

GOD IS DEAD THEOLOGY: A REFLECTION OF GOD'S EXISTENCE AND HUMAN AUTONOMY

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ABSTRACT: *Human being needs God in their life that is why he presents God in each second of his life. The dependence on God is really felt by human beings as they consider God as the protector, the peace creator and others. However, there are some those who do not believe in God. Belief in God is perceived meaningless, useless, even the worst, dangerous for mankind. To believe in God is judged as something manipulated and mystical. So, human who are thinking do not need to believe in God; if they do, it is necessary to cut it of that God must be dead. This behavior has spread in the society consciously or unconsciously. Even it comes up with a new theology namely God is dead. Many critiques are delivered to this theology, but it is important for us as believers to notice these critiques so that it makes us mature in perceiving critically the religion we believe.*

KEYWORDS: God and Human Autonomy, God and Human Existence

INTRODUCTION

The modern world we are living today is in fact not free from the three axis of reality entity that becomes the object of serious analysis of philosophical knowledge that are nature, human and God. The philosophical approach with its critical and reflective characteristics always put the three entities into consideration in order to achieve a comprehensive and universal reality basic structure. Nevertheless, modern world leaves a complicated problem due to the advance of knowledge and technology, starting from socio-cultural problems up to normative ethical problems. Those problems no longer need monodisciplinary solution just like in the middle ages. Instead, it needs interdisciplinary solution that causes many paradigms, philosophy, theology and life perspective that claim the existence of the three entities. Even modernity becomes a new consciousness, with rationality vision that places human as the central figure, the doer and the measure of truth.

The spirit of modernity with the ontological foundation of independence ratio and human autonomy also claim human existential experience about The Transcendent, about an existence that overcomes everything and about something supernatural out there. In human history, the experience of transcendental consciousness has undergone a long and complex evolution, so when it reaches the modernity point, it contradicts with free human autonomy. From here, philosophy and various scientific interpretations eventually start to give no place to God. Religiosity crisis color the modern world and religion as the institution where religiosity gets its more concrete and practical format finally faces the today's existential crisis.

Modern religiosity shifts everything that are sacred, prophetic, myth and superstition that contradict with ratio and scientific way of thinking. Therefore, the idea of God faces a radical criticism for it is considered no longer suitable with the modern era. The modern era visionaries then, try to propose new formulation of theological construction about new belief, with what they call "God Is Dead Theology".

This paper is aimed at giving exposition on the symptoms of atheism. A simple line is taken to try formulating the problem concerning what they call God is dead theology. At first, it will be seen from the social historical background of God's denial, several modern views of atheism and finally, the reflection of atheism phenomenon and God Is Dead Theology. The subject matter will be about whether the denial relies on the level of idea of God, or whether that attitude secretly implies something absolute in the other form underlying human lives.

B. Positivism: The Refusal of Metaphysics and Religion

A radical change happens to modern human in recognizing and living the world and himself. For thousands of years, humans are in their plainness in using many kinds of sense schemes and the interpretation to the world. Humans are always sure that objective reality outside is using that schemes on them. therefore, humans live in a close relationship with nature and undergo a certainty about the truth that they want to achieve. Even if humans get the schemes of life from the belief of religion, metaphysics, intuition, and feeling, yet he thinks that his knowledge is objective and realistic. Traditional human believes that his assumption of world and himself reflects the outside world.¹

Descartes refusal triggers a modern way of thinking that categorize all knowledge that come from religion, metaphysics, and feeling as something subjective and nonscientific. Senses investigation is the only reliable source of knowledge. The world's and human's description becomes different, in a sense that human can only talk about a true reality of nature if he limits himself up to the primary traits, such as weight, volume, temperature, length, etc which can be undergone through senses and is formulated mathematically.

