



## THE EMERGENCE OF MATERIALISM AND ISLAMIC VIEW UPON IT

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### Abstract

*Materialism is an understanding that states that something invisible (can't be sensed) did not exist. That is, the unseen world (including God, angels, jinn, etc.) does not exist. Because it can't be sensed by humans. So if so, how Islam views the concept? Where in the Islamic religion teaches the unseen world which is summarized in the pillars of faith. Automatic if Muslims agree with the materialism, then it will greatly affect the faith. For this reason, this paper tries to explain the essence of the concept of Materialism, by reviewing the definition and history, which at this time will review the opinions of the philosophers of ancient Greece is also one of the teachings of India, Carvaka. At the end of the analysis will be presented how should a Muslim respond to the concept of this materialism.*

**Keyword:** *Materialism, the opinions of the philosophers, the emergence of materialism, islamic view of Materialism.*

### Abstrak

Materialisme merupakan sebuah paham yang menyatakan bahwa sesuatu yang tidak terlihat (tidak bisa diindera) dianggap tidak ada. Artinya, dunia gaib (termasuk di dalamnya Tuhan, malaikat, jin, dst) tidak ada. Karena semua itu tidak bisa diindera oleh manusia. Lantas jika demikian, bagaimana Islam memandang konsep tersebut? Dimana dalam agama Islam mengajarkan adanya dunia gaib yang itu terangkum dalam rukun iman. Otomatis jika seorang Muslim menyetujui pendapat kaum materialisme, maka itu akan sangat berpengaruh pada keimanannya. Untuk itulah, tulisan ini mencoba memaparkan hakikat konsep Materialisme, dengan meninjau definisi dan sejarahnya, yang pada kali ini akan meninjau pendapat para filsuf Yunani kuno juga salah satu ajaran dari India, Carvaka. Pada akhirnya akan

dipaparkan analisa bagaimana seharusnya seorang Muslim menanggapi konsep Materialisme ini.

**Kata Kunci:** materialisme, pendapat para filsuf, kemunculan materialsme, pandangan islam tentang materialisme.

## Introduction

Yuri Gagarin, one of a fighter pilot in the Soviet air force, was the first person to fly in space, making a single orbit of the Earth aboard the spacecraft Vostok 1 on April 12, 1961.<sup>1</sup> Gagarin was arrogance, when he said; *“I have been out in space and didn’t see God; therefore, there is no God.”* By this words, he represented an atheist system, communism.<sup>2</sup> This statement expressed by Gagarin when he was in outer space and didn’t find any signs of the existence of God.

Gagarin’s perspective in this story is too superficial. To value something with sensory perception only. He acknowledged the existence of everything if they are visible to detected by naked eye (sensory system). While the metaphysical world (beyond the usual human nature, including the gods, spirits, genie and etc) are not exist. A people such Gagarin would be very easy to deny the existence of God, and ultimately drive him to become a materialist atheist.

In this simple article, the writers try to analyze the concept of Materialism. Beside that, the article also will explain how the Islamic view upon the people such as Yuri Gagarin, who with arrogantly denied the existence of God? Then continued with Islamic view upon materialism totally. In the end, we will see, is a doctrine of materialism compatible to Islamic way of life, or just the opposite?

## The Meaning of Materialism

Materialism is a philosophical system that regards matter as the only reality in the world. It attempts to explain every event in the universe as resulting from the conditions and activity of matter, and thus denies the existence of God and the immaterial soul.<sup>3</sup> From this statement seen, materialism is a thought based on matter.

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<sup>1</sup>James S. Baugess and Abbe Allen Debolt, *Encyclopedia of the Sixties a Decade of Culture and Counterculture*, (California: Greenwood, 2012), p. 237

<sup>2</sup>Osho, *The Journey of Being Human; Is it Possible to Find Real Happiness in Ordinary Life?* (New York: Osho International Foundation, 2012)p. 137. Check also, Derek Dariusz Iwanski, *Silenced by Job*, p. 98

<sup>3</sup>Heidi A. Campbell and Heather Looy, *a Science and Religion Primer*, (USA: Baker Academic, 2009), p. 139

In “*The End of Materialism*” Charles T. Tart wrote, the term Materialism is derived from the English terminology, *material* and *ism*. And he divides the understanding of materialism into two kinds; *first* is the doctrine that nothing exists except matter and its movements and modifications. *Second* is a tendency to prefer material possessions and physical comfort to spiritual values; a way of life based on material interests.<sup>4</sup> In *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia*, materialism is concept of matter; concept of philosophy stating that everything happens in the world is caused by-or sourced on-objects, and peoples are concerned with materialism, called as materialists.<sup>5</sup> While in *Websters Dictionary*, materialism is the doctrine stating that facts of experience are all to be explained with reference to the fact, legal activities and physical or material substance.<sup>6</sup> As for *Kamus Filasafat Lorens Bagus* written, materialism is a doctrine that emphasizes the primacy of matter factors over the spiritual in metaphysics, value theory, physiology, epistemology or historical explanation.<sup>7</sup>

