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Professor Cânan was born in 1940 in Küçük Karapınar in Konya Province, where he received his primary education. He graduated from Konya Boys' High School in 1958. He taught in Kayseri Secondary School from 1962-4, and Akşehir Secondary School, 1966-7. In 1972, he began to teach in the Faculty of Islamic Sciences in Atatürk University, then continued in the Theology Faculty of the same university. Professor Cânan has recently been appointed Dean of the Faculty of Theology in Harran University, Urfa. In addition to his former Faculty Journal, Professor Cânan has published articles in magazines such as Diyanet, Haksess, İslam, İslam Medeniyeti, Zafer, İcmal, Kadın ve Aile, Altınoluk, and Okul. He won the Prize of the Turkish National Culture Foundation in 1979 with a work entitled, Resulullah'a Göre Okul ve Ailede Çocuk Terbiyesi (Children's Education at School and in the Home According to the Prophet Muhammed). Professor Cânan has published the following works: Tarihçi Açısından Din (A translation of Toynbee's, Religion From the Point of View of the Historian) 1978; Seminar ve Tez Rehber (A Guide to Seminars and Theses), 1979; Resulullah'a Göre Okul ve Ailede Çocuk Terbiyesi, 1980; Atatürk Üniversitesi Lojmanları ve Taklitçiliğimizin Muhasebesi (The Atatürk University Residences and Calling to Account Our Imitating), 1979; İslam'da Çocuk Hakları (Children's Rights in Islam), 1980; İslam'da Temel Eğitim Esasları (The Principles of Basic Education in Islam), 1980; Sulh Çizgisi (The Line of Peace), 1980; Tebliğ Terbiye ve Siyasî Taktik Açısından Hicret

(*Migration from the point of view of Communication Training and Political Tactics*), 1981; Hz. Peygamberin Sünnetinde Terbiye (*Training in the Sunna of the Prophet Muhammed*), 1981; Yeni Usul-i Hadis (*New Principles of Hadith*, by Zafer Ahmad al-Osmanî, trans.), 1982; Kur'an ve Hadise Göre Fitne ve Anarşi (*Dissension and Anarchy According to the Qur'an and Hadith*), 1981; Kur'an'da Çocuk (*Children in the Qur'an*), 1984; Peygamberimiz Hadisleriyle Medeniyet Kültür ve Teknik (*Civilization, Culture, and Technology According to the Hadiths of the Prophet*), 1984; Ahkamu's-Sığar (*Minor Judgements*, by Ustrusheni, trans.), 1984; Peygamberimizin Okuma-Yazma Seferberliği ve Öğretim Siyaseti (*The Prophet Muhammed's Literacy Campaign and Education Policy*), 1985; İslam'da Zaman Tanzimi (*The Ordering of Time in Islam*), 1985, '88; İslam'da Çevre Sağlığı; Kütüb-i Sitte Muhtasarı Şerhi 1-5 (*The Healthy Environment in Islam; Commentary on the Abridged Six [Hadith] Books, 1-5*), 1988.

BEDIUZZAMAN SAID NURSI'S VIEW OF CIVILIZATION

What is Civilization?

If we embark on our subject with the question, What is civilization?, we won't be able to find an answer on which everyone is agreed. It is one of those words, or rather, concepts, the definition of which is disputed, like, humanism, culture, secularism, and technology. Is it only in our language that it is like this? No, it isn't.. As is known by those concerned with sociology, throughout the world, certain words have relative values.¹

Since our basic subject is Bediuzzaman's view of civilization, we shan't embark on a scholarly discussion of the question. Only in order to thoroughly grasp this word which is frequently used in Bediuzzaman's books, we have to know its various usages in our language. For we see that it is used by Bediuzzaman with just the same various meanings as in our language. For example, in an encyclopaedic dictionary prepared by Bediuzzaman's students, the word civilization is defined like this: "love of justice; good and decent living; citizenship; the state of communities whose way of living, social relations, and scientific, technological and industrial development have attained a certain level; the way of life which is in accordance

with the commands of Islam.”²

While defining it, I would like to state the deficiency of the meaning of the word civilization which was predominant in 19th century Europe. For as a European has stated, when Europeans used the word in that period, they took it as meaning only Western civilization, which they considered to be eternal and the highest, and they wrote the word with a capital ‘C’.³ Bediuzzaman also uses the word in this sense, as in this sentence:

“The people of civilization, which is soiled with the mud of vice, soil others with it. For instance, it has given the name of honour and glory to hypocrisy and it urges people to that filthy morality.”⁴

Today, the word civilization is confused with the words, science, technology, and culture. It is also used with these meanings. In such a situation, it is difficult to pinpoint the concept which should be understood by civilization. For while some scholars perceive values and systems like art, philosophy, religion, and law as civilization, others consider material elements like technology and the means of production as civilization. It is useful to know these in putting forward the understanding of civilization in Bediuzzaman’s works, our basic subject here. For it is possible to see that the word is used in the *Risale-i Nur* with one of these meanings in accordance with the historical conditions in which they were written, the basic message intended in the writings, and those for whom they were first written.

Civilization consists primarily of immaterial and moral values

Despite all these differences, from the German sociologist Max Weber up to the present time, what is generally meant by civilization is the immaterial, spiritual, moral understanding of

it. To put it another way, civilization is a way of looking at life, things and events; it is the way people consider the world. It is the rules and principles formed of people’s beliefs, opinions, and moral views. In the words of one sociologist, “The manifestation of a shared thought and joint life.”⁵ Material manifestations like science, labour, technology, and industry are the result of this immaterial base. An understanding just the reverse of Karl Marx’s.

According to Bediuzzaman, even if civilization is founded on the fields of science, industry, and trade,⁶ immaterial values, certain conceptions; and points of view form its basic foundations. Just as he frequently includes this in his comparisons of Islamic civilization and Western civilization.

His comparison of Islamic and Western Civilization

We see clearly the essence of Bediuzzaman’s conception of civilization in a comparison he makes of Islam and the West. He uses this comparison again and again in his works. Sometimes at length, sometimes briefly, sometimes as prose, and sometimes in verse. According to him, Western civilization, which is based on philosophy, which emerges from the human genius, and Islamic civilization, which springs from Divine Revelation, are different and separate in such a way that they cannot be reconciled in their basic principles and have no shared sides.

According to him, there are five fundamental principles which “make the wheels of civilization turn:”

1. The point of support.
2. The aim.
3. The principle of life.
4. The tie between communities.
5. The fruits (its goal, the results it obtains).

Western Civilization:

1. Its point of support is force.
2. Its aim is benefit and self-interest.
3. Its principle of life is conflict.
4. Its tie between communities is racialism and negative nationalism.
5. Its fruits are gratifying the appetites of the soul and increasing the needs of human kind, and facilitating the satisfaction of those needs.

