

Towards an Overview of Nürsî Studies in India

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Abstract:

The impact of Said Nürsî and his movement has virtually crossed geographical boundaries and has made inroads in various regions and continents, including South Asia. In this direction, this paper makes an overview of various fields of activities on Nürsî Studies in India - a country home to the one of the largest Muslim communities (living as minorities) in the world - ranging from conferences, symposiums, workshops to translation, research, Dersâne gatherings, and inclusion of Said Nürsî in the curriculum. The paper focuses on the developments of Nürsî studies in India that took place in the beginning of the second decade of the twenty-first century. It also analyses how Said Nürsî was introduced in India and how Indian people reacted to his message and mission.

Keywords: *Said Nürsî; IFSC; Able Children of Islām; Dersâne; Risāle-al-Nūr; Peace; Harmony*

Introduction¹

Contemporary World is experiencing serious crisis not circumscribed to few regions or communities or religions as such but engulfing the humanity globally. In order to rectify these problems and put things in order *Said Nürsî* (1877-1960) among others devoted himself for the wellbeing of Muslims in particular and humanity in general. He with his extraordinary intelligence and debating skill, unusual memory, and tremendous talent toward learning, caught the attention of one and all² and consequently attained the title of ‘Bedūzzamān’ (*The Wonder of the Age*)³. Yearning to convey the message of Islām to the whole world and dispel the darkness of the modern age, he wrote his *magnum opus* *Risāle-al-Nūr*, a modern commentary of the *Qur’ān*. At a critical juncture of the history, he along with his disciples carried on the mission of enlightening people with the message of Islām and while doing so they (especially *Said Nürsî*) faced harsh treatment from the then government. However, the light lit in Turkey by *Said Nürsî*—whose firm resolve authorities failed to break—is now enlightening the whole world. The dream he saw and the mission he started and lived for is being rigorously carried forward by his

sincere and devoted followers. Impact is very apparent as we encounter an increase in the readership of *Said Nūrsī* for his writings are being translated into different languages of the world. His message and thought is spreading at a very rapid pace and the full credit goes to the Istanbul Foundation for Science and Culture, Turkey (hereafter abbreviated as IFSC) which is frequently organizing among others, conferences, seminars, workshops, summer schools on the one side and translating his works in various languages on the other side.

Among other countries of the world, India too welcomed the message of *Said Nūrsī* who was initially “highly influenced by *Imām Rabbānī Shaykh Aḥmād Sirhindī* (d. 1624 CE) and his *Maktūb ‘āī*”.⁴ It is perhaps after seeing the stature of the latter that the former termed Indian people as “*An Able Son of Islām*”⁵ or the “*Able Children of Islām*”.⁶ We witness that from the last four or five years *Said Nūrsī*’s personality attracts the masses of India so much so that they are now deeply engaged and involved in knowing him and the thoughts he propounded. Here, it is also important to point out that prior to this—as the influence was almost negligible—a meagre numbers of the people were aware about his thought and personality. Dr Obaidullā’h Fahad (Associate Professor, Aligarh Muslim University, India) is one among those few who has come out with a book published long back in 1998 under the title *Jadīd Turkī Mein Islāmī Baydārī*.⁷ One of its chapters (*Shaykh Badī’ al-Zamān Said Nūrsī aur Unkī I lā ī Judu Jaḥad*) is devoted to his life, thought, and reform activities.⁸

One of the very significant reasons for the spread of *Said Nūrsī*’s message in India, apart from those discussed, is his relation with *Imām Rabbānī—Mawlānā Shaykh Aḥmād Sirhindī*. In the works of *Said Nūrsī*, there is every now and then the mention of *Imām Rabbānī* and such a thing perhaps connotes that *Said Nūrsī* might have been inspired by this great scholar to a large extent. Obviously, this relationship seems to be decisive when one attempts to find the answer of the question that what are the decisive factors that attract the people of this region? Another critical factor in this direction, perhaps may be, his vision regarding *Islām* and the issue of modern science and technology. His keen interest to reconcile faith and reason, and *Islām* and science⁹ plus invoking the Muslims to study meticulously modern science and its underpinning values so as “to appreciate the Creator better”¹⁰ also strikes the minds of the people.