From these definitions shows that materialism is a way of life which emphasizes concept of matter. Everything depends on the size of matters, there are no metaphysical. Materialism also be understood as a concept assume that this world does not exist other than matter or nature. In materialism there is no non-matter entities such as spirits, ghosts, demons, and angels. Also doesn't acknowledge the existence of God or supernatural world. According to materialist, the only reality is matter, and everything is a manifestation matter. It's mean, materialism rejecting a Creator of universe concept.

According to philosophers, materialism has diverse meaning. Democritus, one of Greek philosophers some 2400 years ago said;

“*Materia* is what is given in knowledge about nature; there is no basic power or spirit intervening in the processes of nature. What exists is the extended, material reality, and it can be measured. Knowledge about the natural world is limited to what can be experienced through the senses-without interference from speculative phenomena and concepts.....”<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Charles T. Tart, *The End of Materialism: How Evidence of the Paranormal is Bringing Science and Spirit Together*, (USA: Harbinger Publications, 2009), p. 295

<sup>5</sup> Pusat Bahasa Departemen Pendidikan Nasional, *Kamus Bahasa Indonesia*. (Jakarta: Balai Pustaka, 2008), p. 927.

<sup>6</sup> The New International Webster's Comprehensive Dictionary of the English Language, (Florida: Trident Press International, 1996) p. 785

<sup>7</sup> Lorens Bagus, *Kamus Filasafat*, (Jakarta: Gramedia Pustaka Utama, 2000), p. 593

<sup>8</sup> Alan Costall and Ole Dreier, *Doing Things with Things: The Design and Use of Everyday Objects*, (Hampshire England: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2006), p. 176

From this statement, we know that Democritus did not believe the power of the Metaphysic in all of symptoms happened in nature. Because according to him, metaphysic power is unreal, and can't be measured. It also can't be experienced through the senses. It just means, he does not believe in the existence of God.

Another meaning came from modern materialism philosophers. Such as M. N. Roy (1887-1954),<sup>9</sup> he said: "Materialism is the explanation of the world without the assumption of any supernatural force or power."<sup>10</sup> As a materialist Roy also asserts that there is nothing sacrosanct, nothing permanent and nothing eternal to change the nature of everything. Change is the only thing permanent. Materialist philosophy thus inspires man to change the world and himself in the process. To Roy, materialism is the philosophy of revolution change is inherent in the process of human development. Therefore, Roy says that materialist philosophy is a necessity in all ages.<sup>11</sup> Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton (1981), both of them make the argument that materialism is not really a set of personality traits, but rather a way of thinking.<sup>12</sup>

### The Emergence of Materialism

The term materialism has covered a variety of theses and programs. It has quite a long history, dating back at least to Aristotle's objections to the 'earlier thinkers' who over emphasize the 'material element' in Book Alpha of his *Metaphysics*.<sup>13</sup> It's mean, western materialism began from ancient Greek. And we will find more about this history in debating of Greek philosophers, such as Empedocles, Democritus, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Epicurus, Strato and Carus.

Materialism undertakes to answer the fundamental question of philosophy by asserting the primacy of the material world; in short, matter

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<sup>9</sup>His real name was Narendranath Bhattacharya, then changed with Manabendra Nath Roy, was the Communist leader of India. He occupies a secure place among the seminar thinkers of the twentieth century. He was simultaneously a political activist who acquired global eminence, first as a Marxist revolutionary during the twenties and the thirties and then as a radical humanist after World-War II. He has been one of the most colourful, though highly controversial, personalities in the political life of India for over three decades. He died in January 1954.

<sup>10</sup>Prakash Chandra, *Political Philosophy of M. N. Roy*, (New Delhi: Sarup & Sons, 1992), p. 50

<sup>11</sup>MN Roy's, *Materialism: an Outline of the History of Scientific Thought*, (Calcutta: Renaissance Publishers; Ltd, 1951), p. 233

<sup>12</sup>Philip James Seneca, *A Validation Study of the Ger and Belk (1996) Materialism Scale and Richins (2004) Shortened Material Values Scale*, (United States: ProQuest Information and Learning Company), p. 11

<sup>13</sup>Robert C. Koons, George Bealer, *The Waning of Materialism*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), article no. 14 "Epistemological Objections to Materialism" in this book.

precedes thought. It maintains that: reality is basically material; all phenomena in the universe consist of matter in motion, wherein all things are interdependent and interconnected and develop in accordance with natural law; the world exists outside us and independently of our perception of it; thought is a reflection of the material world in the brain; and the world is in principle knowable.<sup>14</sup>

Materialism also a set of related theories that hold all entities and processes are composed of-and so are reducible to-matter, material forces, or physical processes. All events and facts are explainable, actually or in principle, in terms of body, material objects, or changes or movements. Generally, the metaphysical theory of materialism entails the denial of the reality of spiritual beings, consciousness, and mental or psychic states or processes, as ontologically distinct from or independent of material changes or processes. Since it denies the existence of spiritual beings or forces, materialism typically is allied with atheism or agnosticism.<sup>15</sup> So we can judge, basically materialism is atheism.