"However, the mark of force is 'aggression.' The mark of benefit - since it is insufficient for every desire - is 'jostling and tussling.' While the mark of conflict is 'strife.' And the mark of racialism - since it is to be nourished by devouring others - is 'aggression.' Thus, it is for these reasons that it has negated the happiness of mankind."

As for the Qur'anic wisdom,

Its point of support is 'truth' instead of force.

It takes 'virtue and God's pleasure' as its aims in place of benefits. It takes the principle of 'mutual assistance' as the principle of life in place of the principle of conflict.

And it takes 'the ties of religion, class, and country' as the ties bonding communities.

Its aim is to form a barrier against the lusts of the soul, urge the spirit to sublime matters, satisfy the high emotions, and urging man to the human perfections, make him a true human being.

And the mark of the truth is 'accord.'

The mark of virtue is 'solidarity.'

The mark of mutual assistance is 'hastening to assist one

another.'

The mark of religion is 'brotherhood' and 'attraction.'

And the mark of reining in and tethering the soul and leaving the spirit free and urging it towards perfections is 'happiness in this world and the next.'

He explains the moral training philosophy and the Qur'an give to individual life like this:

"The sincere student of philosophy is a pharaoh, but he is a contemptible pharaoh who worships the basest thing for the sake of benefit. He recognizes everything from which he can profit as his 'Lord.' And that irreligious student is obstinate and refractory, but he is wretched together with his obstinacy and accepts endless abasement for the sake of one pleasure. And he is abject together with his recalcitrance and shows his abasement by kissing the feet of Satanic individuals for the sake of some base benefit. And that irreligious student is conceited and domineering, but since he can find no point of support in his heart, he is an utterly impotent blustering tyrant. And that student is a self-centered seeker of benefit whose aim and endeavour is to gratify his animal appetites; a crafty egotist who seeks his personal interests within certain nationalist interests.

"However, the sincere student of Qur'anic wisdom is a servant, but he does not stoop to worship even the greatest of creatures; he is an esteemed servant who does not take a supreme benefit like Paradise as the aim of his worship. And its student is humble; he is righteous and mild, and yet outside his Maker's sphere of leave, he would not voluntarily lower and abase himself before anything other than his Maker. And he weak and in want, and he knows his weakness and poverty, but he is self-sufficient due to the wealth which his All-Generous Lord has stored up for

him in the Hereafter, and he is strong since he relies on his Master's infinite power. And he acts and strives only for God's sake, for God's pleasure, and for virtue.

"Thus, the training the two give may be understood from the comparison of the two students."⁸

If civilization is not seated on moral foundations:

Bediuzzaman insists that the civilization which will bring happiness to man absolutely has to be seated on foundations of morality and divine guidance.

"If respect and compassion depart from the human heart, the reason and intelligence make such people like most fearsome and tyrannical monsters; they can no longer be managed by means of politics."⁹

Western civilization is based on human genius, Islamic civilization on Divine Guidance

While comparing the two civilizations, Bediuzzaman takes their sources, and in evaluating them states that while one is based on "genius"(*deha*), the other is based on "guidance"(*hiida*), and that these sources are reflected in very different ways on the individual and on society. One of the results obtained from these basic differences is the impossibility of unifying and reconciling them. In this way he appears as opposing the idea put forward by some Ottoman intellectuals of an Islamic-Western synthesis.

GENIUS

Functions in the mind,
Confuses the heart,
Looks to the [evil-commanding] soul and the body,
Cultivates the soul,
Develops the potentialities of the soul,
Makes the spirit a servant,

Turns man into a satan,
Recognizes only the life of this world,
Is materialist and worldly-minded,
Worships deaf nature,
Draws a veil of ingratitude over the face of the earth, and for this reason is deaf and blind,
It sees the bounties in it as ownerless booty,
The feeling it gives is thankless usurpation and theft.

GUIDANCE

Works in the heart,
Illuminates the spirit,
Develops the potentialities,
Illuminates nature,
Expands the spiritual capacities,
Makes the soul and the body servants,
Makes the zealous into angels,
Produces happiness in this world and the next,
Sees conscious Divine art and wise power,
It worships Allah, the possessor of art and power,
It scatters the light of thanks; for this reason guidance is seeing and hearing,
It benefits from Divine bounties with thankfulness and measure.

The virtues and sources of Western civilization

According to Bediuzzaman, Western civilization is not entirely bad in all its elements. On the contrary, it has many undeniable virtues, only the source of these is:

Neither the property of Christianity,
Nor the creation of Europe,
Nor the product of this century.
It is on the contrary, the property of all. It has arisen from:
The accumulation of combined human thought,

The laws of the revealed religions,
Innate needs,
And particularly from Islam and the revolution Islam brought about.

He says:

"To attribute civilization to Christianity, to which it does not belong, and show decline to be the friend of Islam, which is its enemy, is a sign that the firmament is revolving in the opposite direction."¹²

From time to time Bediuzzaman states that it is not a question of rejecting European civilization altogether, and that it is necessary that there is no misunderstanding on this point. He makes this reminder:

"Let it not be misunderstood; Europe is two. One follows the sciences which serve justice and right and the industries beneficial for human social life through the inspiration it has received from the true Christianity; this first Europe I am not addressing. I am rather addressing the second, corrupt Europe which, through the darkness of the philosophy of Naturalism, supposing the evils of civilization to be its virtues, has driven mankind to vice and misguidance."¹³

Other criticisms:

Bediuzzaman says that because Western civilization is based on these negative foundations it has brought bad characteristics like:

Wastefulness,
Poverty,
Idleness,
Egotism,
and cast the great majority, like 80%, into wretchedness.

He says:

"Since present Western civilization has acted contrary to the basic laws of the revealed religions, its evils have come to predominate over its virtues, and its errors and harm over its benefits. General tranquility and a happy worldly life, the true aim of civilization have been spoilt. Since wastefulness and vice have predominated over frugality and contentment, and laziness and the desire for comfort over endeavour and service, it has made wretched mankind both extremely poor, and extremely lazy.

"While in a primitive state, man was in need of three or four things. Now tyrannical western civilization has encouraged abuses and wastefulness and the appetites, and making inessential needs into essential ones, has made civilized man in need of twenty things."¹⁴

Thus, licit gain becomes insufficient for expenditure, and man takes ways that are dishonest and unlawful.

Resigning from civilization

As a result of the disgust Bediuzzaman felt during the 31st March Incident in the face of the immorality he witnessed among those who claimed to be civilized, he resigned from civilization, and said that he preferred the primitive life of the mountains of the Eastern Provinces to Istanbul:

"If civilization provides such a favourable ground for honour-destroying aggression and dissension-causing slander, cruel thoughts of revenge, satanic sophistry, and carelessness in matters of religion, let everyone witness that in place of this seat of malice known as the felicitous palace of civilization I prefer the wild nomad tents of the high mountains of the Eastern Provinces, the place of absolute freedom. For a freedom of thought, freedom of speech, favourable thinking, and soundness of heart which I have not seen in this low civilization rule in their full meanings

in the mountains of the East...

