

Conscious Materialistic Realization: Bediuzzaman Said Nursi's Concept

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ABSTRACT

The reality of consciousness and cognition has consequences that are comparably pervasive; while subjectivism, realism and naturalism depended on science for valued truthful response. A strong connection to and advancement of the underlying idea of knowledge accumulation is to the contest alongside socialism and instinctive sympathy or fellow feeling between people with something in common. Bediuzzaman Said Nursi's view of modern science and innovative references for development are covered here. Modern civilization is the product of the thought of integrating the natural sciences with the religious sciences to strengthen the truths on beliefs. His strong preaching's under laid peace and harmony do not use any force and avoid any disruption. Public order and security must be maintained, and any damage caused by unbelief forces could be repaired by the healing truth of the Quran.

Keywords: *Consciousness, cognition, subjectivism, naturalism, knowledge, science*

INTRODUCTION

The reality of consciousness and cognition has consequences that are comparably pervasive; while subjectivism and realism value depend on truthful responses¹. Naturalism, as we know it today, took control of science only after Darwin². Modern civilization is the product of the thought of mankind through which material progress has greatly improved the materialistic lives of people but not the happiness and spiritual fulfilment of humanity³. Hence integration of the natural sciences with the religious sciences is essential as it will strengthen the knowledge base around beliefs. At a time when disaster and decline greatly impacted the Muslim world, the West advanced through materialism and science. Many Muslims could have, Bediuzzaman Said Nursi believed that modern science was not opposed to religion and hence he responded positively to the modern and scientific rhetoric of his time. Through the *Risale-i Nur*, Nursi quoted scientific references made by the Quran, through the perspective of al-tafsir al-'ilmi or scientific commentary of the Quran⁴. In this way he demonstrated that the Quran in no way was contradicting sciences but in fact answered many of the big science questions. In other words Nursi was responding to the anti-religion narrative of modern science by demonstrating the compatibility of religion and science. The *Risale-i Nur* is a commentary of Quran but

not a tradition type of commentary where the Quran is systematically reviewed from beginning to end. Instead Nursi, identifies verses and belief such as the divine names, attributes, activity in the universe, the existence, and oneness of God, resurrection, prophethood, divine determinations or destiny, and man's duties of worship. The reason for Nursi's focus on these areas is because he believed that the biggest challenges to believers in this age of science, reason, and civilization are materialism and atheism, and their source was materialist philosophy⁵.

As the modernity and globalism evolved in the world, the societies started to accommodate by altering and extending the settings of origination, fairness, variety in freedom of thought, ethnic broadmindedness and harmony. The foundation of love is self-sacrifice, which evolves from the passion towards people. These feelings displace the emotional states of hate and unpleasantness. Human kind is differential from animals and insects with faith as the mainstay within them⁶. The importance of faith is vital for mankind to process reasonableness in materialistic approaches. Hence to conduct oneself modestly, it requires the buoyancy in tolerance which behaviourally is the exhibition of respect, understanding, compassion and peace as a loving sentiment⁷. Bediuzzaman Said Nursi wanted to integrate

¹ Thomas Nagel (2012), *Mind and Cosmos: Why the Materialist Neo-Darwinian Conception of Nature is Almost Certainly False*, Copyright Oxford University Press, Print ISBN-13: 9780199919758, Pp. 23.

² Phillip Johnson, (1998), *Afterword: How to Sink a Battleship, Mere Creation: Science, Faith and Intelligent Design*, ed. William Dembski (Downers Grove, Ill.:InterVarsity, 1998), Pp.448-449.

³ Vaffi Foday Sheriif (2016), *Faith As The Foundation of Human Progress: Nursi's Perspective*, *Quest Journals Journal of Research in Humanities and Social Science* Volume 4 ~ Issue 8 (2016) Pp: 73-80 ISSN(Online) : 2321-9467

⁴ Usama Hasan and Athar Osama (2016), *Muslim Responses to Science's Big Questions*, Muslim World Science Initiative, Report of İhsanoğlu Task Force on Islam and Science. Pp. 217-220.