And now, the writers will investigate the history of materialism development by divide it in to two type; materialism in ancient age and materialism in modern age. Materialism in ancient age viewed from some figures, such as Epicurus, Democritus, Plato, Aristotle and Nitikiira Brihaspati from India, known by the teachings of *Carvaka*. While the modern age, would raise some figures like Ludwiq Fuerbach, Pierre Gassendi, Thomas Hobbes, and Charles Robert Darwin.

### **Materialism in Ancient Age (800 BC- AD 400)**

The basic of materialism understanding had been expressed in the theory of atoms<sup>16</sup> by the Greek philosopher,<sup>17</sup> among of them are, Empedocles, Democritus, Epicurus, Carus, and Strato. Although the early Greeks were the first to conceive of atoms, atoms were never at the forefront of Greek thought.<sup>18</sup> Besides Greek's Philosopher, a description of materialism also can be encountered in Indian history, with was pioneered by Nitikiira Brihaspati. He is known with his teachings, *Carvaka*.

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<sup>14</sup> Heidi A. *a Science and.....* p. 139

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 139

<sup>16</sup> Atoms, from the Greek atomos, meaning "indivisible," "having no parts," or "uncuttable"; minute material particles; the ultimate material constituents of all things. Atoms have such properties as size, shape, position, arrangement (combination), and motion, but lack qualities like color, taste, temperature, or smell.

<sup>17</sup> Alan Costall, *Doing Things....* p. 176

<sup>18</sup> Gil Nonato C. Santos, Et Al, *E-chemistry Iii (science and Technology)* 2003 Ed, (Manila: Rex Book Store Inc, 2007), p. 96

Atomic theory is essentially a philosophy of nature. Qua philosophy of nature, classical atomism seems to involve four central claims,<sup>19</sup> two of which might be described as existential, the other two as explanatory.<sup>20</sup>

An atom, according to all the Greek Atomists, is eternal, immutable, homogeneous and physically indivisible.<sup>21</sup> In approximately 450 B.C, Empedocles (492-435 B.C) divided matter into four elements: air, earth, water, and fire. About twenty years later, Democritus (470-375 B.C) proposed that matter is consisted of tiny, indivisible entities called atoms.<sup>22</sup> In another text, Democritus declared that atoms have properties such as size, shape, position, arrangement (combination), and motion, but they do not process sensible qualities like color, taste, temperature, or smell. However, the combinations (compounds and composites) of atoms can grow large enough for us to perceive. Atoms are so small that they are invisible to known by naked eye. Being so small, they are “uncuttable” thus they cannot be destroyed. In other words, atoms are eternal. Because motion is an inherent property of atoms, they are constantly moving, bumping into each other, and bouncing away or quivering in one spot.<sup>23</sup> From here we can understand, that Democritus statement about atom can make a person think the world is eternal and there is no doomsday. In addition, it was contrary to the concept of doomsday.

Although several philosophers called atomists adhered to the idea that matter was ultimately indivisible, Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle –none of whom were atomists- dominated the mainstream of Greek Philosophy. Socrates was almost completely disinterested in the physical realm. In 407 B.C, Plato became a student of Socrates, and about twenty years later (390 B.C), he founded his own philosophy school. Plato redefined Empedocles’s element; he believed the four elements were different-shaped structures of a primary substance he called

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<sup>19</sup> These four claims can be summarised as follows: *First*, a commitment to indivisibles, particles of matter either conceptually indivisible (such that one cannot conceive of their division) or physically unsplitable. *Second*, belief in the existence of *vacuum* or ‘Non-Being’, purely empty space in which the atoms are free to move. *Third*, reductionism: explanation of the coming-to-be, ceasing to-be and qualitative alteration of sensible bodies in terms of the local motion of atoms which lack many (most) of the sensible properties of those bodies. *Fourth*, mechanism: this is a thesis about the nature of physical agency: it claims in effect that no body is ever moved except by an external impulse from another, moving body.