Universe is matter that is moved under the principles of nature. In the beginning of the new era, Allah is still believed as the Almighty who has made the world's mechanisms, but then the belief is step aside for being considered not relevant. The entire universe is explained based on very simple processes and causes. Consequently, among them is that the world is taken out from its sacred characteristics. Back then, the sun is worshipped because human considered it as full of mystery, but now that kind of understanding is considered as a kind of anachronism. At the 17th and 18th centuries, the new concepts for a mechanical and mathematical world's description were developed. After that, knowledge becomes the purpose in his life, independent, autonomy and free from religion and philosophy. The building of knowledge is built based on a few "ifs" which are formulated as laws, for example, knowledge must be objective. It means, scientists may not allow himself to be influenced by factors from inside himself, such as feeling, trust, ethical norms that make him praises and abashes the object he studies, the philosophy, religion, theology or anything that is not presented directly under the observation. Objectivity is the only way to get and achieve the scientific truth. Moreover, knowledge is intersubjective; it means that knowledge must be general. It must be able to be proven and tested by more than one person and is based only on observation.²

Aguste Comte (1798-1857) is considered as the founder or the father of positivism because he popularizes and gives meaning to this term. Positivism is a philosophy that appears in the 19th century that tends to limit human's knowledge to the things that can be obtained by using scientific methods. This stream is rooted from the realism ontology study that declares that

¹ Ian. G Barbour, *Issues in Science and Religion*, (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1971), p.28-31

² Karen Amstrong, *A History of God; The 4000 - Year Quest of Judaism, Christianity and Islam*, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1993), p.48-52

reality is in the fact that runs according to the laws of nature. Research efforts are only to reveal the reality truth and runs according to its reality.

The positive thing is something that must be clarified by everyone who has the same opportunity to judge it. This things are the only thing that bases and forms knowledge. So that this concept is against imaginary things, or things we like to listen to or trust. Facts or things that can be reviewed or tested is the only thing that can base a valid knowledge. Thus, metaphysics and religion are considered as words game or wild speculation. Comte refuses primitive people way of thinking where daily experiences and religious feeling affects each other and religion is the correct interpretation and understanding. Positivism forces religion and metaphysics to take off the throne.³

Comte is sure that the ability of human brain to recognize all the world's symptoms is quite limited. Therefore, human must be wise in his aspiration to search for knowledge which is worth called scientific. He has to limit his efforts and only process the senses data that is objective and real. Three things that must be fulfilled by human are:

1. Accept and clarify the empiric symptom as the reality
2. Collect and classify those symptoms according to its laws covering it
3. Predict the future events based on the laws and take necessary and advantageous action.⁴

According to Comte, it is impossible that in this positive era, people integrates based on the religion's ideas just like in the middle ages because the norms and beliefs are already considered old fashion and out of date. Religious ideas that were used to be the base of today's community are now facing challenges from evolution process and have to be left behind. Since the higher stage of evolution process has become a must and has already happened, then the higher system of trust and norms must also be accepted. The traditional function of religion as something that unites the community must be taken over by positive knowledge. The role of religious people must be given to the scholars, technicians and industrial people.

The unity of human is not caused by the nationality traits or ethnic, but by the common senses and disposition. The similarity in common senses structure results similar perceptions and logical assumptions. Because of this common thing, the development of human all over the world shows a kind of regularity based on the same basic laws. The way human thinks and interprets the world develops in stages, that are religious, metaphysics and positive.⁵

Religious stage

In the beginning of its development, human common sense uses the religious ideas to explain all symptoms and events. Since he does not know himself as a creature having power over others, he then understand his existence in the world as a part of a whole which is amazing and

³ K.J.Veeger, *Realitas Sosial*, (Jakarta: Gramedia, 1985), p. 12-14

⁴ P.H.Nidditch, , *The Philosophy Of Science*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1968), p. 190-195

⁵ Ian Hacking, *Scientific Revolutions*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1983), p.70-73

at the same time terrifying. Primitive humans live their life as the interference of cosmic processes that cannot be reached by simple way of thinking.

Metaphysics stage

In this stage all symptoms and events are no longer seen to be directly caused by spirits, god or the Almighty. Now, common sense looks for understanding and explanation by making abstractions and metaphysics concepts. Even though the principles of natural enlightenment are found in the nature itself, but the illumination has not had its root in the empiric facts but in the apriority.