⁵ Muhammad Amin Samad, (2017), *CIVIC*, 21 April 2017, Academia, https://www.academia.edu/32715858/4_BEDIUZZAMAN_SAID_NURSI_1876-1960_.pdf.

⁶ Vaffi Foday Sheriif (2016), II : 79

⁷ M. Fethullah Gülen (2004), *Toward a global civilization of love and tolerance*, Çağlayan A.S. Izmir, Turkey, ISBN 1-932099-68-9, Pp 291.

religion and science with a reflective knowledge based on belief in God, so that it can consciously illuminate the sincerity, discipline and facilitate the mind with the evolution of mixed from⁸, where the faith guide significantly in human progress, as it follows the principles of the truth and lays the foundation for right action.

REALITY OF CONSCIOUSNESS

In the process Nursi created a theology to interpret correctly the understanding of the Quran with the innovative approach, which is in line with the time, place and external circumstances⁹. Good behaviour is understood properly only with conscious minds. The special reference of the good behaviour in human being with respect to sincerity, honesty and regularity which are the relationship outcomes of worship in God and faithful actions are sprouted from the fundamental physical conditions involving the brain-body biological systems with the within the cosmos. Therefore, Nursi felt that Islam as a religion is bound with duty to help mankind to assist them in attaining the eternal future. He prophesied that all principle morals of materialistic life should command virtue, and forbid ill or wicked manners for wrong attitudes, changes and alignment in relationships. The rise of science learning and materialistic thinking can lead to innovative development, but the development of scientific wisdom should be guided and delivered on a superior direction for humanity's future along with the energy and matter from cosmic control¹⁰.

Modern science and innovative references for development are product of Modern civilization integrated with the sciences and the religious strengths of truths on beliefs founded on strong principles of no-force, disruption to public order and security. Bediuzzaman Said Nursi strongly viewed and believed that any damage caused by sceptic forces can only be repaired by the healing truth of the Quran. Bediuzzaman Said Nursi pragmatically observed that though the modern science was not in line with Islamic thinking, the thin boundary demarcation can be reformulated on a divergent thought with respect to that time period and address the common people so that their understanding can be guided for correction, remedied for Islamic belief, and then transform towards a better civilizational growth. The normal human being when linked to superior changes can perform with purity of purpose, through the control of the lower level mind from unimportant actions and proceed with the conscious mind to attribute for virtuous deeds directed by heart¹¹. Democracy and freedom were necessary preconditions to reconcile faith to scientific intelligence. So Nursi wanted democratic regulations in the society to facilitate such progression¹².

Cognition and consequences

To be compatible with modern science, Islam must have scientific description of the world in a metaphysical explanation. Nursi wanted such a compatibility of modern science and its materialistic description. He spoke of the mechanics of nature in which there is space

⁸ Qazi Mohd. Jamshed (2016), Bediuzzaman Said Nursi's approach to modern education - integrating science with religious sciences, Proceedings of ADVED 2016 2nd International Conference on Advances in Education and Social Sciences 10-12 October 2016- Istanbul, Turkey

⁹ Ingmar Karlsson (2008), Turkish Islam and European values - two irreconcilable concepts? Beyond Nordic Legal Modernity, Reykjavik.

¹⁰ Eric J Chaisson, (2013), Cosmic Evolution, Harvard publications.

¹¹ Faruk Arslan (2014), A hear-based Sufi mindfulness spiritual practice employing self-journeying, Theses and Dissertations (Comprehensive). Wilfrid Laurier University, Pp 213.

¹² Ingmar Karlsson (2008), Turkish Islam and European values - two irreconcilable concepts? Beyond Nordic Legal Modernity, Reykjavik.

for both the modern science and traditional Islamic philosophy. Every movement of Nursi's stressed the importance of good education and wanted science education to therefore be in line of aspiration synthesising the Islam as a religion and acceptance of science in a democratic framework of Islamic law. Material realizations and miracles were primarily prearranged to mankind as a gift from God. Nursi felt that the gift of scientific modernization should come from within and not from outside. He influenced his students in such a way that they become very innovative and eager in scientific developments. The scientific growth was unparalleled in the *Risale-i Nur* students, as they were much ahead in time for obtaining duplicating machines for copy printing materials in written format, even preceding the arrival of printing machines in Latin scripts¹³. When the scientific modernization emerges from outside, there is more antagonism to it than towards its acceptance¹⁴. Islam respects body and mind, where heart as the human truth is the centre for all emotions, intellectual and spiritual faculties. Spiritual health of the heart is vital for the health of whole body¹⁵. Human civilization possesses a different type of force with a certain scope and a certain power to drive the thinking process to perceive, reinforce and construct consciousness in the physical world, predispose the feelings, delicacies, approaches, and reasons all interests attributing to the practices by combining advantages of intelligence¹⁶.