"My resignation from civilization will make you think. Yes, I prefer the wild life to civilization which is thus mixed with despotism, depravity, and degradation. This civilization makes individuals impoverished, dissolute, and immoral, whereas true civilization serves mankind's progress and development and the realization of man's potential. In this regard, therefore, to want civilization is to want humanity."¹⁵

One of the factors impelling Bediuzzaman to resign from civilization is civilization appearing under the labels of freedom, and the attitude and conduct which recognizes no view other than its own. He describes this situation in another passage like this:

"All of Europe's sycophants who attack the bigotted are a hundred times more bigotted in their own defective paths. If a *hoca* praised Shaykh Geylani (QS) to the excess they praise Shakespeare, he would be declared an infidel. Alas! Where is love of the nation and patriotism among them?"¹⁶

The West's end

Bediuzzaman held the firm conviction that present-day Western civilization, established as it is on foundations contrary to nature, will collapse, and that in its place Asian civilization will prevail. He mentions this in many places in his works:

"The facts that European civilization is not founded on virtue and guidance, but on lust and passion, rivalry and oppression, and that up to the present the evils of civilization have predominated over its virtues, and that it has been infiltrated by revolutionary societies like a wormeaten tree are each like powerful indications and means for the supremacy of Asian civilization. And in a

short time it will prevail."¹⁷

And in another passage he says:

"Christianity will either be extinguished or it will be purified. Because it was rent several times and Protestantism came. Protestantism was rent and approached belief in Divine Unity. It is preparing to be rent once again. It will either be extinguished, or it will see directly before it the truths of Islam, which comprise the fundamentals of true Christianity. Man cannot exist without religion. The Prophet Muhammed (PBUH) alluded to this mighty mystery thus: 'Hazret-i Isa will come and will be of my community. He will act precisely in accordance with my Shari'a.'"

And in a further passage he points out that the collapse of this civilization, which is contrary to mankind's benefit, will be as a result of mankind's awakening:

"This vicious civilization.... from which we have seen only harm, and since it is rejected in the view of the Shari'a and its evils have prevailed over its virtues... is annulled through the *fatwa* of what is beneficial for humanity, and doomed to extinction through the awakening of mankind, dissolute, obstinate, cruel, and in its meaning, savage..."¹⁸

The virtues of Western civilization

While criticizing the bases on which Western civilization is founded as has been shown, Bediuzzaman does not reject it outright. He states that it has virtues which should be obtained. According to him, Western civilization also has good sides:

"We shall take with pleasure from the Europeans the points which will assist our progress in civilization, like science and industry."¹⁹

And he puts it another way like this:

"At this time 'upholding the Word of God' is dependent on material progress. We can uphold the Word of God by entering upon true civilization."²⁰

Only, we must choose carefully in what we take from the West, and must not take points which will destroy our culture:

"What we mean is the virtues of civilization and the good things which are beneficial for mankind. Not the sins and evils of civilization."²¹

On this point he criticizes the road taken in Westernization:

"You should understand that what I mean are good things that are civilization's virtues and its benefits for mankind. Not its iniquities and evils that idiots have imagined to be its virtues, and imitating them devastated our possessions, and giving religion as the bribe did not even gain the world."²²

The Japanese model

Bediuzzaman long ago advocated following the Japanese model in taking what is beneficial from Western civilization, which only recently has begun to be mentioned in some official quarters:

"We have to follow the Japanese in acquiring civilization, for together with taking from Europe the virtues of civilization, they preserved their national customs which are every people's means of perpetuating themselves. Since our national customs developed within Islam, we have to embrace them in two respects."²³

Why doesn't Islam adopt Western civilization?

Bediuzzaman states that Muslims have acted coldly towards and held back from adopting Western civilization, and says that this a noteworthy and meaningful situation. According to him, Islam, whose basis is Divine light, has two fundamental

characteristics:

1. Self-sufficiency.
2. Independence.

That is to say, Islamic civilization is not in need of another civilization. It has no deficient sides. It has to be independent. It will preserve its independence so long as it preserves its Islamic characteristics.

He says on this point that Western civilization possesses two different geniuses, one Roman and the other Greek:

One is a genius given to imagination and fancy.
The other is materialist.

In spite of the long time that has passed and the efforts of Christianity and of civilization, these two spirits have not fused; they have remained separate like oil and water. If these two geniuses which are twins have not unified and fused despite a shared civilization which covers the centuries, how should guidance which descended from the heavens fuse and combine with human genius which arose from the earth?

According to Bediuzzaman,

"The Shari'a is the source of virtuous civilization. The Islamic world is worthy of being Plato's 'Virtuous City.'"²⁴

Furthermore, the Qur'an accepts a civilization which brings happiness to everyone, or at least to the majority. Whereas Western civilization has brought a false happiness to only 10%. 80% of the broad masses that remain are poor and needy, while the 10% is in a position between rich and poor.²⁵

Technology

Another notion which comes to mind when one says civilization is technology. Civilization and technology are so one within the other and closely connected that in many situations

they are confused with one another. For this reason, while discussing civilization we have also to consider technology. Just as in Bediuzzaman's works the question of technology occupies an exceptional place.

According to him, technology represents industry, one of three bases, science, industry, and trade, on which civilization are based.²⁶

Technology is a Divine favour bestowed as a consequence of man's impotence and need.

According to Bediuzzaman, in mentioning the miracles of the prophets, the Holy Qur'an is urging Muslims to achieve what is similar to them by way of science and industry, that is, technology. For the prophets are people who should be taken as examples in every matter. He says:

"The verses of the Qur'an of Miraculous Exposition concerning the miracles of the prophets, which are its most brilliant verses, are not historical stories, they contain meanings of guidance. Indeed, in mentioning the miracles of the prophets, it is tracing the final limits of man's science and industry. It is pointing the finger at the furthest objectives. It is specifying their final aims. It is striking man with the hand of encouragement and urging him towards those goals."²⁷

According to Bediuzzaman, the miracles which the prophets manifest are showing the objectives mankind will reach in science. The prophets do not represent only spiritual and moral attainment, but also material achievement. In one sentence, he says:

"It may even be said that it was firstly the hand of miracles that gave as a gift to mankind material achievements and wonders, the same as moral and spiritual attainments."

Moving on from this basic idea, Bediuzzaman gives

examples from the Qur'an's verses for numerous wonders, from electricity, trains, aeroplanes, telegraph, television, artesian wells, and fireproof materials, to radiation, the raising of the dead to life in medicine, and the subjugation and employment of demons and jinn. He says that man is being encouraged to obtain these by way of science and industry.²⁸

The dangers of technology

Together with stating that technology should be acquired, Bediuzzaman draws attention to the fact that it should be used for good, otherwise it will be the cause of harm. Foremost the treatise called *A Key to the World of Light* gives space to this, included by various means from others of his works. His ideas on this question are as follows:

1. The wonders of modern civilization are bounties and favours bestowed on mankind by Almighty God.
2. In which case, mankind should offer thanks for these bounties.
3. Thanks for these wonders of technology is offered by using them for good.
4. However, they are being used for idle pleasures and enjoyment, to satisfy base appetites.
5. As a punishment, each item of technology has been the cause of a calamity, and it will be the cause.