Positive stage

In this stage, the natural symptoms are explained by the common sense based on the reviewable, testable and provable laws empirically. This explanation results an instrumental knowledge. In the positive stage, religion has to give up its hegemony over the area of common sense to the empiric knowledge. According to Comte, the simpler and more universal the structures of symptoms, the faster the religious or metaphysics interpretation will be left behind and replaced by the positive interpretation. The positive thoughts only teach human to pay attention and recognize the physical and material symptoms. The consequences of this kind of thoughts is the lost of realization over spiritual norms which are sacred and transcendental.

Atheism and the Rise of Human Autonomy as the Subject

Atheism is a cultural phenomenon that rises in the history of western post-renaissance thought. Various fundamental changes accompany the sixteenth century going on the seventeenth. Events occurred in that century has become a fertile land for a philosophical thought revolution religion and theology. Renaissance is a negation of religion's vision domination by the power of church in the middle age. Renaissance spirit is a rise of human ability as a free creature over any power and tradition. The focus of renaissance era is at the universe, human society and history. This is the turning point of middle age's vision that is full of abstract ideas under the regulation of church's religiosity and sets a side the concrete things.⁶

Human and nature became the object of philosophers' visions at that time. Hence, people found a new consciousness over two things; world and himself. His consciousness as a subject brought him to the recognition of subject, knowledge and its limits. He recognized his autonomy ability and felt free from every power and tradition. Thus, renaissance had placed a basic philosophy over secularism process objectively and subjectively. Objectively, renaissance movement had given new vision that weakened the power of church over the vision at that time. Subjectively, there was a separation in religious practice, where ratio was considered a different field from the revelation. Ratio was considered to have no authority over revelation. Thus, the process of finding the truth was by relying on the power of free human ratio potential. Renaissance brought a fast advancement in knowledge and technology because human life was challenged to rely on knowledge. Many scientific inventions, either natural or social science colored that era. Renaissance vision reached its maturity in the seventeenth century's vision dominated by rationalism and empiricism.

⁶ Harun Hadiwijono, *Sari Sejarah Filsafat Barat 2*, (Yogyakarta: Kanisius, 1989), p. 34-35

Eighteenth century is considered as the enlightenment era (*aufklarung*) very much influenced by natural science. Issac Newton (1642-1727M) is the figure that gives a strong foundation in classical physics. These physics laws are then become so dominant and influenced other knowledge application. From the theological perspective, the symptom of enlightenment in Britain has produced the deism perspective. This theological perspective states that there is one great figure creating the universe and the figure is God. Yet, after He creates the universe, He leaves this nature to its own destiny. According to this stream, it happens because God has put those nature laws in it.⁷

The secular tendency is clearly seen in the vision of enlightenment era. The enlightenment era vision considers himself as having the assignment to examine critically according to the rules of ratio over every exist thing, including religion. According to his opinion, it has become the assignment of philosophy to free human from the power of church and the belief based on revelation.

At the beginning of nineteenth century, the human economic demand over himself and the freedom from the supernatural power has placed atheism as a clearer agenda. The development of knowledge and technology has given a birth to the new spirit of autonomy and independence that has brought a number of its followers to free themselves from God. The idea of God that has lived and developed for centuries in Christian is facing destruction now and is shifted by common sense era. It is also accompanied by the reaction over rational worship.⁸

The middle age inherits the trauma of power, so whatever the form of power and strength is, becomes the problem in the enlightenment world framed by humanism. Human tends not to be willing being ruled and will claim every power given to him unfairly. In theology territory, this tendency appears in atheism symptom. Atheism only claims the power of God over human at first. However, this tendency develops and sharpens as the denial of God's existence.⁹

General Note on Atheism and God Is Dead Theology

Atheism is a teaching or a stream that denies the existence of God. Atheism is a denial of an existence concept of God. Therefore, the meaning of God varies according to the religious concept followed. For monotheist religion, God is understood as a transcendent personality over universe. People who denies the transcendence of God is called atheist. In contrast, for pantheistic or monism religion, someone is called atheist when he takes a profane action over the universe.¹⁰

There are two patterns of atheism; they are theoretic and practical atheism. Theoretic atheism is atheism that strikes religion for according to this belief, God is an enemy that must be

⁷ Pardoyo, , *Sekularisasi dalam Polemik*, (Jakarta: Grafiti, 1993), p. 50-51

⁸ Karen Amstrong, *A History of God; The 4000 - Year Quest of Judaism, Christianity and Islam*, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1993), p.35-37