The credit of keeping this interest alive and in consolidation of *Nūrsī*’s readership among masses goes to the system of *Dersāne*.¹¹ The *Dersāne* culture that has been introduced in India by the followers of *Nūr Movement* is been conducted on weekly basis at various places in Delhī

including the academic hubs like *Jawāhar Lal Nehrū* University¹² and in *Jamia 'h'h Millia 'h Islāmiya*.¹³ Moreover, these gatherings are also held in the south of India—*Kerālā*. These activities obviously are strong reasons among others that are helping in the dispersal of the message of *Said Nūrsī* in India. It is also to mention that these *Dersāne* gatherings are not only meant for Turkish expatriates but Indians are also involved in them as well. *Dersāne* is meant: to cultivate the inner life and to prevent the penetration of modern skepticism and materialistic ideologies; and to place the *Qur'ān* at the centre of social interactions and adopt the modern changes by reviving the shared *Islāmic* clusters. Its other important objectives are to facilitate the dissemination of *Said Nūrsī's* life and thought and also give a concrete shape to *Said Nūrsī's* discourse.¹⁴ It can be said that these gatherings are becoming a new public ground to socialize with people and exchange ideas, values and opinions of one another.

One and all; the intellectuals, academics, scholars, and the students actively participate in the activities (especially conferences and symposiums) related to *Said Nūrsī*. They not only strive to understand his message but also endeavor to spread it among the natives in their own mother language (*Urdū, Kashmirī, Hindī* etc). In the following pages, a brief description is given about the activities related to *Said Nūrsī* like the conferences organized, themes touched, scholars involved, papers on diverse subjects presented and published and the influence produced.

Symposiums, Conferences, and Workshops on *Said Nūrsī* and *Risāle-al-Nūr*

It has been already mentioned above that IFSC is probably the only organization which is actively engaged in this wholesome affair. Even if there might be some miniature activities related to *Nūsrī* Studies in India performed earlier, but it is only from the year 2012 onwards, as is palpable enough, that a major impact has been laid. In this regard, Conferences, Workshops, and other related activities have proved far more effective in recrudescing the interest and enthusiasm among the Indian people. Its emblematic is the huge participation of students, scholars, intellectuals, and experts alike in these events. For example, Dr. *Obaidullā'h Fahad*¹⁵ (Aligarh Muslim University) and Prof. *Hamīdullā'h Marāzī* (University of Kashmir) who amid being profusely engaged in their scholarly workings also frequently participate in these events whether organized in India or abroad. The latter's work on *Said Nūrsī* titled *The Relevance of Nūrsī to Modern Times: A Study of Intellectual Paradigm* is under print and is hoped that very soon the readers will extract benefit from it.¹⁶

Risāle-al Nūr, Faith, and Multiculturalism

For the first time in India, two symposiums on *Said Nūrsī* and his *magnum opus Risāle-al Nūr* were organized in *Kerālā*, India on 29 and 30

January 2012. Organised at *Dār al-Hudā Islāmīc* University, *Kerālā* under the theme *Risāle-al Nūr and Islām in Modern Turkey*, the first event witnessed the participation of more than 1000 master and PhD students.¹⁷ On the very next day at the same place but at a different institution namely *Jamiā'h Markazu al- Saquafathi al- Sunniyya*,¹⁸ another symposium titled *Living in Faith and Peace in a Multi-Cultural World: Risāle-al Nūr* was held. Amid witnessing the participation of about 10000 people, the gathering was graced with the august presence of some reputed dignitaries like *inter alia* Sri Lankan Minister of Education, Riza Akcali, Ex-Minister of Turkey and Prof. Dr. Abdulhakim el-Enis who enlightened the participants with their views about Bediuzzamān Said Nūrsī and his *Risāle-i Nūr*.¹⁹

Peace and Harmony in a Multi-Cultural World and Risāle-al Nūr

Marching from south India and reaching to north India, IFSC continued its endeavour to familiarize the masses *vis-^{azza}-wa-jalla-vis* the persona of Said Nūrsī with an objective to disseminate his teachings thereof. It is in this background that the 1st International Conference on Said Nūrsī and his *Risāle-i Nūr* took place in one of the leading institutions of higher learning in India namely Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), New Delhi on 1-2 February, 2012.²⁰ The conference “*Living in Harmony and Peace in a Multi-Cultural World: Risāle-al Nūr*” was a joint venture of the Centre of Arabic and African Studies, School of Language, Literature and Culture Studies, JNU, New Delhī and IFSC.²¹ The conference was attended by delegates from the places as far as UK, USA, Canada, UAE, Turkey, Lebanon etc. Research scholars and students from JNU, Delhī University, *Jamia'h'h Millia'h Islāmīa'h* (JMI) and Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) not only attended the conference but also actively interacted with the academicians and scholars of high repute from India and abroad; thus broadening their vision, enlightening their character, and infusing in them new vistas multifariously.²²