And he gives examples in connection with newspapers and the radio.

He says in connection with newspapers:

"This dissolute civilization has made the globe of the earth like a single city; on becoming acquainted with one another, every morning and evening its people relate and teach to one another sins and trivia by means of the newspapers."

Continuing, he states that this situation has enveloped man in a thick veil of heedlessness which is very difficult to rend.²⁹

And he says in connection with the radio, which he says has made the earth like "a single house:"

"Certainly and without any doubt, as universal thanks for this truly great bounty, the radio should be used before anything for the All-Wise Qur'an and its truths, which are 'good words,' and for instruction in belief and good morality, and words about what is necessary and essential for mankind's interests, so that it may be thanks for the bounty. For if the bounty is not thanked for in this way, it becomes harmful for mankind.

"Indeed, man has need of some light pleasures in addition to needing the truth, but these should be one out of five, otherwise it falls contrary to the wisdom in the air's creation. Also it gives rise to man becoming lazy, and to being dissolute, and to him leaving aside his necessary duties. While being a great bounty for mankind, it becomes a great disaster. It destroys enthusiasm for work, which is necessary for man."

Bediuzzaman states that while the treatise was being written, one out of ten of programmes on the radio were allotted for useful programmes, and that this was a human error. He concludes the discussion like this:

"God willing, mankind will remedy this error and as thanks for this bounty of the radio, which is the means for making the whole face of the earth into an enlightened gathering, an exalted dwelling, and a school for the instruction of faith, make the 'good words' expended for man's eternal life four out of five."³⁰

How did the West progress?

Bediuzzaman also analyses the causes that played a role in

the West's progress. He analysed the matter in a short discussion which is a summary of some of the theories put forward in the West.³¹ He explains why he is going to touch on the subject of how the West developed like this:

"By some fearsome means, and by impregnating certain minds, this era's civilized inquisition has brought into existence a number of illegitimate children, and expressed its hatred and feelings of revenge towards Islam. It wanted to open the door to irreligion, or to slackness, or to the inclination towards Christianity, or to make people feel coldly towards Islam through doubts.

"The plot is this: O you Muslims! Look! Wherever there is a Muslim, he is relatively poor, heedless, and primitive. And wherever there is a Christian, he is to some degree civilized, awakened, and rich. And so on.

"And I say this:

"O Muslims! Don't loosen your hands from Islam, the preserver of your existence, in the face of the destructive effects of the two reasons, one material, one immaterial, for Europe's superiority; cling onto it with all your might, otherwise you will be lost.

"Yes, we are descending, they are ascending. There are two reasons for this. One is material, the other immaterial.

First Reason: The general Christian Church, and Europe's natural situation. This is the source of its life, because it is small, it is beautiful, it is the source of iron, it is zigzagged and wavy. Its seas and rivers are indented and full of curves. It is cold.

"Indeed, while Europe forms one fiftieth of the globe of the earth, it has drawn to itself one quarter of humanity through its natural charms. It is established by science that the gathering together of numerous individuals gives rise

to needs. The needs multiply for many reasons like custom, and cannot be contained in the growing capacity of the land.

“And so from this point, need teaches industry, and curiosity teaches science, and hardship teaches the means of dissipation, and they begin to study.

“Yes, the idea of industry and inclination towards science arise from great numbers. Just as, due to Europe’s smallness, their getting to know one another and co-operating through travelling around the seas and rivers, its natural means of transport, gave rise to trade and shared activities, so also contact resulted in the meeting of minds, and rivalry also resulted in competition. Since iron, the source of all industry, is found within it in abundance, this gave its civilization such a powerful weapon that it seized and plundered the remains of all the civilizations of the-world, made itself felt extremely forceably, and spoilt the balance of the earth.

“Also, coldness and moderation, whose mark it is to delay in taking things and leave late the leaving of things, gave stability and steadiness to their endeavours, and perpetuated their civilization. Also, through relying on science, the formation of their states, the clashing of their reciprocal forces, the harassment of their cruel despotisms, the oppression of their inquisition-like bigotry, which caused reactions, and the rivalry and competition of parallel elements caused the Europeans’ potentialities to develop, and awakened the virtues and idea of nationalism.

“Second Reason : This is the point of support. Indeed, if any Christian raises his head and seizes on one of the goals, which carry on in continuous succession and are one within the other, he looks behind him and sees a most powerful point of support on which to rely, and from

which he can always seek help for his morale and give it life. He finds the strength in himself to contest even in the face of even the greatest and most burdensome matters.

“Thus, that point of support is European civilization, which is a barracks of the armed masses or a great church, which, with its civilized inquisition bigotry kneaded together with the irreligion of the materialists and its drunken pride at the domination of its civilization, is cunning and ever-ready to give strength to the veins of life of its co-religionists, who stretch out their hands to it from all sides, and to cut the most vital veins of Muslims.

“Is it not seen that the British, who don most the mask of lover of liberty, stretch out their hand and search; wherever they find a Christian, they give life. See Abyssinia and Sudan. See the Tayyar and Ertasi. See the Lebanon and Huran. See Malsor and Albania. See the Kurds and Armenians, the Turks and Greeks, and so on...

“In Short : What gives them life is hope and what kills us is despair. It is well-known that someone said: ‘If I find a point of support, I’ll shift the earth from its place.’ There is a strange point in this hypothesis. It means if this insignificant man finds a point of support, he can turn mighty matters like the globe.

“O People of Islam! Your point of support in the face of the disasters and calamities that have descended on the world of Islam and weigh as heavy as the globe of the earth, is the point of Islam, which commands love and unity, and science and the combining of ideas, and brotherhood and mutual help.”³²

Reasons for the Muslims’ backwardness

According to Bediuzzaman, in the first three centuries of the Hijra Muslims were distinguished and held their heads high. Up

to the fifth century were 'golden years.' From the fifth to the twelfth centuries was a period when emotions predominated; they represent a time of coming to a standstill and retrogression. After the twelfth century enlightened ideas predominated over black feelings and pessimism. The period after the 14th century is one of victory.³³

Bediuzzaman considered the reasons for the decline after the 5th century on different occasions, and on each analyses from different angles why they declined and how they should progress. He analysed it most systematically and extensively in his work called The Damascus Sermon. He wrote:

"In the conditions of the present time in these lands, I have learnt a lesson in the school of mankind's social life and I have realized that what has allowed foreigners, Europeans, to fly towards the future on progress while it arrested us and kept us, in respect of material development, in the Middle ages are six dire sicknesses. The sicknesses are these:

"The First: The coming to life and rise of despair and hopelessness in social life.

"The Second: The death of truthfulness in social and political life.

"The Third: Love of enmity.

"The Fourth: Not knowing the luminous bonds that bind the believers to one another.