<sup>20</sup> Andrew Pyle, *Atomism and its Critics; Problem Areas Associated with the Development of the Atomic Theory of Matter from Democritus to Newton*, (University of Bristol: Thoemmes Press), p. xi

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid*, p. 19

<sup>22</sup> Gil Nonato C. Santos, Et Al, E-chemistry ..... p. 96

<sup>23</sup> Douglas J. Soccio, *Archetypes of Wisdom: An Introduction to Philosophy, 8th edition*, (Canada: Conveo Publisher Services), p. 71



*hyle*. Accordingly, Plato taught, fire was a tetrahedron, air an octagon, earth a cube, and water an icosahedron (twenty-sided structure).

However, Plato rejected the atomic theory, and his ideas regarding matter are not considered important today. Plato's most famous pupil was Aristotle. From about 340-331 B.C, Aristotle taught that space is always filled with matter. However, Aristotle rejected the atomic theory and the idea that matter could be subdivided indefinitely. Although many aspects of Aristotelian philosophy are still appreciated today, his theories regarding matter are not considered valid.<sup>24</sup> Thus we can judge, the atomic theory initiated by the early Greeks then underlying the birth of materialism, rejected by three Greek philosophers; Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle.

Although atomic theory was rejected by three great Greek philosophers, the atomic theory revived briefly after Epicurus (341-270 B.C.) founded the Epicurean philosophy school in about 300 B.C. The Epicureans considered atoms a fundamental unit of matter. Epicurus ascribed weight, shape, and size to the atoms.<sup>25</sup> In other words Epicurus assumed that each atom to have an unchanging shape and size.

Later, from about 286-268 B.C, Strato seemed to advocate the existence of atoms; he conjectured that air was composed of particles in a void, and that these particles could crowd closer together or pull apart. Carus (98-55 B.C), another Greek philosopher, wrote about atoms about 65 B.C. After this, however, the concept of atoms seemed to fade from Greek philosophy. Some of the ideas, especially Strato's, were carried on to Alexandria, Egypt, where scientists practiced more applied science. It was there that people first attempted chemical experimentation, but they experimented little, if at all, with atomic theory.<sup>26</sup> It's mean, the development physics science in Egypt influenced by Greek.

Although the underlying atomic theory of materialism in Greek philosophy has been rejected by some philosophers, but its development has not stopped. In fact, taken out of Greece. Viewed from its concept, Greeks materialism denies the existence of God and all things metaphysical. It is therefore incompatible with most world religions including Christianity, Judaism and Islam.

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<sup>24</sup> Gil Nonato C. Santos, Et Al, E-chemistry ..... p. 96

<sup>25</sup> Alan Chalmers, *The Scientist's Atom and the Philosopher's Stone: How Science Succeeded and Philosophy Failed to Gain Knowledge of Atoms*, (Sydney: Springer, 2006), p. 52

<sup>26</sup> Gil Nonato C. Santos, Et Al, E-chemistry ..... p. 96

Besides in Greek philosophy, materialism is also present in ancient India philosophy. One way to classify the types of philosophy in ancient India is to divide the *darsanas*<sup>27</sup> into the following two categories according to their relationship to the ancient texts known collectively as the Vedas.<sup>28</sup> First is *Nastika*, or schools of Indian philosophy that do not use the Vedas to establish their own authority; some of the *Nastika* schools are *Loyakata* (*Carvaka*), Buddhism, and Jainism. The second is *Astika*, or schools of Indian philosophy that use the Vedas to establish their own authority. *Astika* is also referred to as orthodox as opposed to the heterodox *darsanas* of the *Nastika*.<sup>29</sup>

*Carvaka* is the oldest of the classical Indian schools. It was probably formulated between the 8th and 6th centuries BC. There were materialist views before this school, but there does not appear to have been a materialist School as such. There is no extant literature of the *Carvaka* school; all that we know about it comes from other's attempted refutations. Thus *Carvaka* is always presented as rather crude and unsophisticated. *Carvaka* is possibly derived from "*Caruvak*" (a man of beautiful word or sweet tongue) from "*vac*" (to speak). They are also known as *Lokayatas*, which means "that which is found among people in general." *Lokayata* is also taken as a general term for materialism. The name *Carvaka* possibly was given to the *Lokayatas* by their adversaries as a depreciating designation, or possibly *Carvaka* was the disciple of *Brihaspati*, the traditional founder of the School, or possibly *Carvaka* himself was the founder of the School. The two Schools of *Carvaka* are the *Dhurttā* and the *Susiksita*. The extreme and unorthodox views of *Carvaka* probably stimulated, through reaction, the development of the other Schools. At one time *Carvaka* School

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<sup>27</sup> All ancient Indian points of view. This is classical Indian philosophy is an *inclusive* category that defines Indian thought as all those traditions and perspectives that are pre-Aryan (such as yoga); as Vedic (Aryan), a synthesis of the pre-Aryan and Vedic; as orthodox (such as one may read in the *Bhagavad Gita*), and non-Vedic; or as heterodox (Buddhism, Jainism, Loyakata).