⁹ A. Sudiarja, Kerajaan Allah dan God Is Dead Theology, in *Rohani*, (Yogyakarta: Yayasan BP Basis, 1993), p. 14-15

¹⁰ Chaerul Arifin, *Kehendak untuk Berkuasa Friedrich Nietzsche*, (Jakarta : Erlangga, 1987), p. 21-25.

destroyed. This can be just a belief and not an must defended , struggled and distributed ideology. On the other hand, practical atheism is atheism that denies the existence of God in a practical manner. Atheists live their life as if God does not exist. They usually tend to be ignorant to the existence of God. They never think about the possibility of God's existence. This attitude is spread widely in modern society drowned by their own daily business and it makes them not being able to reach the vision of God.

Practical atheism is also found in people who admit their inability to find out something about God. Theoretically, they claim as agnosticisms who do not know for sure about reality, including God, and practically is a form of atheism. This form of practical atheism is not backed up by ignorant attitude. Instead, it has a doubt of everything that goes beyond the data of human nature as the background. If in the modern era, people have come to the vision that God does not exist, it is not because they refuse God just like that as though God has gone out of their life. Rather, they usually refuse the idea that says religion as a human way of life, for example Comte and Marx who view religion as a factor standing in the way of human development in society, and Nietzsche and Sartre who state that all religions are the negative substances in personal development.

Fuerbach and Comte whose opinion is more positive over humanity, also want to avoid the reason that causes the lost of self-confidence in the past time when Europe was so thick with its idea of God. Fuerbach states that God is just a human projection. The idea of God has alienated human from its destiny by placing an impossible perfect ness against human weakness itself. God is not limited while human is limited, God is the Mighty while human is weak, god is the saint while human is sinful.¹¹

The symptom of God's denial in Nietzsche's vision is indeed a bit different. Therefore, he used to be called anti theist. For Nietzsche, Christianity is no more than just the turning all scientific values that deny the world and matter up side down in the name of God. He hates Christian very much, the religion he followed before he became a philosopher. In his opinion, the Christian people have replaced the noble life and the admission of the world with a weak, sick and humble God. This is the reason why Nietzsche hates religions, God and all people believing in God.

Nietzsche is not a person without God (atheist), neither an agnostics but he is an anti theist. He denies the existence of God explicitly and his opinion is a denial against the belief of God's existence. The conclusion about the Nietzsche's non-existence of God is not his basic stand point, but a conclusion. Although anti theist denies the existence of God, yet for Nietzsche there is a problem about the existence of God. He states that "God is dead", this statement implies that there used to be God, but now He's dead, killed by Nietzsche. In his endless loneliness, he finally realized that human has killed God so that he can free himself, for the non-existence. This means, if God is dead, the world is open for human for a freedom and creativity.

It should be known, it is a bit difficult to differentiate anti theist with atheist. Yet, generally both of them can be understood as a belief of God's existence denial and Its role over human and nature. Atheism has existed for sure in the agenda of human life since the nineteenth

¹¹ W. Donald Hudson, *A Philosophical Approach to Religion*, (London: Mac Millan Press, 1974), p. 83-86

century. The development of knowledge and technology has brought human to the autonomy and freedom that then brought them to free themselves from God. It is in this century that Fierbach, Marx, Darwin, Nietzsche and Freud analyze the philosophy and scientific interpretation about reality and give no room for God. In the end of that century, a number of people started to feel that God has been dead, and it is the job of the ratio and the freedom of every human to kill It.¹²

Most of the ideologies rejecting the idea of God have made a better understanding. Therefore, it is true the saying that "God is dead" is an analysis about the death of God. For them, the Christian personal God is easy to strike because many vicious crimes are sometimes done in the name of His. Some people then try to conserve God by arranging a new theology to free Him from empirical vision system, although atheism itself does not exist.

The reaction against this view appears from various people such as the poets, novelists, and other visionaries. They say that a perfect rationalism is a reduction because it erases the imagination and intuitive activity of human spirit. They re-interpreted the dogmas and mysteries of Christian secularly by establishing creative imagination. Here, ratio is just a limited rule in a creative process. The middle age's mystics described the experience about God in an almost similar way. The other mystical poets in that period revealed more that God is dead.