Bediuzzaman Said Nursi viewed science as orderly and purposeful processes of the natural world, seamlessly connected as one within the other. Scientific growth is a lifelong process of spiritual development, which demanded every individual's active participation. It requires the strict observance of all religious obligations and Prophet Muhammad's example, which enables individuals, through constant worship to God, to deepen their awareness of themselves as devotee to God. Bediuzzaman Said Nursi inferred education in the form of question and answer; he criticized the scholars who memorize the pages of the books and were theoretical. For him the scholars should give position to application and experiments in science education. Bediuzzaman Said Nursi therefore discarded the learning approach, based on memorization and desired to familiarize an education method that gives reputation to practical opinions and expansion of inquisitive intelligence of student's minds. Considering thoughts and knowledges from elsewhere are matters of distracting details that are to be avoided for the cleanliness of the exercise of justice. To receive convinced self-imposed constraints of decent conduct, then objective expansion happens only in those who follow self-imposed restraints, and can follow to the comprehensive demands of reasonableness by subsequent judgmentally inspected choice. Subsequently the humble method of self-interest grows in supplementing the liberal concept accepts during the option of identifying oneness¹⁷.

¹³ Wikipedia, *Risale-i Nur*.

¹⁴ Ingmar Karlsson (2008), *Turkish Islam and European values - two irreconcilable concepts? Beyond Nordic Legal Modernity*, Reykjavik.

¹⁵ Williams, I. (2005). 'An Absent Influence? The Nurcu/Fetullah Gülen Movements in Turkish Islam and their potential influence upon European Islam and global education.' Paper delivered at the conference *Islam in the Contemporary world: The Fethullah Gulen Movement in Thought and Practice*. Rice University.

¹⁶ Kurzweil, Ray. (2012), *How to Create a Mind: The Secret of Human Thought Revealed*. New York: Viking Press.

¹⁷ Amartya Sen (2009), *The Idea of Justice*, The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press Cambridge, Massachusetts, Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data, ISBN 978-0-674-03613-0, pp. 497.

COMPARABLY PERVASIVE

The cosmopolitan consumerism is very wide to absorb the rich diversity in the society by balancing the cultural significance including deep rooted problems that are found hard to be resolved¹⁸. Materialism shadows the tolerant values and at time disturbs the social moral and cultural process, however the demand of global commerce is always packed up with this liberty to openly speak up and exchange information on cultural issue as well¹⁹. The transparency of ideological transaction leads to evolution of ideas, which is the prerequisite and important for a democracy²⁰.

Even is such a case Nursi never left disturbed but felt opportunities in line with the analogy of the sky high levels, meaning that one need not feel transgressed with the weight of the problem, then to use all the available hurdles as opportunity to face up the challenge with preparedness. He always believed that all the balancing act of living are indicators of the existence of God, and that there will be a judgement day to measure everything in unison with equal justice²¹. Hence, Bediuzzaman Said Nursi wrote letters to his students so as to guide, encourage, and comfort them throughout their torments, and to remind them to be watchful in the face of their adversaries and also uphold their unity to reinforce their fraternal relations. Development is a measure of the reality to some assumed range of understood or expected change that depended on the notion of the lived experience and resulted in a new