<sup>28</sup> The Vedas (Sanskrit *vēda* वेद, "knowledge") are a large body of texts originating in ancient India. Composed in Vedic Sanskrit, the texts constitute the oldest layer of Sanskrit literature and the oldest scriptures of Hinduism. The Vedas are *apaurueya* ("not of human agency"). They are supposed to have been directly revealed, and thus are called *śruti* ("what is heard"), distinguishing them from other religious texts, which are called *smṛti* ("what is remembered"). In Hindu tradition, the creation of Vedas is credited to Brahma. The Vedic texts or *śruti* are organized around four canonical collections of metrical material known as *Sahitās*, of which the first three are related to the performance of *yajna* (sacrifice) in historical Vedic religion: The *Rigveda*, containing hymns to be recited by the *hotar*, or presiding priest; The *Yajurveda*, containing formulas to be recited by the *adhvaryu* or officiating priest; The *Samaveda*, containing formulas to be sung by the *udgatar* or priest that chants; The *Atharvaveda*, a collection of spells and incantations, apotropaic charms and speculative hymns.

<sup>29</sup> David Jones and E. R. Klein, *Asian Texts — Asian Contexts: Encounters with Asian Philosophies and Religions*, (USA: State University of New York Press Albany, 2010), p. 79



was probably very influential; it was refuted by all the other Schools. There is evidence that it was still a force in the 4th century B.C.<sup>30</sup>

*Carvaka* was a reaction against the domination of *Brahmin* priests and Vedic rituals. The *Carvakas* strongly attacked the authority of the Vedas and pointed out their contradictions while the *Mimamsakas* were trying to establish the authority and reconcile contradictions. *Carvakas* were atheists, materialists, naturalists, positivists, and naive realists. There is no soul surviving the body and consciousness is only an epiphenomenon of the body. Only matter is real; life is due to a special configuration of matter. Everything is a result of the combination of four elements: earth, air, fire, water. These are eternal and uncreated. There is no God, no heaven, no hell, no law of *karma*, no rebirth after death, no power (*apurva*) in sacrifices. Religion is a fabrication of the priests who cannot make a living honestly.<sup>31</sup> It turns out that the western materialist is not the only group that powerfully rejects the concept of creation and the concept of God. Indian materialist was no less vigorous in opposing religion.

According to *Carvaka*, the only valid *Pramana*<sup>32</sup> is sense perception (*pratyaksa*).<sup>33</sup> All things which are real are perceptible; thus the smallest particle of matter is perceptible. Inference can only give us probability but not certainty since all possible cases, past, present, and future, cannot possibly be observed. Also, there are no universal causal laws or laws of nature. There is no necessary connection between a sequence of events; we cannot examine all such sequences and prove an inevitable causal law.<sup>34</sup>

*Carvaka* is the only hedonistic Indian school. The highest good and the end of life is to enjoy as much sensual pleasure as possible and to avoid as much

<sup>30</sup> John C. Plott, *Global History* ..... p. 204-205

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, P. 204-205.

<sup>32</sup> In Indian Philosophy valid knowledge is called *Prama* and the sources of valid knowledge is called *Pramana*. There are six sources of valid knowledge accepted by Indian systems. But according to the *Carvakas*, perception is the only source of true knowledge. The *Carvakas* have stated that inference and testimony cannot give us true knowledge of reality. For establishing this position they criticize the possibility of other sources of knowledge like inference and testimony, which are regarded as valid *pramanas* by many philosophers. Look more at: Ujjal Kalita, *International Indexed & Referred Research Journal*, Vol. IV, No. 45, 2012, p. 28

<sup>33</sup> *Pratyaksa* (perception) as a source of valid knowledge is universally accepted by all the schools of Indian system both *Astika* and *Nastika*. Thus the *Carvakas* regard *pratyaksa* as the only means of valid knowledge." According to *Carvaka*, knowledge directly collected by the sense-organs is called perception. "What is arrived at by means of direct perception is the truth. That alone exists. What is not perceivable is non-existent, for the simple reason that it is not perceived." Perception is of two kinds, namely, external perception and internal perception. Perceptual knowledge, collected by five external sense-organs as such eye, ear, nose etc. are called external perceptions and the knowledge such as pleasure, pain etc. Collected by mind, the internal organs are called internal perceptions. Therefore, the *Carvaka* holds that perceptible world is the only reality.

