opinion, the basic problem of Atheism and Naturalism is their neglectful attitude towards the interpretation of nature's transcendent and overestimating the meaning of immanence. They ignores the transcendent interpretation by exaggerating the essence of nature that does not

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<sup>83</sup> Badiuzzaman Said Nursi, *Shaiqal-Islam* (Egypt: Sozler Publications, 2012). 402

<sup>84</sup> Nursi, *The Damascus Sermon*. 14

need God. In Nursi's view, Atheism and Naturalism have a wrong understanding of nature. Their mistake, according to Nursi, lies in the conceptualization of nature as a closed system that is *self-sustaining* and the loss of its *contingent* nature. Meanwhile in Nursi's view, nature depends on God (*contingent*); nature does not work alone. From there, He vehemently objected to Atheism, Naturalism, and Western thought due to their reliance solely on rationality. Said Nursi has formulated a theological comprehension of nature and has asserted that theology encompasses a vast majority of the same domain as natural science. To establish the God's existence, Allah SWT, Nursi said that demonstrating the God's existence is comparatively simpler than proving the non-existence of God, as the concept of God's existence is more logical than the arguments against it.

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