Towards an Overview of Nūrsī Studies in India

Dr. Muḥammad Dawood Șofī
Post-Doctoral Candidate, International Relations, Anaqara Yıldırım Beyazıt Üniversitesi (AYBU) Ankara, Turkey
Email: sofidawood@gmail.com

Showkat Ahmad Dār
Ph. D İslāmic Studies, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh, India; Contractual Lecturer Government Boys Degree College Pulwama, Kashmir

Abstract:
The impact of Said Nūrsī 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 Nūrsī 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, Dersāne gatherings, and inclusion of Said Nūrsī in the curriculum. The paper focuses on the developments of Nūrsī studies in India that took place in the beginning of the second decade of the twenty-first century. It also analyses how Said Nūrsī was introduced in India and how Indian people reacted to his message and mission.

Keywords: Said Nūrsī; IFSC; Able Children of Islām; Dersāne; Risāl-e-Nūr; Peace; Harmony

Introduction

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 Nūrsī (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 all and consequently attained the title of ‘Bedűzzamān’ (The Wonder of the Age). Yearning to convey the message of Islām to the whole world and dispel the darkness of the modern age, he wrote his magnum opus Risāl-e-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 Nūrsī) faced harsh treatment from the then government. However, the light lit in Turkey by Said Nūrsī—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 Ḥmād Sirhandī (d. 1624 CE) and his Maktūb’āt”. It is perhaps after seeing the stature of the latter that the former termed Indian people as “An Able Son of Islām” or the “Able Children of Islām”. 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’ḥ 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. One of its chapters (Shaykh Badī‘ al-Zamān Said Nūrsī aur Unkī Islāḥī Judu Jaḥad) is devoted to his life, thought, and reform activities.

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 Ḥmād 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 science plus invoking the Muslims to study meticulously modern science and its underpinning values so as “to appreciate the Creator better” 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 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 Fahad15 (Aligarh Muslim University) and Prof. Ḥamīdullā’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.\footnote{16}

**Risāle-al Nūr, Faith, and Multiculturism**

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 Islāmic 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.\footnote{17} On the very next day at the same place but at a different institution namely Jamī‘h Markazu al- Ṣaquafathi al- Sunniyya,\footnote{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 Bedūuzzamān Said Nūrsī and his Risāle-i Nūr.\footnote{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-à-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.\footnote{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 Delhi and IFSC.\footnote{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 Millia‘h Islāmia‘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.\footnote{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.”

Shri Arif Mohammad Khān, Former Union Minister of India said: “I made a research about Risāle-i Nur, read it and I can describe Risāles as ‘Barakath-ul Qur’ān’.”

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 Rahmān (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.

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 Islāmic 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.\textsuperscript{26}

In the contemporary times, the issue of Islam 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 Islam–Modernity dichotomy.

Among the other participants, the main characters who addressed the audience were Dr. Burak Akçapar (Turkish Ambassador in India), Prof. Akhtar ul Wasey (JMI, New Delhi), Prof. Faris Kaya, Prof. Dr. Ibrahim Dzdemir (Rector of Hasan Kalyoncu University, Gaziantep, Turkey), Mr. K. Rahman Khan (former Union Minister for Minority Affairs), Prof. S. M. Rashid (former Pro Vice Chancellor JMI, New Delhi) etc.\textsuperscript{27} They in their speeches while stressing on the thought and contribution of Said Nursi 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.\textsuperscript{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 Urdu papers presented in the conference has been published in a book form by Al-Balagh Publications, New Delhi under the title Mu‘allim- al Aṣr: Said Nursi. 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 Nursi’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 Nursi [authors’ translation].”\textsuperscript{29}