"The Fifth: Despotism, which spreads like various contagious diseases.

"The Sixth: Restricting endeavour to what is personally beneficial."

The remedy for progress

"I shall explain, by means of six 'Words,' the lesson I

have learnt from the pharmacy of the Qur'an, which is like a faculty of medicine. This lesson constitutes the medicine to cure our social life of those six dire sicknesses:

"First Word: is hope; that is, to nurture a strong hope of God's mercy.

"Second Word: the casting away of despair.

"Third Word: the raising to life amongst us of truthfulness.

"Fourth Word: the thing most worthy of love is love.

"Fifth Word: one person's sin does not remain as one, it sometimes grows and spreads and becomes a thousand. Don't say: 'We don't do harm, but we don't have the power to do good, therefore we are excused.'"

Bediuzzaman recommends zeal, that is, thinking of the nation, with the Fifth Word, and states that it will emerge through the emotions of "love", "respect", and "compassion" towards the nation.³⁴ "A person's value is in relation to his endeavour. Whoever's endeavour is his nation, that person becomes a small nation on his own."³⁵

"Sixth Word: is the consultation enjoined by the Shari'a, which is the key to the happiness of the Islamic social life of Muslims."³⁶

Bediuzzaman also discusses the reasons for our backwardness in regard to another subject at the level of the Ottomans, and ties it to two reasons:

1. Despotism.

2. Differences between the three main branches of the 'general guide;' the people of the secular schools, those of the religious schools, and those of the Sufi *tekkes*.³⁷

And according to another analysis, our backwardness was

due to four reasons:

1. Our not conforming to Islam.
2. Arbitrary and erroneous interpretations of it by certain sycophants.
3. Bigotry on the part of certain ignorant externalist scholars.
4. Ill-fortune; choosing the evils of the West, which are agreeable to man's base appetites.³⁸

Hope

It would be lengthy to give here the discussions of the matters noted above, so we shall make do with just indicating to the headings. However, since the question of 'hope' bears greater importance than all the others, we find it necessary to include some of his explanations concerned with it.

According to Bediuzzaman, what plays the greatest part in decline and disaster is despair. Like a bird which is unable to fly away due to fear on seeing a snake and thinks it is not capable, it means a despairing person is paralysed. Thus, "Despair is the obstacle to all attainment and achievement." Our salvation is tied to casting away despair and raising hope to life again amongst us. For this reason he interprets the slightest evidences in ways that will increase hope, and promises victory. He states in most certain terms at every opportunity that the Muslims will dominate materially in the future:

"Have hope! The loudest and most powerful voice in the upheavals and changes of the future will be the voice of Islam."³⁹

"I am certain that the skies of the future and the land of Asia will together submit to the clean, shining hand of Islam."⁴⁰

"God willing, through a miracle of the Prophet, from the hundred-year distance we have remained backward in pro-

gress we shall mount with our actions the train of the Constitution, which is accordance with the Shari'a, and shall mount with our minds the Buraq (the Prophet's mount) of Islamic Consultation, and perfecting our means and crossing in a brief time this fearsome vast desert, shall compete neck and neck with the civilized nations. For they mounted ox-carts and set off; we shall straight away mount vehicles like trains and balloons, and shall overtake them."⁴¹

"God willing, through the strength of Islam in the future, the virtues of civilization shall prevail; it will cleanse the face of the earth of filth, and secure universal peace."⁴²

A few sentences from the reply Bediuzzaman gave to those who said in the face of his hope and optimism about the future, "You are exaggerating. You are showing illusion as the truth. And you are insulting us with ignorance. Now is the end of time, it will gradually grow worse." Bediuzzaman replied:

"Why should the world be the world of progress for everyone else, and the world of decline and retrogression only for us? Is that the case? See, I shall not speak to you, I am turning this way; I shall speak to the people of the future:

"O you Said's, Hamza's, Ömer's, Osman's, Tahir's, Yusuf's, Ahmed's and rest of you who are hidden behind the high age of three centuries hence, and listening silently to my words, watch us with a secret, unseen gaze! I am addressing you! Raise your heads and say: 'You are right!' And it should be incumbent on you to say it. Let these contemporaries of mine not listen if they do not wish. I am speaking to you over the wireless telegraph that stretches from the valleys of the past called history to your elevated future. What should I do? I was hasty, I came in winter, but you will come in a paradise-like spring. The seeds of light sown now will open as flowers in your

ground....

"And so, O you miserable two-footed mobile mausoleums who have left Islam, which is like the spirit of the two lives! Do not stop at the door of the generation that is coming. The grave awaits you. Retreat into it and let the new generation come forth, which will wave the reality of Islam over the universe in earnest!..."⁴³

When Bediuzzaman was completing his work called *Lemeât*, the crescent moon and a star came together in the sky. On seeing them, he made this prediction:

"The star and crescent, the standard of 'Upholding the Word of God,' will regain the former glory which raised it."⁴⁴

"Europe and America are pregnant with Islam, one day they shall give birth to an Islamic state, just as the Ottoman Empire was pregnant with Europe and gave birth to a European state."⁴⁵

The evidences which afforded Bediuzzaman certain hope

Bediuzzaman also cites a number of evidences in order to convince those he is addressing on the question of his hope that Muslims would regain their former glory in the future and move to the fore in material and moral and spiritual progress. These evidences he deals with separately as material, and moral and spiritual.

1. Progress from the moral and spiritual point of view

A summary of what he says concerning this: Islam is the truth. It is conformable with man's nature. Unlike the Christians, who remained backward the more they showed bigotry in their religion, the Muslims have progressed the more they have

embraced their's. Although the Europeans progressed the more they drew distant from their religion, the Muslims retrogressed the more they slackened their hold on their's and were confronted with disasters. Just as this shows the truth of Islam, so too although not one person has left Islam on the strength of evidence and proof, foreigners have entered Islam in every period.

Unlike other religions, Islam does not demand that the reason should be abandoned in order to be a believer. On the contrary it all the time addresses the reason and says: Think! Use your reason! Haven't you got a mind?

Therefore, the people of the future, which will be saved from the bigotry and blind imitation of the past and will take science and reason as their basis, will adopt Islam, which has a place for proof and reason. He says:

"We do not abandon proof in favour of blind obedience and imitation of the clergy like some adherents of other religions. Therefore, in the future, when reason, science, and technology prevail, that will surely be the time the Qur'an will gain ascendancy, which relies on rational proofs and invites the reason to confirm its pronouncements."⁴⁶

According to Bediuzzaman, in the past eight obstacles prevented Islam being adopted by the world:

1. The Europeans' ignorance.
2. Their barbarity.
3. Their bigotry in their religion.
4. The oppression of the clergy and spiritual leaders.
5. The people following them blindly.
6. The despotism that was with us.
7. Our immorality.
8. Certain scientific knowledge being imagined to oppose

Islam.

In the course of time all these obstacles will disappear.