The efforts to combine the subjective religious experience and rational consideration are done by Schellermacher. According to him, feeling cannot give a complete explanation about religion. Ratio and feeling, both of them go beyond themselves toward the indescribable reality. It even defines religion as a feeling of dependency to God the Absolute. In the end of his life, he realizes that he emphasizes so much on feeling and subjectivity. Although he fails to see that each generation must create its imaginative concept of God, he states that religious emotion is not against ratio. In this century's journey, there is even group that denies the concept of God admitted in the west. The especially deny the belief of God the Almighty out there who has an objective existence.¹³

Although the idea of God as the Highest Substance has been very influential in the west, yet, the other monotheistic traditions take their own path to separate themselves from this kind of theology. The orthodox Jews, Christian and Moslem explain one different way that human idea of God is not suitable with the indescribable reality that is merely a symbol. All of them state that one time or another time is more suitable to describe God as nothing more than just a substance that is the Highest, because God is not in our way to describe. For centuries, westerners begin to lose their imaginary concept of God.

Hegel thinks that ratio is more than just an imaginary. He sees ratio and philosophy as something better than religion that is stronger in its way of representative way of thinking. Hegel also takes his conclusion about the absolute from the work of individual spirit that he describes as what caught in the dialectic process reflecting the whole. While for Schopenhauer,

¹²Peter Hamilton, *The Living God and The Modern World*, (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1967), p. 121-122

¹³Ian. G Barbour, *Issues in Science and Religion*, (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1971), p.78-81

nothing is absolute, no ratio, no God, no spirits working in the world, but an instinctive willingness to live.

According to Amstrong, the new nineteenth century atheism against the typical conception of God in the west fiercely. Marx, for example, sees religion as a complaint of tortured creature, an addiction to society that makes human can accept the misery he undergoes. Although Marx accept the historical perspective that depends so much on Jews and Christian traditions, he refuses God because he thinks it is irrelevant. There is no meaning, value or purpose outside the history process. The idea of God cannot help human. According to Marx, God is something easy to strike because people who have staple position to legitimate his power and maintain his position often use God.

Nietzsche responds to the radical changes in human realization that will make them more difficult to trust a phenomenon described as many people as God. Therefore, to make it more precious, human has to be the God of himself. According to Nietzsche, a super human can replace God. Freud states that the idea of God is not a lie but a part of unconsciousness explained psychologically. Alfred Ayer with a quite different tone states that human is a projection, but he believes that God helps human, God is a symbol of perfect ness. C.G Jung even considers God as the same as Mystical God, a psychological truth that objectively experienced by every individual.¹⁴

The Denial of God in God Is Dead Theology

In atheism argumentation, the denial of God has a difference in terms of role played by the religion. Back then, religion was stroke because of the admission of God. Now, religion is attacked because religion is a part of human life. Therefore, the problem of God is investigated from a different angle that is from the angle of human life. The life that becomes the criteria in God problem is the personal life and human social as the basic of society and cultural life.¹⁵ Naturalism denies the existence of God by placing the nature at the front as something real. What is not including in nature is considered an imaginary thing. According to naturalism, all objects and events are the data of nature of which truth can be gained. The right method for that is by experience and scientific investigation. The result of the experience and the scientific investigation is the scientific truth. This is the only condition determined by naturalism to reach the truth.

The ancient teaching about God continues to be cursed as something useless and improper. Soren Kierkegard (1813-1855M), a Danish philosopher states that credo and the ancient teaching has become statue, ended in themselves and replaced the indescribable reality of God (Leahy, 1992). Ludwig Andreas Fuerbach (1804-1872M) in "*Essence of Christianity*" stated that God is merely a human projection. The idea of God has alienated human from his destiny, by imposing an entity of impossible perfect ness with the reality of human weakness. Hence, God is not limited while human is limited. God the Almighty while human the weak, God the saint while human the sinner. By doing that, human has isolated himself. He has admitted God

¹⁴Peter Hamilton, *The Living God and The Modern World*, (, London : Hodder and Stoughton, 1967), p.169-172

¹⁵Theo Huijbers, *Mencari Allah, Pengantar ke dalam Filsafat Ketuhanan*, (Yogyakarta: Kanisius, 1992), p. 52-53

in what he denies in him. In other word, the idea of God has been externalized and gives a negative concept about human destiny.