Prof. Dr. M. Aslam Islāhī in the inaugural speech espoused:

“We are glad to introduce such a figure who appeared 100 years ago with his ideas. It was not useless that he was given the name ‘Bediuzzamān-Wonder of the Age,’ because he suffered a lot, then deserved this title.”²³

Shri Arif Mohammad Khān, Former Union Minister of India said:

“I made a research about *Risāle-i Nūr*, read it and I can describe *Risāles* as ‘Barakath-ul Qur’ān’.”²⁴

With reference to India, he said that the place is known for its long cherished practice of pluralism as it has received the Persians, Jews, Christians, and Muslims. India does not just tolerate pluralism rather welcomes and practices pluralism. Moreover, according to him the

teachings of Bediuzzamān about human cooperation, mutual love, coming together of human beings etc will commence from this land of pluralism and diversity and will therefore add further significance to these values. In the same vein, Dr. *Mujīb-ur Raḥmān* (coordinator of the symposium) delivered an informative speech wherein he said:

Nūrsī is not known in India and unfortunately India is unaware of *Nūrsī's* dynamic approach in his commentary. There are a lot of things that we should learn from him.²⁵

It seems that the aim and objective of organizing such a grand conference on the apt title and at the apt place was not only to make contribution to the field of learning but also to deliberate upon the relevance of ideas of peace, harmony, meaning and significance of faith in life, peaceful co-existence, interfaith dialogue, pluralism etc in a multicultural environment like India with special reference to *Said Nūrsī*. The titles of the technical sessions, diverse in nature, viz *The Methodological and Educational Aspects, Modernity; Globalization and Reform; Human Nature, Faith Youth and Women's Issues; Contribution of Nūrsī to Change and other Issues; Interfaith Dialogue and Pluralism; Spirituality, Revivalism and Reform; Dialogue and Co-existence* etc itself speak about the areas touched and the themes resonated.

Islām, Modernity, and Said Nūrsī

The mission of familiarizing and disseminating the message of *Said Nūrsī* to the people of India at the behest of IFSC continued unabatedly. In February 2013, the same organization organized another International Conference in collaboration with *Zakīr Ḥusain* Institute of *Islāmīc Studies*, JMI, New Delhī. *Islām and Modernity: The Perspective of Bediuzzaman Said Nūrsī* was chosen as the theme of the Conference and the Scholars, academics, and intellectuals presented their views on the topic diversely.²⁶

In the contemporary times, the issue of *Islām* and Modernity dominated and dominates discussions in the religious and academic field. The event, as the fitting title suggest, provided an opportunity to listen to the prolonged presentations, discussions, and speeches on the nature of *Islām–Modernity* dichotomy.

Among the other participants, the main characters who addressed the audience were Dr. *Burāk Akçapār* (Turkish Ambassador in India), Prof. Akhtar ul Wāsey (*JMI*, New Delhi), Prof. Faris Kāya, Prof. Dr. İbrahim D̄zdemir (Rector of *Hasan Kalyoncū* University, Gaziantep, Turkey), Mr. *K. Rāḥman Khān* (former Union Minister for Minority Affairs), Prof. *S. M. Rashīd* (former Pro Vice Chancellor *JMI*, New Delhi) etc.²⁷ They in their speeches while stressing on the thought and

contribution of *Said Nūrsī* also emphasized on the relevance of his teachings to the present times. They further upheld that his teachings act as panacea in modern world which is full of chaos and confusion.²⁸ Moreover, his vision, approach to look at the realities, response to the challenges like the modernity were among other subjects discussed extensively in the conference.

Moreover, collection of *Ūrdū* papers presented in the conference has been published in a book form by *Al-Balagh Publications*, New Delhi under the title *Mu‘āllim- al A r: Said Nūrsī*. Prof. Akhtarul Wasey who has edited this book writes about its significance in the *Preface* that:

We hope this book will be helpful to comprehend *Said Nūrsī*'s thought in the sub-continent and for the Urdu readers it will prove an excellent source and channel for the introduction of life and contribution of *Said Nūrsī* [*authors' translation*]."²⁹