2. Progress from the material point of view

Bediuzzaman stated with complete certainty that Islam would also dominate materially in the future, and noted convincing proofs for this. According to him, established in the heart of the Islamic world's 'collective personality' are five extremely powerful, unbreakable "Strengths," which have blended and coalesced:

"The First Strength is the reality of Islam. As was seen in the past, this reality is the foundation of all attainment and all the sciences, of a world civilization. It can unite three hundred and seventy million people as though they were a single individual.

"The Second Strength is an intense need and complete poverty. The master of all progress and science is need and poverty.

"The Third Strength is the Freedom which is in accordance with the Shari'a. This affords high ideals and urges rivalry and competition in their being realized. In other words, it means being furnished with the desire and inclination for the highest achievements worthy of humanity.

"The Fourth Strength is the fearlessness arising from belief, which is decked out with compassion. That is, neither to abase oneself, nor to display abasement before oppressors, and nor to abase the oppressed.

"The Fifth Strength is Islamic pride which proclaims and upholds the Word of God, and at this time upholding the Word of God is dependent of material progress."

According to Bediuzzaman,

"Time does not run in a straight line so that its beginning and end draw apart from one another. It rather moves in a circle like the motion of the earth. Sometimes it displays the seasons of spring and summer as progress. And sometimes the seasons of storms and winter as decline. Just as every winter is followed by spring and every night by morning, mankind also shall have a morning and a spring, God willing. You may expect from Divine Mercy to see true civilization within universal peace brought about through the sun of the truth of Islam."⁴⁷

Freedom and consultation

According to Bediuzzaman, the Muslims' salvation is tied to freedom and consultation. He repeats this in almost all his works as the occasion arises. For instance, he says:

"It is only constitutionalism and freedom that will reveal Asia's good fortune and Islam's destiny. But only on condition they remain within the sphere of conduct taught by the Glorious Shari'a."⁴⁸

And he explains that they should not be interpreted as vice, illicit pleasures, extravagance, aggression, and freedom to follow the low desires of the soul, nor acted on according to these.⁴⁹

As is clear, Bediuzzaman recommends not absolute freedom, but freedom within the limits of Islam. According to him, this beneficial freedom can be entered upon by five doors:

"First Door: the union of hearts, that is, union of belief and hearts.

"Second Door: love of the nation.

"Third Door: education.

"Fourth Door: human endeavour.

"Fifth Door: the giving up of dissipation."⁵⁰

According to Bediuzzaman, brilliant men could be raised in Anatolia and Rumelia thanks to this Islamic Freedom, who would serve humanity. He says:

"If this Islamic Freedom is lived in accordance with justice, through smashing the heavy chains on mankind's thought and overturning the barriers before the potentialities of progress, it may expand that small sphere as far as the world. A common villager like myself even will fasten high in the Pleiades the shoots of his hopes and desires, which will take into account the government of all, which is that exalted, and since trembling with growth each of his actions will find a way up to the Pleiades, and his endeavour will rise that high, and his morals will become perfected to that degree, and his ideas will expand to the breadth of the Ottoman lands, he will leave behind the Plato's, the Ibn-i Sina's, the Bismarck's, and Descartes', and the Taftazani's, God willing."⁵¹

According to Bediuzzaman, there is a great strength in true consultation. Just like three *alifs* side by side have the power of 111, the solidarity of three people with true sincerity round one aim results in the strength of a hundred people. And ten people reach the strength of a thousand men.⁵²

And what about democracy? Although Bediuzzaman speaks of the freedom which is in accordance with the Shari'a, and Islamic consultation, and the importance he attaches to consultation is so great he proclaims it to be the key which will reveal Asia's good fortune, he not once uses the word 'democracy.' Although intending Adnan Menderes and his group who came to power in 1950 he uses the word "Democrats",⁵³ the word democracy is not included in his works even once.

Just as it is possible to explain this by the destruction and intrigue which was carried out in Islamic countries under this word, it is also possible to explain it through his understanding

of civilization which we have already mentioned, and this is even more reasonable. It is like this: he proclaimed Islamic civilization as possessing the characteristics of self-sufficiency and independence. The meaning of this is as follows: Islamic civilization is in need of the West in none of its institutions at all. Each of its institutions has its own originality. Islamic freedom and Islamic consultation and Western democracy and its understanding of freedom are not different things. But even if democracy bears points similar to consultation, there are places where it differs. In which case, why should it be sought after? Also, Bediuzzaman did not use in his works other terms which express Western concepts, like humanism, culture, and technology.

Conclusion

Bediuzzaman was a man of action. He was not an ordinary *hoca* or Ottoman religious scholar. He passed his whole life in struggle. He wrote, he gave speeches, he went to war, he was sent into exile, he was sent before courts. In short, he lived a life of struggle right up to the moment of his death.

Why did he struggle? What was he fighting for?

We can answer this with a single word: civilization!

His whole fight was the fight for civilization. The fight for civilization that would gain for humanity universal peace and happiness in this world and the next. He knew that the matter confronting all the Muslims in the world was the same, it stemmed from the same thing: the reason for the distress and pain suffered on all sides, its meaning, was the same: what had to be saved was Islamic civilization.

According to him Western civilization was established on negative foundations. For this reason it could not gain the worldly happiness even of 90% of humanity, and had entered its decline. Tomorrow's world would definitely adopt Islamic

civilization.

The salvation of all mankind, not only Muslims, was tied to the raising to life of Islamic civilization, which is based on the belief of Divine Unity, virtue, and good morality.

Throughout history Muslims had progressed so long as they had lived Islam, and had been dominant.

All their backwardness and afflictions arose from Islam having departed from their lives.

Our civilization had to be raised to life again. While doing this, we should take the virtues of the West, like science and technology, but we should not take their way of life, their vices, their immorality. He called out like this:

“O sons of this land! Do not try to imitate Europeans! How can you reasonably trust in and follow the vice and invalid, worthless thought of Europe after the boundless tyranny and enmity it has shown you? No! No! You who imitate them in dissipation, you are not following them, but unconsciously joining their ranks and putting to death both yourselves and your brothers. Know that the more you follow them in immorality the more you lie in claiming to be patriots! Because your following them in this way is to hold your nation in contempt, to hold the nation up to ridicule!”⁵⁴

* * *

Answers to some of the audience's questions

Question 1: You spoke of Bediuzzaman's fight in your talk. Who did Bediuzzaman fight (struggle) with? Is this fight what we know as fighting? Or what sort of fight is it? What do you mean when you say fight (struggle)?

Answer: Bediuzzaman lived every stage of his life in order to raise Islamic civilization to life. This goal demanded that according to the circumstances, he gave speeches, wrote articles, hastened to the front-line in war, and composed works. Those who wanted to prevent this service of his put him in prison, sent him into exile, sent to live under the supervision of gendarmes. While fighting on the front, he wrote Signs of Miraculousness (*Ishârâtü'l-I'jaz*). And most of his other works were written in exile and prison under the most difficult conditions. That is to say, he lived a life every moment of which passed in struggle. The enemy he was struggling with was unbelief, and its representatives, supporters, and party. This fight did not necessitate weapons. Just like the *jihad* the Prophet Muhammed (PUBH) told of, the fight in the home.