That idea of God for Fuerbach is a mistake. Human must build his dream. In order to become a true human, he should destroy that alienation by denying god as the negation of human destiny. That denial means an elimination of illusion and isolation as the result of human purpose projects. Hence, the problem of existence and non-existence of God is indeed a problem of existence and non-existence of human. According to the supporter of other materialism, Marx, states that Fuerbach way of thinking is too abstract and theoretic. Karl Marx (1818-1883M) has never discussed about religion in a special manner, therefore it is useless looking for Marx denial of evidences of human and God existence. Marxis criticism about religion actually points at concrete things that become the causes of the idea of God, and the consequences it produces. This is caused by the Marxism approach about the idea of God based on dialectic materialism as the foundation of it ontology and historical materialism as the foundation of its epistemology.

In dialectic materialism view, the reality of fundamental structure is the material that keeps moving due to the contradiction in it. Essentially, matter is in a continuous contradiction of which condition jumps from one condition to another. The condition changes occur in a dialectic line, from one contradictory condition that results a higher synthesis, until that synthesis absorbed and results a higher level, without being able to find a definitive balance. In short, those quantitative changes will then result a qualitative progress. Life, for example, in this view is merely a chemical physical activity. Consciousness is a superstructure symptom raised determinedly by infrastructures. Although infrastructures have autonomy, but in many ways it is influenced by material conditions (infrastructures).¹⁶

Historical materialism is a knowledge paradigm to see how the whole history of superstructure building is conditioned and determined directly by the most material activity that is the economic phenomenon. For Marxism, human is an essence that create himself through work (productive activity). Hence, every change in “production way” (tools and technology) will cause a direct consequence on the “production relationship” that radically explains the social, politic and cultural changes.

Therefore, religion phenomenon is also a reflection of economic changes. Catholic belief is bound to the structures of society in feudal era and Protestant reformation appears in relation with the structures of society in capitalist era. The emergence of monotheism spontaneously resulted by the Roman world union that in time is a result of production power game. It is true that the idea of God is a serious attitude, but it appears in that history stretch. Nevertheless, that religious resistance reflects a resistance to an economic situation where human cannot be fully human, an isolated situation. The idea of God is a mythical projection of this fundamental isolation. The idea, despite realizing the misery of the tortured class, is also the class tool having the power to continue its dominance.

Alienation reaches its peak in proletariat condition as the result of capitalist system, where the proletariat class will be the power of history that will destroy it and emerges as the new human.

¹⁶ Harun Hadiwijono, *Sari Sejarah Filsafat Barat 2*, (Yogyakarta: Kanisius, 1989), p. 46-49

The capitalism collapse due to internal contradiction, will bear a non-class society where all contradictions are diminished and human can realize himself according to his destiny. Thus, human finds himself back in a total satisfaction and never think again to look for help from an imaginary excitement.

Marxism is a perfect form of atheist humanism. God is rejected because He reflects a certain human condition that is not only understood by Marxism, but on the other hand, Marxism also wants to destroy it. In one of Marx works, he narrates philosophically about atheism and its truth; he contradicts humanity's idea as a principle (causal) with the idea of God as the creator. According to him, admitting a condition as a creature created by others and its dependency to the creator is a typical characteristics of alienated people. In contrast, Marxist human is the human that has understood that he gains his existence by himself.¹⁷

The whole atheist philosophical stream originates from a premise that human does not have any obligation to anyone or even to himself. If God exists, human will lose his worldly dignity. Human will try as hard as he could to deny any transcendence and hold only the contingency realities, not The Absolute. The view of God destroys the human authentic existence. Therefore, it is impossible that God and human exist all at once. Human existence can only be built upon the death of God. Or it is God the source of every thing and human is just a tool in His hands. Or human is totally free with the consequence that God is not the source of every thing. Thus, God does not exist and freedom means a total sovereignty.