<sup>34</sup> John C. Plott ..... p. 204-205

pain as possible. There are no objective ethical laws; any means is justified to gain pleasure. In short, the view is “eat, drink, and be merry,” for when we die there is neither reward nor punishment but simply an end to it all.<sup>35</sup> Actually, Indian materialism has a historical tradition dating much earlier than the rise of *Carvaka* school. Its history begins with the beginning of philosophy itself in India. And although it could not be developed as a school or system of philosophy before the rise of *Carvaka* school, its traces may very clearly be seen in the early passages of even the *Regveda*.<sup>36</sup>

### **Materialism in Middle Ages until Twentieth Centuries Era (1200-2000)**

Modern Materialism says that universe is the infinite unity of the material. Nature, including all matter and energy (motion or energy) is always exist and will always exist, and the universe (world) is a hard reality, it can be touched, material, objective, which can be known by man. Modern Materialism says that a material exist before the soul (mind), and the material world is the first, while thinking about world is number two.<sup>37</sup>

Materialists deny an existence of the ultimate nature of reality. According to Ludwig Feurbach (1804-1872), the only one exist only natural, human that too including natural objects.<sup>38</sup> The question rises here, what the different between a dead body and a live body? Is both of them exist? As we know, a dead body will be destroyed after several years. Whereas a live body intact until the soul run out from body. Besides Feuerbach, other modern philosophers talked about materialism is Pierre Gassendi (1592-1655), and Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679). The influence of Gassendi and Hobbes was diminished by the prestige of their brilliant contemporary, Rene Descartes (1596-1650), who accepted a materialist and mechanical account of the inanimate world and the brute creation but insisted that men had immaterial, immortal spirits whose essential nature lay in conscious thought undetermined by causal processes.<sup>39</sup>

Pierre Gassendi, rejected the official Aristotelian philosophy of his time and set about the rehabilitation of Epicureanism. He claimed that the atoms are not eternal but created. They are finite, not infinite, in number and are organized in our particular world by a providential determination of initial conditions.

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<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 204-205

<sup>36</sup> Samir Nath, *Dictionary of Vedanta*, (Delhi: Ivy Publishing House, 2002), p. 234

<sup>37</sup> Bryan Magee, *The Story of Philosophy*, (Yogyakarta: Kanisius), p. 7

<sup>38</sup> Chairul Arifin, *Pengantar Filsafat*, (Jakarta: ISTN), p. 93

<sup>39</sup> Donald M. Borchert, *Encyclopedia of Philosophy; 2nd edition*, (USA: Thomson Gale, 2006), p.9

Gassendi's materialism extended over physics and psychology, undertaking to account for all inanimate changes and for sensation on a materialist basis. He treated the coming into being of particular things as the accumulation of matter about a seed atom.<sup>40</sup>

While Thomas Hobbes, was much more consistent and uncompromising. In 1629 he discovered Euclidean geometry and was captivated by its method. Hobbes said, no part of the universe is not a body, and no part of the universe contains no body. Thus, Hobbes considered God to be a corporeal spirit difficult to distinguish from his eternal, immutable, omnipresent, embodied space, the pervasive ether.<sup>41</sup> All change in the universe consists in the motion of bodies, so all change reduces to change of position and velocity. Further, nothing can cause a motion but contact with another moving body. The substance of anything is body, and "incorporeal substance" is therefore a contradiction in terms. Hobbes thereby disposed of angels, the soul, and the God of orthodox theology. He departed from strict materialism, however, in his introduction of "conatus" and "impetus" (which are not physical properties) into his account of the initiation of motion and measurement of acceleration.<sup>42</sup>

Another figure of materialism is Charles Robert Darwin (1809), was an atheist from Shrewsbury, England, who carries evolution theory.<sup>43</sup> His idea of the theory poured in his book, "*The Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection.*"<sup>44</sup> Darwin's theory of evolution is contain with materialism. This theory says that all organisms are includes all plants and animals that exist and ever existed, growing from a few or even a very simple form through the process of descent with modification by natural selection. Evolution in the sense of above is just a scientific hypothesis without any proof, or even just a rough estimate then raised as scientific truth by supporters and taken for granted by the general public via an intellectual dictatorship.<sup>45</sup> With his theory, Darwin has made peoples re-thinking about nature and human existence on earth.<sup>46</sup> Where this kind of

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<sup>40</sup> Donald M. Borchert, *Encyclopedia* ..... p.8

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid*, p.9

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 9

<sup>43</sup> Keith A. Francis, *Charles Darwin and The origin of species*, (USA: Greenwood Press, 2007), hal. 15

<sup>44</sup> Fiktor Ferdinand P. dan Moekti Ariwibowo, *Praktis Belajar Biologi*, (Jakarta: Visindo Media Persada, Cetakan I, 2007), hal. 127

<sup>45</sup> Rosman Yunus, dkk, *Teori Darwin Dalam Pandangan Sain dan Islam*, (Depok; Prestasi, Cetakan I, Ramadhan 1427H/Oktober 2006 M), hal. 22

<sup>46</sup> Mohammad Zazuli, *60 Tokoh Dunia Sepanjang Masa*, (Yogyakarta: Narasi, Cetakan I, 2009), hal. 133

thinking is very dangerous for religious people. Especially Muslims, where the concept of nature and human existence on earth was describe in the Qur'an.