Glimpses of Knowledge, Faith, Morality and Humanity in Risāle-al Nūr

Aligarh Muslim University, the fountainhead of Sir *Sayyid Aḥmād Khān*, witnessed the holding of 3rd International *Nūrsī* Studies Conference from 11-13 February 2014. The conference which spanned for three days was organized by Department of Islāmic Studies, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh (AMU) in collaboration with IFSC on the fitting title, *The Risāle-al Nūr: Knowledge, Faith, Morality and the Future of Humanity*. The credit for organizing such a grand international event goes especially to Prof. *Faris Kāya*, *Ḥakān Glurece*, *Iḥsān Altintās*, Dr. *Obaidullah Fahad* (Convenor), Dr. Abdul Majid Khān (Co-convenor), Dr. *Bilāl Aḥmād Kutty*, Dr *Ziauddin Malik* and the University Administration. It attracted the attention of the wider sections of the Indian society when *Millī Gazette* (a fortnightly paper) further publicized the event. The column read:

Aligarh: A three-day conference on the works and struggle of Turkish thinker and reformer *Badīūzzamān Nūrsī* (1877-1960) was held by the AMU Department of Islāmic Studies in cooperation with Istanbul's Foundation for Science & Culture (FFSC), during 11-13 February. Delegates from Indian universities as well as Turkey, Jordan, Algeria, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Iraq, USA and Malaysia participated in the seminar. Speakers included *Nadwat - al Ulamā's Shaikh Sayyid Sulaimān Nadwī* who said that *Nūrsī*'s treatises positively affected the recent Egyptian history. The Arabic translator of *Nūrsī's Risāle-al Nūr*, Dr *Qasim Ṣālehī* said that while reading these treatises one feels as if

he is witnessing the age of early Islām with his own eyes. *Algeria's Māmōn al-Jarrār* [actually from Jordan] said that *Nūrsī's* treatises have played a historic role in changing and correcting people's outlook. ... Professor *Faris Kāya* of Turkey (from FFSC) was one of the participants. He invited people to study *Nūrsī's* treatises which stress on kindness, *shūrā* and positiveness.³⁰

Besides Inaugural (held at the University's famous Kennedy Auditorium) and Valedictory Sessions, a total number of 12 plus 9 parallel Business Sessions were held. Presentation of more than 100 papers, explored, examined, and highlighted diverse dimensions of *Said Nūrsī* and his *magnum opus*, *Risāle- al Nūr*. The scholars highlighted the vision and role of *Said Nūrsī* in revitalization of *Islāmic* faith in the dark ages of *Islāmic* caliphate. The intellectuals of high repute like *Mawlānā Sayyīd Salmān Nadwī*, *Prof. Faris Kāya*, *Dr Mamōn Jarrār*, *Dr Ozgler* and others presented their views multifariously on the life, thought, and works of *Said Nūrsī*. Deviating attention of the listeners toward *Said Nūrsī's* struggle, the scholars endeavored to strengthen faith, morality, and brotherhood among the believers.

Gracing the occasion, Vice-Chancellor Lt. General (Rtd.) *Zamīr ūddīn Shāh* (AMU) in his presidential remarks while highlighting the inevitability of reorienting 'Education' with 'Faith' emphasized on the adoption of education as a source for upholding 'Truth' and 'Justice'. He further espoused that in such efforts Aligarh should play the role of the vanguard.³¹ The special lecture of Pro Vice Chancellor Sayyīd Aḥmad Alī (AMU) and of Prof. *Faris Kāya* which they delivered in the Valedictory Session of the Conference summarized on the one hand the entire theme of the Conference and on the other highlighted the necessity and inevitability of spreading the vision of *Said Nūrsī*.³²

IFSC's Mission Continues: The Concept of Qur'ān in The Risāle-al Nūr

IFSC's mission continues. As the organization is very much engaged in conducting another conference of the series; the preparations of which were in full swing. While emphasizing on the thought and mission propounded by *Said Nūrsī*, the 4th International *Nūrsī* Studies Conference focused on the topic—as proposed by the organizers—*The Concept of Qur'ān in The Risāle-al Nūr* held on 12-13 February, 2015. *Wa y, Tafsīr, Mufasssirīn*, their approach to *Tafsīr*, views on the issues of *Tawḥīd, Risāla'h, Akhirā'h, Mi'rāj* etc. with a special focus on *The Risāle-al Nūr* of *Said Nūrsī* were the spotlight subjects of the event. *Āliā'h* University, Kolkata hosted the event in collaboration with IFSC, thus,

widening the readership of *Said Nūrsī* in India.³³ The conference attracted many national and international academicians who participated and presented their papers in the well-organized business sessions.³⁴ Thus, *Āliā'h* University had the opportunity to contribute variously to a very vital field of learning having inexplicable significance when it comes to the main sources of *Islām*.