As for the existential atheists, the idea of God is considers contradictory, because it contains two aspects that are in contrast that are "being in itself", en-soi (in itself) and "being for itself" pour-soi (there for itself). Jean Paul Sartre (1905-1980) is the representative of this perspective. Sartre defines the universe as the immortal and meaningless "being in itself". "being in itself" is not created without any intention and is never expected forever. "Being in itself" is not created by God and does not stand as the cause for itself either, being in itself is not passive nor active. Being in itself is an immanence that can not realize itself, a persistence that is not able to persist itself, an action that can not act. We are completely clueless about being in itself. In its calm darkness, being in itself does not have any outside or downside layer, it does not have a relationship to something; being in itself is full, solid and massive.

If in itself exists, there will be no problem, merely because no one will propose questions. Yet, we do not know how and when or why human reality begins its vague in itself world. Sartre calls human reality "for itself". "for itself" is defined as an independence and an absolute clearness and therefore, it becomes the opponent of "in itself". Since only "in itself" exists, human reality does not exist. Human reality is a pure existence. If we had to say "non being" as nothingness, human reality will also be "nothingness".¹⁸ (Lepp, 1985).

"There for itself" (pour soi) contradicts with "being in itself" (en soi). The latter is vague and dark while the former is clear. Consciousness will only be gained through objectivity, dividing self into two. That separation causes a crack, in that crack is the "nothingness". Because,

¹⁷ Louis Leahy, , *Masalah Ketuhanan Dewasa Ini*, (Yogyakarta: Shalahuddin Press, 1992), p. 99-101

¹⁸ Ignace Lepp, *Ateisme Dewasa Ini*, (Yogyakarta: Shaluddin Press, 1985), p.78-81

between “there for itself” (pour soi) and “being in itself” (en soi), there will only be a nothingness, because there is nothing else but “being in itself” and “there for itself”.

According to Sartre, human must be independent from the power outside himself. The problem whether God exists or not is the second problem. Even if He exists, human dignity will claim to deny it. In the play “The Flies”, Sartre reveals through Oreste character “soon after You create me, I’m no longer Yours”.¹⁹ Sartre is responsible for his opinion by stretching human existence as an absolute freedom. There will always be two forms in every thing; material form of which content is always determined and human form who determine his own content. If human is the one who determine himself, there will be no place for truth and staple life values. Human chooses his own life values as his personal development factors. Therefore, it is impossible that God exists because God is defined as the source of any values. The remaining is the fundamental choice; God or human. Human who wants to live as human can not accept opponent. He chooses human

Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) perceives the belief of God as an illusion and needs to get rid of. The idea of God is not a deception, but a part of unconsciousness that needs to be explained psychologically. God is none other than a noble father figure. The need of one God comes from the childish willingness for a father figure who is protective and strong, for justice and for the continuation of life. God is only the reflection of this need, who is feared and worshipped by human because of his eternal feeling of weak. Religion becomes the possession of childhood. It belongs to one stage needed in the transition time from children to adult. He teaches ethical values important for the society. As human reaches his adult age, he must leave religion. Knowledge, a new logo, can replace God. It gives a new foundation for morality and helps us facing our fear. Freud shows a strong empathy toward his belief on knowledge; therefore, it appears religious in its intensity.²⁰ (Amstrong, 1993).

The Death of God According to Nietzsche

One of Nietzsche points of teaching is his opinion about *der uebermensch* (upper human) in the English “superman” while according to Kaufmann; it is called overman. The concept of Superman is often narrated in his atheism context. Superman is the person who finds out that God is dead, that no one or nothing compares to Him to rule this world. This Superman admits the world completely. He consequently accepts that he himself is a willingness to rule (his influence as Schopenhauer influence, for example the spirit of competing that he meets in Greek’s culture). For Nietzsche, Superman is a purpose and human is just a bridge to that purpose.²¹

Other Nietzsche’s big vision is about the return of every thing that says that every event occurs will happen again in an exactly the same way and the principles of eternal energy puts this vision into consideration. This perception also gives an opportunity for worldly characteristics in the most radical way. If everything will somehow happen again, we no longer accepts God as the creator or the other transcendental principles to define the world. The world is understood