### Islamic Views and Critique of Materialism

According to the Catholic Encyclopedia, materialism denies the existence of both deities and souls. It is therefore incompatible with most world religions including Christianity and Judaism.<sup>47</sup> The concept of materialism blinding us from knowing the truth. Also, materialism contrary to the core teachings of Islam, especially related to the concept of monotheism (Tauhid). There are six pillars of faith in Islam. These six pillars are metaphysical, those are undetected by a naked eye.

Sayed Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi, in his book; *Faith versus Materialism: The Message of Surat al-Kahf*, explain at least two main reasons that causing materialism is unacceptable in Islam. *First*, materialism revolt against the Lord and Creator. Indeed, one of the greatest misfortunes for the world as well as for humanity that the modern Western cultural impulses and ideas took shape at a time when the revolt against religion in general,<sup>48</sup> and against the realities beyond the ken of human perception, had already captured the mind and heart of the Christian nations.<sup>49</sup>

This, in its turn, gave a materialistic bias to endeavors of intellectual and cultural development, industrial progress, and social growth in these nations. As this lopsided development increased, it also decreased the balance of a spiritual relationship between man and his Creator.<sup>50</sup> All these consequences

<sup>47</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Materialism#Axial\\_Age](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Materialism#Axial_Age) 26 November 2013, 10:28

<sup>48</sup> The Western civilization was born and brought up amongst the nations which had entrenched themselves against a priestly order that exploited religion for the sake of base desires and selfish ends. In addition, an uncompromising opposition to worldly knowledge by the Christian Church had set its very face against the improvement of conditions of the earthly life. This coupled with the immorality, fanaticism, and ignorance of Church fathers, forced the people in the West to take a thoroughly anti-religious stand.

<sup>49</sup> Sayed Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi, *Faith versus Materialism: The Message of Surat al-Kahf*, (Malaysia: Academe Art & Printing Service, 2005), p. 109

<sup>50</sup> This new civilization was thus born and raised in an atmosphere surcharged with atheistic and amoral tendencies. Phenomenal progress in the fields of physical sciences, industry and technology, on the other hand, enabled man to conquer space and set his foot on the moon. An ever-increasing material progress, control over the forces of nature, and the dynamic expansion of human potentialities promising ultimate dominion over the universe, has, in consequence, given rise to an anti-God materialism which has become the champion of anti-religious thought and action. It is the distinctive mark and dominant characteristic of the modern materialistic civilization. We do not know of any other civilization so ruthlessly materialistic and at the same time so thoroughly God-opposing, hostile to everything divine in origin or religious in principle and method, craving for material power and pleasure, and claiming an unquestioning submission to its own impulses and ideas.

were, it would seem, the product of inborn tendencies, temperaments, peculiar circumstance, and the social and religious order of the European peoples.<sup>51</sup> *Second*, materialism is contrary to prophethood. Materialism, which does not believe in God, also does not believe in anything related to God. Prophethood is one that relates to God. So, materialism does not believe in the prophethood. In fact, believing in the prophethood is one of the core teachings in Islam; moreover, it was included in the six pillars of faith.

A question arises here. If the universe and the innumerable creations contained therein are beyond human imagination; if all the trees and seven seas are inadequate to expound the Wisdom and Glory of God; and if the infinite signs and commandments of the Lord are beyond the ken of human understanding; then how can man attain the knowledge of his excellence and his attributes? How could be the mystery of life solved, and how is man to seek the path of divine guidance and righteousness? The prophets too are no more than mere mortals. We know that the knowledge of man is extremely limited and liable to err. Then how are we to place reliance on the teachings and wisdom of a prophet?<sup>52</sup>

For that, we need someone who will guide humans in the search for divine guidance and truth way. Someone is able to open the mysteries of life. Here is an important role for human the presence of prophet. From this opinion, we conclude that the prophethood is nature and necessity. In the Qur'an, surah Saba' verses 28, Allah said;

*"And We have not sent you except comprehensively to mankind as a bringer of good tidings and a warner. But most of the people do not know."*

Also in al-Furqan verses 56, Allah said;

*"And We have not sent you (O dear Prophet Mohammed - peace and blessings be upon him) except as a Herald of glad tidings and warnings."*

And in al-Isra' 105;

*"We have revealed the Qur'an in Truth, and with the Truth it has come down: and O Muhammad, We have sent you only to give good news to the believers and to warn the unbelievers."*

Then, Darwin's evolution theory which laden with materialism is also not free from various criticisms. Not a bit of world religions which criticize this theory. Almost immediately after Darwin's book published, the rejection of this

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<sup>51</sup> Sayed Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi, *Faith versus.....* p. 109-110