In the second month of the year 2016, IFSC conducted the 5th International Conference in the southern part of India. This time IFSC organized the event in collaboration with the Department of Arabic, *Kerālā* University on 8-9 February 2016. The conference focused on its proposed theme, “*Education & Ethics in Said Nūrsī’s Risāle-al Nūr*.”³⁵ The conference focused on the importance of education in the in human life, need of moral-based education, integration of knowledge and other dimensions with reference to *Said Nūrsī* and his *Risāle-al Nūr*.

IFSC’s tight schedule of activities in India to disperse the message of *Said Nūrsī* is evident as it conducted in the very next day another International *Nūrsī* Studies Seminar in Mumbai. India is a multi-cultural and multi-religious society and in fact, to live a peaceful and pleasant life is very difficult in such societies. The theme, *Living in Peace & Harmony in a Multi Cultural Society: From The Perspective of Said Nūrsī’s Risāle-al Nūr* for the seminar held on 10-11 February 2016 reflects the significance of the subject and its apt relevance in the contemporary times.³⁶

***Risāle-al Nūr* Workshop: Role and Place of *Said Nūrsī’s* Thought in 21st Century**

Continuing the mission, IFSC conducted a two day international workshop on *Bediūzzamān Said Nūrsī* and his *Risāle-al Nūr* with the support of Department of *Islāmic* Studies, *Islāmic* University of Science & Technology, Kashmir (IUST). Although the purpose, was as per the organizers, to “establish dialogues among intellectuals and students, to share the knowledge, to explore the objectives and challenges of the modern society”³⁷ but it looks as if the chief aim of the event was to introduce the personality, mission, and works of *Said Nūrsī* among the students and research scholars and thereof inculcate in them the values and principles the man lived for.

The occasion was graced by the presence of a good number of reputed and revered intellectuals like Prof. *Yūnus Cengel*, *Dr Ihsān Colāk*, *Dr Necātī Aydīn*, Prof *Ṭalāt Aḥmad*, Prof. *Hamidullā’h Marāzī* etc who irradiated through their deliberations, lectures and speeches the various dimensions of *Said Nūrsī’s* life and thought. For example, Prof *Ṭalāt Aḥmad*, Vice Chancellor of JMI, New Delhi, in his address, amid

deliberating upon the teachings of *Said Nūrsī* stated that the “contribution of this [great] Turkish [reformer] was relevant and imperative [religiously] and [politically] to the present day ... scenario across the Muslim world.”³⁸ He continued to point out that “In the age of inter-religious, intra-religious and regional conflicts, the teachings of *Nūrsī* in general and the workshop in particular have great relevance to address many issues.”³⁹ Prof. A.R. Trag, Vice Chancellor of IUST, spotted out that *Nūrsī* by way of logic and reasoning conveyed the message of *Islām* to the followers of other faiths.⁴⁰ Moreover, Prof. *Faris Kāya*, the secretary of IFSC, and Prof. *Ḥamīdullā’h Marāzī* gave a detailed account of life, works and thought of *Said Nūrsī*, wherein they mainly highlighted his struggle, contribution and selfless dedication to the cause of *Islām*.

Students and scholars who actively took part in the entire workshop also presented their papers highlighting various aspects of *Said Nūrsī*. Moreover, IFSC enriched the Library of *Islāmīc* Studies Department of the University of Science and Technology with two sets of *Risāle-al Nūr* Collections (English and Arabic) and other relevant books on the subject. It was decided that the University will not only establish a ‘*Nūrsī* Corner’ at the Library but will also initiate student-faculty exchange program.⁴¹