¹⁹ Louis Leahy, *Aliran-aliran Besar Ateisme*, (Yogyakarta: Kanisius, 1990), p. 31-32

²⁰ Karen Amstrong, *A History of God; The 4000 - Year Quest of Judaism, Christianity and Islam*, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1993), p.187-189

²¹ Kees Bertens, *Ringkasan Sejarah Filsafat*, (Yogyakarta: Kanisius, 1983), p.101-102

as having cyclical characteristic and always revolves without any beginning. Nietzsche also refuses that the world evolves. However, the absence of beginning makes the world dependent, it still needs the same creation just like when he originated. Nietzsche then accepts a thesis of an eternal world in the return of something, and therefore he can deny creation and God.²² Nietzsche criticism toward Christian is that Christian belief of God in western Europe at that time is considered weak and no longer has a real role. For Nietzsche, the most outstanding event in the modern era western community is that God is dead. Nietzsche stands as if he is the prophet proclaiming the new era, an era that is consequently atheist. Christian belief of God is a weakness, bitterness and a refusal to admit the worldly life. Christian weakens and lowers human. Religion makes people deal with his heart and stands in his way to develop his life freely.

Hence, if God is dead, if Christian's God with all His rules no longer stands in the way, human will have a freedom for his creativity. Human eyes should be aimed at the world he is living. For Nietzsche, although Christian values were still there in Europe at that time, it is possible that those values will disappear and modern human will be threatened by nothingness. Therefore, in order to overcome the danger, human should create new values, with all transvaluation values.²³ When God is dead, there will only be human. Human can develop his potential, as he likes, develop his freedom and creativity and rule the world.

CONCLUSION

In the autonomy frame where human is the conscious subject, the problem of God should be viewed from human perspective. There are three things that existentially trigger that to appear in human personality. First, human existential consciousness is influenced by certain characteristics. In terms of Godness, the most significant philosophically is that human exists and this is a fact. Second, human is able to question his ability with his consciousness. This is because of human's ability in doing transcendence. He realizes that his existence is a fact and with his existence, human can also see something that overcome his presence and go beyond space and time in his consciousness context. Third, with his existence, he builds contact with the world. Human refuses to feel enough with the direct experience he gets from the reality if there is unsuitability between what the ratio wants and what happens in reality. therefore, there is a need to understand the world experienced and then, transcends it to look for a world across that is expected to give answer to the ratio's question about today's world.

Thus, the resistance of God should be seen from the optical felt in the context of free human autonomy. "Dead God" is a theological decision, in a sense that he does not only deny the existence of God, but also experiences the absence of God like what is inherited by orthodox belief. However, dialectically the negation of God's existence is at the same time the affirmation of human existence. In other words, human autonomy shifts the existence of God with human resisting every reality effort outside himself as the consequence that takes away his ability in creating. Human becomes the source of every moral and values where in orthodox belief, it comes from God described by the holly book. From this point of view, atheism builds a very thick humanity.

²² Louis Leahy, *Aliran-aliran Besar Ateisme*, (Yogyakarta: Kanisius, 1990), p.48-51

²³ Kees Bertens, *Ringkasan Sejarah Filsafat*, (Yogyakarta: Kanisius, 1983), p.55-57

In the above way of thinking, what is resisted by the atheists is God who takes away and underestimates human. Since atheism resists God, the consequence is building the power and ability to be apart from God. If that so, what is denied from God is not something transcendent, but God who experience mystification by religion and thus appears in different face other than what is expected. Marxism criticism over religion and God is clear, where Marxism perceive God as a complaint of tortured people and therefore, it weakens and becomes an addiction, because religion makes a kind of entertainment so that the misery can be accepted. The ruler as the politic tool to keep the social order from a slanted system of community often uses even religion, according to Marxism. however, he trusts the history that is moving to a better condition. He believes that there will be a non-class society someday; a messianistic attitude that also has transcendental content. Marxism is an atheism built systematically. He transcends human as merely economic and social structure who experience isolation and oppression due to slanted economy structure.

Hence, there is a theological relativism about the resistance of God from atheism. This theological relativism gives meaning to transcendental contents from a religiosity attitude in the other form, commit to human life so it gets better and meaningful, if only it is not misunderstood in the form of formality.

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