<sup>52</sup> Sayed Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi, *Faith.....* p.120

theory comes from the theological community. Where the view, which prevalent up to that time is that God-in Christianity-has created the world, complete in the form we see today. Consequently, many people argue that Darwinian model is contrary to Christian-Jewish understanding of creation. More than a hundred years later, several parties still exciting such a conclusion.<sup>53</sup>

Likewise with Islam, one of the famous figures Jamaluddin al-Afghani, wrote a book rejecting Darwinism. In the book entitled *al-Radd ala al-Dhariyyin* (refutation of the materialists), Jamaluddin al-Afghani regard materialism as a manifestation of evil that intends to destroy human civilization. He traces the history of modern materialism track to the upstream, that is the Greek materialism, which he thought held by Democritus, Epicurus, and Diogenes the Cynic. This historical survey followed by a critique of Darwin and his theory of evolution. Al-Afghani rejected the idea of materialism which states that the universe itself is formed accidentally, and that the atom (that is, matter) has a «perception and intelligence.» He also rejected their absolute idea that the universe is self-regulating structure without the Exalted Essence created.<sup>54</sup>

The development of physics also participated in breaking down of materialism. One of the most hated physics theory by the materialists is “Big Bang” theory. This theory talk about a creation of the universe. A theory states that the universe began as very hot and dense matter that cooled as the universe expanded.<sup>55</sup> According to the writer, there was similarities between rejection of materialism posed by al-Afghani to the theory of the «Big Bang». The similarities lies in the statement that the universe it has a beginning and there was a creator.

Another reason is materialism will make peoples arrogant. In fact, there are people who make his brain as God. While arrogant is strictly prohibited in Islam, as Allah says in the Qur'an: al-Isra 37;

*“And do not walk upon the earth exultantly. Indeed, you will never tear the earth [apart], and you will never reach the mountains in height.”*

Human should not be arrogant. Because humans knowledge is limited. In fact humans knowledge no more than a speck of dust. In another example, humans knowledge no more than sea water taken by a bird. Just a few drops.

Related with above statement, in Qur'an Allah says;

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<sup>53</sup> Ted Peters & Gaymon B, *Menjembatani Sains Dan Agama*, (Jakarta: Gunung Mulia, Cetakan II, 2006), hal. 105

<sup>54</sup> Ary Nilandari, *Memahat Kata Memugar Dunia: 101 Kisah yang Menggugah Pikiran*, (Bandung: Mizan Media Utama, Cetakan I, 2005), hal 82-83

<sup>55</sup> Claire L. Datnow, *Great Minds of Science Edwin Hubble: Discoverer of Galaxies Revised Edition*, (USA: Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data, t. th), p. 119



*“And they ask you (O Muhammad) concerning the Ruh (the Spirit); Say: “The Ruh (the Spirit): it is one of the things, the knowledge of which is only with my Lord. And of knowledge, you (mankind) have been given only a little.”*

The fact proved that human knowledge is limited. Many secrets yet of space unknown. Such as a questions about the existence of alien in space, amount of stars in space, and the vastness of space. Most are still in the form of assumptions. Therefore, it is not appropriate for a human to deny the existence of the creator.

## **Conclusion**

From this explanation, we conclude that materialism is not in accordance with religious of human life. The teachings of materialism are contrary to the core teachings of religion; believing in the Creator. Materialism also contrary to human nature as a whole. Because in essence, human are worshipers. When materialist do not believe in God, they actually shift their god to other forms, such as idolized artists, footballers, etc. If materialism continues to grow, then it is possible that someday there is no such thing as God. For that, we need to be aware the dangers of materialism. Consider that arrogant is one of materialism characteristic, it's mean an arrogant peoples has planting the seeds of materialism inside their soul. And we must keep our self from this dangerous characteristic.

Related about materialism and Darwin's Theory of Evolution, a collaboration of the two has made people doubt the existence of the Creator. Especially in terms of religion, as most religions that exist in the world (either *samawi* or *wadha'i*) believe there is a creator. This concept makes the theology rejects materialism and theory of evolution. In fact, the theory of the “Big Bang” is a real clue that the universe created from nothing, in other words God created it. Moreover, this theory becomes irrefutable scientific evidence to reject materialism.

In the last, author assesses, Yuri Alexeyevich Gagarin thinking influenced deeply by the teachings of Materialism. It is not surprising, Gagarin presumption that deny the existence of God was received responses from some people. Of them from a community in Moscow who said, “If you have never seen God in the world, then you will never see the God in the space.” Others poke it with a more subtle way. “In Siberia there is a worm's head out of the ground, he looked from side to side, then she said; “I have been to the surface, looking back and forth and I do not see Khrushchev (the supreme leader of the Soviet Union at that time), then Khrushchev was not exist”.

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