experience, leading to an improvement in the quality of life. Therefore, the quality criteria of theoretical knowledge lead to criteria of quality interpretation²². Mind is affected by both internal and external locus of control. Protection of liberty therefore affects the mind, to interrogate and check all actions even if it is supported by science and on the innovations and targeted interventions which could impact diverse variables such as culture, religion, commerce, domestic regime type, and geography; so that enough preparation can be made prior to admitting the scientific intervention. In the race to succeed and sustain in the materialistic drive, freedom is always adjusted to submit itself in a modified form based on the vulnerability of individuals, for retaining a minimum security²³, and skilful interdependence as protection and security. According to Bediuzzaman Said Nursi, modern scientific works do not resemble the wherewithal and lights of man's subtle inner capabilities, besides the brainpower. Hence, Bediuzzaman Said Nursi's wanted to achieve the scientific progression as an evolution through the descriptive knowledge of Quran, on the truths of belief that which integrates the traditional Islamic practices with contemporary scientific facts for effectively achieving the materialist philosophy²⁴. Knowledge of the *Risale-i Nur* relates the purpose and the sentiment of spontaneous faculties; gained through the trust to instil in the whole human being so to manage and pay for it as a stanch commitment for gift. This is in line with the systematic

¹⁸ Robert J. Lieber, Ruth E. Weisberg (2002), *Globalization, Culture, and Identities in Crisis*, International Journal of Politics, Culture and Society, Vol. 16, No. 2, Human Sciences Press, Inc. Pp 273-296.

¹⁹ David Hoffman, (2002), *Beyond Public Diplomacy*, Foreign Affairs, Vol. 81, No. 2, Pp. 89.

²⁰ Qaisar Mohammad (2015), II : 137.

²¹ Faruk Arslan (2014), *A hear-based Sufi mindfulness spiritual practice employing self-journeying*, Theses and Dissertations (Comprehensive). Wilfrid Laurier University, Pp 213

²² Shaun D. Hutchins (2015), *Theoretical analysis of the philosophy and practice of disciplined inquiry*, Dissertation, Colorado State University Fort Collins, Colorado, Pp 252.

²³ Ken Booth (2011), *Realism and world politics*, Routledge, ISBN 0-203-83396-1

²⁴ Şükran Vahide (2016), *Toward an Intellectual Biography of Said Nursi*, Suny press, Pp.23.

analytical process governed by laws of relationship in category, sequence and determinants in a theory-building process as per the Table 1 (in Appendix 1), for justification towards an interventional framework building up interim and full-blown theory, customised theories and practice, applications (strategies, phases, processes, and methods).

Subjectivism, realism and naturalism

Risale-i Nur's describes that the nature of emotion and feeling cannot be seized in any physical form other than the complete show of quality of humanity. Islamic education has a spiritual emphasis and celestial exposure in creeds of trust, belief and moral responsibilities to guide political, social and commercial society of the community²⁵. Universal wisdom and special knowledge can be derived through unity and diversity passion which requires more openness in observation, awakening towards the internal dimension of being and enabling the individual to acquire a strong conviction of the truth of all Islamic principles²⁶. This modestly presents a certainty for serenity, piousness; insights to austerity required for journeying towards the divine judgement, honesty and self-control. Sincerity helps people to travel through the struggles of loneliness due to withdrawal during difficult times, engrossed prayer, handling self-control and self-criticism to prevent any disturbance during reflection, thankfulness, patience; divine expansion of

love, soul, self, spirit humility; truthfulness of freedom, spiritual suffering or sorrow; trustworthiness journey of seclusion, privacy and confidence; forgiveness decisions to good hope; remembrance and strong attachment to peace which are the preparations required in people during scientific exploration. Hence, Nursi's always dreamt of sincerity, purity of intention, protection, associating all activities with Islam with the most effective penetrating way of divine love. Bediuzzaman Said Nursi was very much aware of the importance of education²⁷, so he developed the Islamic educational curriculum that combined both theological teachings and modern sciences, both of which he felt should be provided at religious and modern schools alike, as this would simultaneously eliminate disbelief and fanaticism²⁸.