Other Fields/Activities

Apart from conferences, symposiums, and workshops; there are other relevant and important mediums contributing to a great deal to the field of *Nūrsī* Studies in India. They include, among others, Barla Publications, New Delhi, *Dersāne* gatherings, recent introducing of *Said Nūrsī: Life, Thought, Works, and Movement* in the curriculum of the subject of *Islāmīc* Studies,⁴² translation of his works (in the local languages of Urdu, Kashmiri, Hindi, Bengali, Gujrati, and Malyalam),⁴³ write-ups, and research papers published in various newspapers, magazines, and journals. A special issue of *Islām aur ‘A ri ā ir* “*Islām and Modern Age*” (quarterly journal of Department of *Islāmīc* Studies, JMI) dedicated to *Mu’allimī ‘A r: Sa’id Nūrsī (Said Nūrsī: A Contemporary Scholar)* is a significant example in this regard. Abdul Rashīd Āfāq from Kashmīr is engaged in translating the works of *Said Nūrsī* into Kashmiri language with an aim to disseminate the message of this Turkish reformer among the Kashmirī masses. He has translated a book of *Said Nūrsī* into Kashmiri under the title *Hashr teh Akhrāt*. Similarly, *Ḥafiz Muḥammad Aḥmad Nadwī* and *Dr Nasīm Akhtar Nadwī* have rendered the Life of *Said Nūrsī* in Urdu Language under the title *Dastan-al’Azm wa Imān: Bedūzzamān Said Nūrsī ki Mukhta ar Sawāni ayāt*. In short, the website of Barla Publications updates the new readings in various Indian languages and so far it displays that the teachings of *Said Nūrsī* have been translated into six

Indian languages which include 12 in Urdu, 5 in Bengali, 1 each in Kashmiri, Malayalam, Hindi, and Gujarati.⁴⁴

In the recent years, it is also witnessed that research students are showing more than normal interest in those topics which in one way or the other are related to *Said Nūrsī*. The names of *Zubair Hamīd* (AMU),⁴⁵ *Irfān Jalāl* (IUST),⁴⁶ *Gowhār Qadrī Wanī* (JMI)⁴⁷ etc are the evidences that generalize and verify the statement thus made. Regarding inclusion of *Said Nūrsī* and his Movement in the curriculum of the Universities like AMU and JMI, it is to say that it is one of the topics incorporated recently in one of the papers related broadly to *Muslim Reform Movements and Thinkers*. Moreover, this paper is for MA students and is compulsory as well.⁴⁸ In addition, the research scholars working on the various dimensions of *Said Nūrsī's* thought and methodology adapted in interpreting the *Qur'ān* and in understanding what Nūrsī calls 'the book of nature'. A glimpse of this fact was seen when Dr. Obaidullah Fahad published an edited book titled "*Faith-Knowledge: Perspectives of Said Nūrsī*" containing 32 papers by the various scholars from different fields.⁴⁹

Conclusion

Bediūzzamān *Said Nūrsī*—the Turkish reformer—pioneered a movement both practically as well as intellectually with an aim to enlighten and reform the Muslim society at a critical juncture of the history. A mission for which he devoted his entire life, faced so many hardships, and even rejected the government's portfolio is carried forward vigorously, earnestly, and enthusiastically by his ardent followers. We observe that they are endeavouring to go beyond Turkey and propagate his message at a global level.⁵⁰ From the last three or four years, IFSC is yearning heavily to struck *Said Nūrsī's* chord among the Indians. While discoursing *inter alia* on the vital subjects and expressions of faith, morality, peace, reform, pluralism, brotherhood, coexistence, knowledge, and spirituality, IFSC is aspiring to strengthen faith, re-invigorate morality, re-energize religious fervour and revive the society.

In India, acquaintance with the works of *Said Nūrsī*, as is observed, has enhanced the interest of people to know and study him. The impact is evidenced by the overwhelming participation in these academic *cum* reform events. However, it is also very important to mention that in India before commencing of these conferences, workshops and other activities there were very few who had conversancy of *Said Nūrsī*. Therefore, it is apt to state that it is the aftermath of these conferences that more and more people amid getting involved in reading *Said Nūrsī's* message are producing books, research papers and articles of great literary taste touching various dimensions on the one side and spreading his thought on

the other side. Moreover, selecting research topics related to *Said Nürsî* (as is seen) by those pursuing PhD (as their number goes on increasing in India) reflects the growing zeal to study him among the young scholars. In short, it can be said that *Nürsî* Studies in a very short span of time gained much prominence, wherein its influence spread like a river in India and in the future it is expected, seeing the extent of its impact on the region, that discourse in religious and academic circles will be dominated by the *Nürsî* element. Last but not the least, IFSC's role—which needs full appreciation in being remarkable (in its ways and methods) in travelling beyond the boundaries of Turkey—will be decisive in the future course of *Nürsî* Studies in India.