Call these endeavours for Islam *jihad*, or call them struggle, or call them fighting, or striving; whatever word you use, you will be saying the same thing.

Only, if you understand from the words fight and struggle, spilling into the streets, taking to terrorism, clashing with the police and gendarmes, holding demonstrations, rebelling and

revolting, Bediuzzaman did not carry on that sort of fight. And he did not recommend it either. He said: "Conquering the civilized is by convincing them, not by force and compulsion like with savages." In which case, his fight was not a material fight, it was an immaterial fight. It was endeavouring to convince people of matters to do with belief in God by the use of reasoning and logic.

Question 2: To what degree was Nursi able to be successful in his effort to modernize Islam and reform religion?

Answer: There is some mistake in the question. Because Bediuzzaman was not after reform and modernization in religion. Reform is a term to do with the West. It means religion being expelled from political life, and the principles which the church added to religion being taken out from it. The reform movements in the West all aimed at being saved from religion. The word reform brings to mind putting religion aside.

In Islam there is the word 'renewal.' The Prophet Muhammed (PBUH) gave news that each century a renewer of religion would come. The renewers begin in the second century of the Hijra with Umar Ibn Abdu'l-Aziz. It means renewal. It is not casting religion out of life, it aims to cleanse religion of innovations. Renewal is returning to the origins, it is regeneration.

Throughout history, all the renewal movements in the Islamic world, which emerged in response to a local need far from outside influence, contrary to the reform movements in the West, sought the return to the origins and the strengthening of weakened Islamic, religious, life. In the West, however, contrary to our renewers, reformists wanted to expel religion from life. And whenever we have returned to religion, we have achieved progress and victory in political and economic, and

even military, fields. And on their carrying out reforms and expelling religion from their lives, they have progressed.

This arises from one of the main differences between Islam and Christianity. Christianity rejects the reason and science, and has dogmas, which are contrary to reason and science. The church is an institution of oppression. Islam has a place for the reason and encourages science, it rejects despotism. In Islam those who are considered most superior are scholars. The poor too are protected by Islam.

Since this is the case, to express the renewal that Bediuzzaman wanted to bring about in Islam with the word 'reform' is completely mistaken. The term modernization is the same. Islam cannot be modernized. Islamic matters, the fundamentals of belief, are expounded in a way present-day man will understand. And Bediuzzaman did this. Bediuzzaman expounded the fundamentals of belief in a style that the people of today, who attach importance to learning and reasoned argument, will understand, and by which they will be convinced, and won't reject; with reasoned, logical, scholarly proofs. He gave reasoned explanations concerning the most difficult, abstract matters, like belief in the Hereafter, Divine Determining (Fate or Destiny), and the angels, about which former scholars had said, "They are confirmed by faith and cannot be proved by the reason." He even offered the challenge: "If you can still reject and object to this after reading and understanding it, come and stick your finger in my eye!"

Thus, we can look at Bediuzzaman as a renewer, not as a reformer. He tried to remove the dissipation, wastefulness, ignorance, and European invasion which come between people and the Qur'an and Sunna. To a very large extent he was successful in achieving his aims. In Turkey and in every part of the world even, people benefit from his works and live true Islam. Those working for the development of true Islam and for it to

be conveyed to people, increase in number every day. We can say that within the next ten years his aims will be achieved entirely.

Question 3: What did Said Nursi intend by not allowing his students to read other books?

Answer: Bediuzzaman would never have recommended not reading other books. This is one of the claims fabricated to denigrate him. I too am someone who has benefited from his works. I became a professor by reading and studying. I mentioned numerous names of Western authors during my talk. If I hadn't read them, I wouldn't have been able to mention them. There are numerous references to authors Turkish and foreign in the books I have written. All Students of the Risale-i Nur primarily read the Risale-i Nur, and then read other beneficial books. But of course they choose carefully between books, and won't read haphazardly those which aren't useful. The Prophet said: "I seek refuge with God from useless knowledge."

Question 4: You said Bediuzzaman spoke of human civilization. Is this different from Islamic civilization? (This question was asked verbally and the person who put it was probably a reporter.)

Answer: For sure, Bediuzzaman's view of civilization is not outside Islam. I said this to state the difference between Bediuzzaman and Western thinkers. Bediuzzaman usually proposed a civilization which took into consideration first and foremost the benefits of world Muslims. He had to choose only Muslims as those he was addressing in this matter. To put it another way, if he included such a term, we would consider it to be normal. However, he spoke of the worldly happiness of all humanity, and said that civilization should bring happiness

to everyone or at least to the majority. He frequently uses the phrase "universal peace" and speaks of a peace that includes within it all humanity. And he dwells on the principles which will bring this about.

Whereas what Western authors and thinkers who have Christian roots mean when they speak of the future of humanity and tomorrow's civilization is not humanity, but the domination of Western civilization over the whole world. The purpose of Western domination is to take Western institutions *per se* to the places it goes, it isn't to make the material affluence, the knowledge, technology, and virtues of civilization that there are in the West reach everywhere. For example, Toynbee does not make the analysis of how the West can predominate over the civilizations of Islam, which even if it is not a rival to Western civilization today, is anticipated to be in the future, and of Russia, India, and the Far East, and how other societies can be integrated - provided they remain in the status of proletarian - into Western civilization, he states that a nation can outright be the proletarian, that is, workers', class. For example, for the Islamic world, he says that it should be integrated into the West within the framework of conditions whereby it lives a vegetable life like a corpse without a spirit and not adding anything original to civilization. In continuing his analysis, Toynbee states that whether religious bigots or secular Westernizers, neither of these groups of intellectuals will be able to come forward with a civilized progress which will offer a threat to the West. According to him, the danger to the West might come from from the working class, which he describes as "the porters of Istanbul" and "Egyptian peasants." After making this diagnosis, in masterly style Toynbee points out the two ways of getting rid of this danger:

1. Spreading alcoholic liquor among the working class.
2. Introducing racist ideas among the Muslim nations.

According to Toynbee, Islam preserved itself by rejecting these two demons. Whereas the West has wiped out from history numerous primitive peoples with just drink.

Western analysts say: "Alcoholics lose all feelings of patriotism, honour, and family. They reach a state at which they think of nothing but their own pleasure. Families and nations are wiped out of their own accord."

Again Toynbee states that in the West racial distribution found stability in the form of a patchwork quilt, while in the nations of the East religion was taken as the base and since there was no racial distinction, it presented the view of shot silk, and geographically they lived interspersed with one another in houses following on one after the other. He says that these will be turned into nation-states based on race only by barbaric methods, that is, through terror and massacres. (For further information and sources, see my book entitled, *Peygamberimiz Hadislerinde Medeniyet, Kültür ve Teknik* (Civilization, Culture, and Technology in the Hadiths of the Prophet). Cihan Yayinevi, Istanbul 1984.)