Quran has ever continuing relevance in contemporary life, Bediuzzaman Said Nursi enunciated most succinctly that many verses of the Quran comprises of sparks of miracles and abundant delicate facts. Realism is perfect truth while objectivism though criticism in articulation insists to derationalize the objective wrong or immoral fact affecting the fabric of the universe to gain knowledge and reliable belief in different forms of the existence²⁹. Therefore, arguments are towards reality and realising from the disagreement is for obtaining a feasible rational solution³⁰. Disagreement sets constraints for achieving the realism. All challenges lead to a metaethical realism

²⁵ Bame Nsamenang and Therese M.S. Tchombe (2011), Handbook of African educational theories and practices: A generative teacher education curriculum, Human Development Resource Centre (HDRC), North West Region (Cameroon), ISBN: 978-9956-444-64-2, Pp 596.

²⁶ Faruk Arslan (2014), A hear-based Sufi mindfulness spiritual practice employing self-journeying, Theses and Dissertations (Comprehensive), Wilfrid Laurier University, Pp 213

²⁷ Zeki Saritoprak (2011), Said Nursi, Oxford Bibliographies, DOI:10.1093/OBO/9780195390155-0147.

²⁸ Encyclopedia (2004), Nursi, Said Biography, Encyclopaedia of World Biography.

²⁹ Dan Wylie (2008), Toxic Belonging? Identity and Ecology in Southern Africa, Cambridge Scholar Publishing, New castle, UK, ISBN (10): 1-84718-514-2, Pp. 267.

³⁰ David Enoch (2009), How is Moral Disagreement a Problem for Realism? J Ethics (2009) 13:15-50, DOI 10.1007/s10892-008-9041-z

as part of the disagreement, towards a reasoning to evolve and attribute to a cognitive shortcoming. A strong connection to and advancement of the underlying idea in knowledge accumulation is to the contest alongside people with an innate sympathy for common fellow feeling³¹. The continuous search for the spiritual essence of the social formation is the discovery of universal truths about human nature and life. Modern disciplines and the Islamic legacy can be mastered and critically evaluated before being synthesized and disseminated in the form of knowledge³². Seeing the previously concealed truth is an exposure to shed away all the layers hiding in a distinctive confusion or the lack of awareness of time and space. The quality of life has characteristics and sense on the existing background rationalities, understanding, and emotions. The sense of perceiving truths is not known, when the mysteries of life become lucid and imaginary with the universal truths. They get hidden intelligently in an uncertain form on the subject which is dangerous to the realities of existence. The greatest barrier hard to achieve is when the widespread belief is impossible to be noticed or proved by any absolute truth.

RESPONSE ON SCIENCE

Interdisciplinary intervention thoughts are validated through a process by presenting, directing and associating the content for consistency in quality through a pictorial evolution of the interpretations that can

bring credibility, transferability and dependability for realistic outputs. However in Nursi's content trust is evolved through moral, credibility and then tested for sufficiency in quality. *Risale-i Nur* of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi cites many verses of the Quran inviting people to observe and contemplate the wonder of the universe, like reading a book, which eventually would increase their belief and obtain the true belief³³. Demonstrating that to happen has no dichotomy, between science and religion, rather, a true progress and happiness for human being can only be achieved in this way, proves religions contribution only. Further development is required to convey pluralism and increase harmony for collaboration through the differences, organizing inter connect and promoting dialogue in activities is essential³⁴.

Bediuzzaman Said Nursi encountered all kinds of suffering and pains towards the evolution materialistic development in the Islamic society. The familiarity and rashness gave a wrong message and influenced negative thinking in the observers to skew all good actions of Nursi's merit, as not a necessity attached to the work of God³⁵. Wisdom is the most convenient means for comprehending prosperous future. Wisdom can be reinforced in several ways by development and accomplishment of good happenings all around³⁶. Cultivating and nourishing all the common people who do not have sufficient knowledge or experience, to achieve the requisite wisdom is a complex process of self-reflection.

³¹ Qaisar Mohammad (2015), Clarifications on the Works of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi, American International Journal of Research in Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences, ISSN (Print): 2328-3734, AIJRHASS 15-844; Pp. 136-138.

³² Christopher A. Furlow (2005), Islam, Science and Modernity : From northern Virginia to Kulalumpur , Dissertation, The Graduate school of the University of Florida. Pp 100-115.

³³ Muhammad Amin Samad, (2017), II: 1876-1960

³⁴ Suleman Essop Dangor (2009), Said Nursi's Approach to Interfaith Dialogue, Alternation Special Edition 3 (2009) 270 - 300 ISSN 1023-1757.