References & Endnotes

1. Most of the information given in the paper is predominantly taken from the website of IFSC, conversation with Prof. Hamidullah Marazi (Kashmir), Prof. Obaidullah Fahad (Aligarh), Hakan Gulreze and Ihsan Altintas (Turkey), Ibrahim Ahmet and Muhammad Akif (New Delhi). The authors have collected information from them either through email or personal conversation. They wish to extend and express their in-depth gratitude to all of them for their frequent response and for providing the much needed guidance, requested information, and relevant material as well. We are also thankful to our mentor and supervisor Dr. Abdul Majid Khan who always encourages rather incites us to take such academic propositions.
2. Bediuzzaman Said Nürsi, *The Damascus Serrmon*, tr. Şükran Vahide (Ankara: Ihlâs NĒr Nesriyat, 2004) p. 4
3. Molla Fatah Allah of Siirt presented him the title because of his exceptional ability and the speed with which he mastered different sciences.
4. Dr. Abdul Majid Khan, "Welcome Address," *Conference Magazine, IFSC*, Year: 6, Issue: 21, March 2014 (Istanbul: Mega Basim, 2014) p. 5
5. Mehmet Firinci, student of Bediuzzaman said this in his speech in the 'Inaugural Session' of the conference held at AMU's Kennedy Auditorium. The authors were also present in that session as well. See also *Conference Magazine, op. cit.*, p. 10
6. Prof. Faris Kaya gave a mention of it in a speech which he delivered in the 'Inaugural Session' of the conference held at AMU's Kennedy Auditorium. See also *Conference Magazine, op. cit.*, p. 12
7. Obaidullah Fahad, *Jadīd Turkī Mein Islāmī Baydārī* (Delhi: Hilal Publications, 1998), 326 pp.
8. *Ibid.*, pp. 27-108
9. Isra Yazicioglu, "Perhaps Their Harmony is not that Simple: Bediūzzamān Said Nürsi on the Qur'ān and Modern Science," *Theology and Science*, vol. 11, no. 4, 2013, 339-355, 342
10. *Ibid.*

11. Assembling together and then reading Said Nürsi's works is what is called *Dersane*. Mustafa—one of the followers of Said Nürsi who lives in Delhi—revealed (when asked about these gatherings) that we use to read one chapter from *Risale-i Nür* after every *alah*.¹¹ So, it therefore, implies that these gatherings are a means of communicating Said Nürsi's message to the others. Personal conversation of the authors with Mustafa Culfa, January 9, 2015
12. On 20/04/2015 in the evening I, Mohammad Dawood also attended the gathering in this University in a room of Lohit Hostel occupied by a Turkish student namely Sardar and it continued for about more two hours.
13. Personal interaction of Mohammad Dawood with Ibrahim Ahmet, Delhi on 21/04/2015
14. M. Hakan Yavuz, "Print-Based Islamic Discourse and Modernity: The Nür Movement," Third International Symposium on Bediuzzaman Said Nürsi, 24-26 Sep 1995, pp. 8-9; retrieved from <http://www.iikv.org/index./sympeng/article/view/917/1140> (08/01/2015)
15. In an interview with the authors, Dr Obaidullah Fahad while sharing some significant information related to the subject also revealed about that he is working on Said Nürsi especially from last three or four years and very soon his book on this great reformer, touching some important aspects, will be published. *Interview with Dr Obaidullah Fahad, AMU*, 1 January 2015.
16. In a conversation, Prof. Hamidullah Marazi said that he has not only participated in almost all the events organized by IFSC in India but has also presented his papers highlighting some critical subjects like *Western and Islamic Civilisation, Social Change, Prophethood, Philosophy, Theology, Sufism, and The Relevance of Nürsian Thought to Modern Times*. He has also chaired some sessions of these events in India and abroad as well. *Email conversation(s) with Prof. Hamidullah Marazi*, 04-07 January 2015
17. "India Welcomed Risale-i Nür," *IFSC*, 24 April 2012, retrieved from <http://www.iikv.org/en/india-welcomed-risale-i-Nür> accessed on 20 December 2015
18. Jamia Markazu Ssaquafathi Ssunniyya (estd. 1978) is a leading academic and prestigious charitable Islamic University in Kerela (India) that plays a key role in revival activities. See for more details <http://markazonline.com/en/history/> accessed on 07 January 2015
19. India Welcomed Risale-i Nür," *op. cit.*
20. *Ibid.*
21. "Seminars & Conferences," *JNU NEWS*, retrieved from http://www.jnu.ac.in/JNUNewsArchives/JNUNews_Mar_Apr12/conferences.htm cessed on 21 December 2014
22. *Ibid.*
23. India Welcomed Risale-i Nür," *op. cit.*
24. *Ibid.*