Under the leadership of thinkers and scholars like this, the West exerted military and political pressure, and introducing racialism and alcoholic liquor into the Islamic world and the whole world with a thousand and one tricks, prepared the ground for its domination and still continues to do so. In our country it should be noted in which circles drink is deified and sanctified and made a means of examination in order to find new ways of exalting it. Who opposes the prohibition of alcoholic liquor or its restriction, and defends it as a requirement of modernity? When was the manufacture and marketing of drink made official in Turkey? Investigating and discovering and pondering over these facts will be a key to understanding serious matters. To put it in a nutshell, these are carried out through the compulsion and planning of the West. Even if the present

government wanted sincerely to abolish it, it would not have the power to do so; the West would not permit it.

To return to our subject, Bediuzzaman, who dwelt on the questions of civilization, would not descend to their egotism and propose disgusting, satanic intrigues like his Western counterparts; he proposes bases that will bring happiness to all humanity. He dwells on man being the most valuable being on the earth. He mentions love of man, respect for man, and giving value to man. He frequently says: "O man!" in addressing mankind, the same as he says: "O Muslims!" in addressing Muslims.

We can explain Bediuzzaman frequently discussing a civilization that will embrace humanity through his belief that it will come about. According to him, mankind will enter Islam in masses, the skies of the future and the continent of Asia will surrender to Islam's clean and stainless hand. The events that the Prophet told of, "Hazret-i Isa will descend to the earth, kill the Dajjal, and perform the prayers behind the Mehdi," are the Christian world entering Islam. According to Bediuzzaman, those days are close, and he was preparing the ground for such a future. In which case, he did not see his mission are being limited to the Muslims of Turkey or the Islamic world. He understood it to embrace all humanity. The treatises, *Tabiat Risalesi* (Nature: Cause or Effect) and *Ayetü'l-Kübra* (The Supreme Sign) do not address only Muslims; they address mankind needy for universal peace and form a few of the foundation stones of mankind's civilization of the future.

Footnotes:

1. For an analysis of the word, see my, *Medeniyet, Kültür ve Teknik*, Cihan Yayınları, Istanbul 1984, 25-8, and, Cemil Meriç, *Umran'dan Uygarlığa*,

Ötüken Yayınevi, İstanbul 1977, 93-9, 349 fn.16.

2. *Dini İlmî Yeni Ansiklopedi* (prepared by a committee headed by Hekimoğlu İsmail), TİMAS Yayınevi, İstanbul 1989, ii, 771.

3. Toynbee, Arnold J., *La Religion Vue Par un Historien*, trans. Marcelle Weill, Gallimard, Paris 1963, 152.

4. Nursi, Bediüzzaman Said, *Mesnevi-i Nuriye*, Osman Yalçın Matbaası, İstanbul 1958, 184. An event we witnessed in 1984 will make clear the different understandings of civilization we have. On alighting from the bus in the East Bus Station in Antalya, we approached the policeman directing the traffic at the junction immediately opposite to ask an address. Although the traffic lights were red, a couple was crossing to the other side of the road. One was a woman, the other a man. They were in bathing-suits since it was summer. That is, they weren't wearing anything else. When the policeman saw them ignoring the traffic rules, he muttered: "And you ought to be civilized, but you don't even observe the red light!" The policeman was right, because in the view of officialdom, civilization was this, and being civilized was to behave like that. To wear Islamic dress was a sign of backwardness carrying a lot of risks, starting with Article 163.

5. Bennabi, Malek, *Vocation d'Islam*, Seuil, Paris 1954, 21.

6. Nursi, Bediüzzaman Said, *Muhakemat*, Sözleryayınevi, İstanbul 1977, 53.

7. —, *Sözlery*, 132-3.

8. *Ibid.*, 132.

9. —, *Şualar*, Çeltut Matbaası, İstanbul 1959, 379.

10. —, 714.

11. *Ibid.*, 714.

12. —, *Mektûbat*, 489.

13. —, *Mesnevi-i Nuriye*, 141-2.

14. —, *Emirdağ Lahikası*, Sinan Matbaası, İstanbul 1959, ii, 98.

15. —, *Asar-ı Bediyye*, 321.

16. —, *Sinûhat*, Gaye Matbaası, Ankara 1976, 57-60.

17. —, *Hutbe-i Şamiye*, Sinan Matbaası, İstanbul 1958, 33.

18. Bediüzzaman Said Nursi, *Hayatı, Mesleki, Tercüme-i Hali*, Sözleryayınevi, İstanbul 1976, 116.

19. Nursi, Bediüzzaman Said, *Hutbe-i Şamiye*, 32.

20. *Ibid.*, 32.

21. *Ibid.*, 33.

22. *Ibid.*, 33.

23. —, *Asar-ı Bediyye*, 350.

24. —, *İki Mekteb-i Musibetin Şehadetnamesi veya Divan-ı Harb-i Örfi*, İstanbul 1328, 36; *Tarihçe-i Hayat*, 74.

25. *Ibid.*, 107-8.

26. —, *Muhakemat*, 53.

27. —, *Sözlery*, 254.

28. *Ibid.*, 252-267.

29. *Yeni Ansiklopedi*, ii, 273.

30. Nursi, Bediüzzaman Said, *Nur Aleminin Bir Anahtarı*, Günyay Matbaası, İstanbul 1957, 18.

31. We say a summary of Western theorists, because in *Mektûbat* (Twenty-Ninth Letter, Seventh Indication) he himself confessed that in the Old Said period, like other thinkers, he had approached matters taking the principles of philosophy as the basis.

32. Nursi, Bediüzzaman Said, *Sinûhat*, 57-60.

33. —, *Muhakemat*, 30-1.

34. —, *Hutbe-i Şamiye*, 56.

36. *Ibid.*, 16-17.

37. Badıllı, Abdulkadir, *Bediüzzaman Said Nursi*, Tımas, İstanbul 1990, i, 168.

38. *Ibid.*, i, 171.

39. *Tarihçe-i Hayat*, 118.

40. Nursi, Bediüzzaman Said, *Sözlery*, 694.

41. Badıllı, i, 168.

42. Nursi, Bediüzzaman Said, *Hutbe-i Şamiye*, 33.

43. *Tarihçe-i Hayat*, 77-8.

44. Badıllı, i, 679.

45. Nursi, Bediüzzaman Said, *Hutbe-i Şamiye*, 29.

46. *Ibid.*, 24.

47. *Ibid.*, 34-5.

48. —, *Sözlery*, 254.

49. Badıllı, i, 167.

50. *Ibid.*, i, 171.

51. Nursi, Bediüzzaman Said, *Asar-ı Bediyye*, 532.

52. —, *Hutbe-i Şamiye*, 60.

53. *Tarihçe-i Hayat*, 547.

54. —, *Mesnevi-i Nuriye*, 148.

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