³⁵ Şükran Vahide (2016), II: 23.

³⁶ Lombardo, Thomas. (2012), Consciousness, Cosmic Evolution, and the Technological Singularity, Journal of Futures Studies, Center for Future Consciousness, Arizona, United States, 17(2): Pp. 93-100.

Therefore, realizing knowledge and accelerating the evolutionary processes, for greater returns of power, and continuously perform the duties was the mistaken identity in Nursi. Humanity when driven with problems of lack of faith, jealous, excess greed pushes a good and civilized society towards animalistic behaviour thus losing the excellences of the conscience and moral virtues to become a non-existent. Thus, throughout the change process, historically the Ottoman Empire lost its dominance and resulted in chaos. During this process when Bediuzzaman Said Nursi's intellectual role started emerging, the revolution was so powerful and could not be controlled within the frontiers of the Ottoman Empire. This led to the general thinking that such perpetuation and mass acceptance for change made the government to also feel that Nursi had interest in attainment of political claims³⁷. The climax of his view is to ascertain the truth of reaching the reality is by following a divine revelation. In the end Bediuzzaman Said Nursi was a condemned philosophy not submitted to revelation, therefore couldn't yield results beneficial to scientific development in humanity.

CONCLUSION

Peace can prevail in world when the global society upholds divinity in the behaviour by following truth, quality, unity and mutual assistance among its fellow beings. Human dignity, justice, and fellowship are the basis of mutual relationship and love. Science and its development need to promote access and connect for global oneness. Bediuzzaman Said Nursi dream on science is a tool of inclusiveness among inter-cultural peace and prosperity. It had strong connection to and advancement of the idea that knowledge

accumulation needs to the contest alongside people's lives as an instinctive sympathy. Bediuzzaman Said Nursi, till today is an innovative reference for tolerance in spite of all the ill-treatment and hardships faced in bringing the development and modern civilization as an integrated product of science and religion therefore to strengthen the truths on spiritual beliefs.

The improvement in education has produced a migratory movement into the cities by speeding up the employment opportunities; these people still carry with them their traditional way of life marked by Islam³⁸. Such people can be handheld along with skills and capacities that lead a person to a normal life along with a companionship feeling which can be commonly attained through religious involvements. Truth is within ourselves, it is from within us, our belief in our own self. Truth stands in conscious upon us and reflects our clear perception of life. An aware mind identifies itself with nature and progresses the ability to make achievement strides. The state of realization is a constant means of awareness, thought, and composition that can be noted along with in the special impulsive biological limits. The individual knowledge of mystical awareness is a gift from inner peace and comprehensive contentment which removes the strain leading to quality of awareness in the immediate surroundings influencing the people and nature. *Risale-i Nur* charts its way to peace, prosperity, and happiness of humankind nurturing the soul with feelings of decency, sympathy and reflecting them through beneficial service for a materialistic development of the society. ◀

³⁷ Shaun D. Hutchins (2015), II: 210.

³⁸ Ingmar Karlsson (2008), Turkish Islam and European values - two irreconcilable concepts? Beyond Nordic Legal Modernity, Reykjavik

APPENDIX I

Table 1. Summary of nature of knowledge accumulation and theory

		Paradigm		
Positivist	Postpositivist	Critical	Constructivist / interpretivist	Participatory
<i>The purpose of theory</i>	Development of grand to middle range explanations and predictions	Development of critical local to middle range descriptions of social structures towards critically informed praxis	Development of descriptive local to middle range understanding of meaning towards improved praxis	Not defined
<i>The nature theoretical knowledge accumulation</i>	Verified theoretical propositions existing prior to experience	Historically situated descriptions of experiences explained by descriptions of power structures	Stories grounded in experience that convey meaning of lived experience and result in vicarious experience	Not defined
<i>Quality criteria of theoretical knowledge</i>	Pattern's eight criteria of quality theory	Epistemological, Communicative, and Critically analytic categories of quality critical theory	Lincoln and Lynham's 13 criteria of quality interpretive theory	Not defined

Source: (Shaun D. Hutchins, 2015)

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