25. *Ibid.*
26. It was a two day conference held on 8 and 9 February 2013. For more details on this, see <http://www.iikv.org/en/islam-and-modernity-a-two-day-conference-in-india-and-turkey-10/11/14>
27. “Jamia Millia hosting international conference on ‘Islam and Modernity’,” *Muslim Mirror*, 8 February 2013, retrieved from <http://muslimmirror.com/eng/jamia-millia-hosting-international-conference-on-islam-and-modernity/> accessed on 25 December 2014
28. The lectures and speeches of these personalities were published in the Conference Brochure, *Islam and Modernity: The Perspective of Bediuzzaman Said Nürsi*, available online at <http://www.iikv.org/images/tools/bulten/16.pdf>
29. Akhtarul Wasey, (ed.), *Mu‘allim ‘A r: Said Nürsi* (New Delhi: Al-Balagh Publications, 2015) p. 9. This 154 page book covers, among other topics, mostly the Life of Said Nürsi, The Dialogue between Islam and West, The Criticism of Philosophy, Islam and Modernity, and The Idea of Nationalism *vis-à-vis* Said Nürsi’s views.
30. See *The Milli Gazette*, Issue 1-15 March 2014, retrieved from <http://www.milligazette.com/news/10037-conference-on-Nürsi-at-amu> accessed on 25 December 2014
31. Speech delivered at the inaugural session in AMU’s Kennedy Auditorium.
32. In the entire event, the authors were themselves present there. Therefore most of the related information provided is taken from the statements recorded by the authors while the conference was ensuing.
33. Retrieved from <http://www.iikv.org/en/call-for-papers-4th-international-Nürsi-studies-conference-in-india-2015> accessed on 26 December 2014
34. See more details about the programme of the conference on <http://www.iikv.org/en/wp-content/uploads/Academic-Sessions-finalized.pdf>
35. The authors were also among participants who presented the papers there.
36. Details of the Programme <http://www.iikv.org/en/international-Nürsi-studies-seminar-2016-programme>
37. “International Workshop Programme & Abstract Book in Kashmir/India,” *IFSC*, 22 July 2014, retrieved from <http://www.iikv.org/en/international-workshop-programme-in-kashmir-india> accessed on 26 December 2014
38. See for more details, “Seminar on Nürsi Begins at IUST,” *Rising Kashmir*, retrieved from <http://www.risingkashmir.com/seminar-on-Nürsi-begins-at-iust/> accessed on 28 December
39. It was his concise statement published by the daily newspaper, *Greater Kashmir*. “2-day seminar on Nürsi begins,” *Greater Kashmir*, 22 August 2014, retrieved from <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2014/Aug/22/2-day-seminar-on-Nürsi-begins-58.asp> accessed on 26 December 2014

40. *Ibid.*
41. “Seminar on Nūrī Begins at IUST,” *op. cit.*, <http://www.risingkashmir.com/seminar-on-Nūrī-begins-at-just/>
42. Islamic Studies Departments of AMU and JMI have introduced in their recently revised curriculum (Masters Degree) the topics like contemporary personalities, life, thought, and works of Said Nūrī, Islamic Revivalism in Turkey etc.
43. For more details about Barla Publications and the books which they have published in various languages, see <http://www.barlapublications.com/>
44. For more on this visit; <http://www.barlapublications.com/index.Php?cPath=24>
45. Zubair Hamid—A PhD student enrolled in Aligarh Muslim University is currently working on the topic *Islam and the West: A Critique of Said Nūrī*
46. Irfan Jalal—doing integrated Mphil-PhD in Islamic University of Science and Technology is carrying research on *A Comparative Study of Nūr Nama and Mathnavi Nūrī*
47. Enrolled in Jamia Millia Islamia as a PhD student, Gowhar Qadri Wani is currently doing research on *Islam and Modernity: A Study with Special Reference to Said Nūrī’s Risal-e-Nūr*
48. See for more details http://jmi.ac.in/upload/programme/cs_fhl_is_ma_islamic_studies.pdf
49. See Dr. Obaidullah Fahd, *Faith-Knowledge: Perspective of Said Nūrī*, (Aligarh, India: Department of Islamic Studies, AMU, Aligarh, 2016), 440pp.
50. IFSC which is actively engaged in this task (since 1979) invites the reputed scholars who are well acquainted with life, thought, and works of Said Nūrī.



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