\textit{Glimpses of Knowledge, Faith, Morality and Humanity in Risale-al Nûr}

Aligarh Muslim University, the fountainhead of Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan, witnessed the holding of 3\textsuperscript{rd} International Nursi Studies Conference from 11-13 February 2014. The conference which spanned for three days was organized by Department of Islamiic Studies, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh (AMU) in collaboration with IFSC on the fitting title, \textit{The Risale-al Nûr: Knowledge, Faith, Morality and the Future of Humanity}. The credit for organizing such a grand international event goes especially to Prof. Faris Kaya, Ḥakān G lurece, Ihsân Al tintâs, Dr. Obaidullah Fahad (Convenor), Dr. Abdul Majid Khan (Co-convenor), Dr. Bilal Aḥmād Kutty, Dr Ziauddin Malik and the University Administration.
It attracted the attention of the wider sections of the Indian society when *Millî 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 Bağdat-ul-zamân Nûrsî (1877-1960) was held by the AMU Department of Islâmic 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 Ulamâ’s* Shaikh Sayyid Suleimân Nadwî who said that Nûrsî’s treatises positively affected the recent Egyptian history. The Arabic translator of Nûrsî’s *Risâle-al Nûr*, Dr Qasim Şâlehî said that while reading these treatises one feels as if he is witnessing the age of early Islâm with his own eyes. Algeria’s Mâmôn al-Jarrâr [actually from Jordan] said that Nûrsî’s treatises have played a historic role in changing and correcting people’s outlook. … Professor Faris Kâya of Turkey (from FFSC) was one of the participants. He invited people to study Nûrsî’s treatises which stress on kindness, shûrâ and positiveness.

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 Nûrsî* and his *magnum opus*, *Risâle-al Nûr*. The scholars highlighted the vision and role of *Said Nûrsî* in revitalization of Islâmic faith in the dark ages of Islâmic caliphate. The intellectuals of high repute like Mawlânâ Sayyîd Salmân Nadwî, Prof. Faris Kâya, Dr Mamôn Jarrâr, Dr Ozgler and others presented their views multifariously on the life, thought, and works of *Said Nûrsî*. Deviating attention of the listeners toward *Said Nûrsî*’s struggle, the scholars endeavored to strengthen faith, morality, and brotherhood among the believers.

Gracing the occasion, Vice-Chancellor Lt. General (Rtd.) Žamîr ûddîn Shâh (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. The special lecture of Pro Vice Chancellor Sayyîd Ahmad Afî
(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 Nūrși*.\(^{32}\)

**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 Nūrși*, the 4\(^{\text{th}}\) International *Nūrși* 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. Wāḥy, Tafsīr, Muṭassirīn, their approach to Tafsīr, views on the issues of Tawḥīd, Risāla’īh, Akhīrā’īh, Mī’rāj etc. with a special focus on *The Risāle-al Nūr* of *Said Nūrși* were the spotlight subjects of the event. Āliā’īh University, Kolkata hosted the event in collaboration with IFSC, thus, widening the readership of *Said Nūrși* 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’īh 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 5\(^{\text{th}}\) International Conference in the southern part of India. This time IFSC organized the event in collaboration with the Department of Arabic, Kerāḷā University on 8-9 February 2016. The conference focused on its proposed theme, “*Education & Ethics in Said Nūrși’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 Nūrși* and his *Risāle-al Nūr*.

IFSC’s tight schedule of activities in India to disperse the message of *Said Nūrși* is evident as it conducted in the very next day another International *Nūrși* 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 Nūrși’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.\(^{36}\)
**Risâle-al Nûr Workshop: Role and Place of Said Nûrsî’s Thought in 21st Century**

Continuing the mission, IFSC conducted a two day international workshop on Bedîüzzamân Said Nûrsî and his *Risâle-al Nûr* with the support of Department of Islâmic Studies, Islâmic 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” but it looks as if the chief aim of the event was to introduce the personality, mission, and works of *Said Nûrsî* 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. Yûnus Cengel, Dr Ihsân Colâk, Dr Necâtî Aydîn, Prof ɬâlât Ahmîd, Prof. Hamîdullâ’h Marâzi etc who irradiated through their deliberations, lectures and speeches the various dimensions of *Said Nûrsî’s* life and thought. For example, Prof ɬâlât Ahmîd, Vice Chancellor of JMI, New Delhi, in his address, amid deliberating upon the teachings of *Said Nûrsî* 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.”

He continued to point out that “In the age of inter-religious, intra-religious and regional conflicts, the teachings of Nûrsî in general and the workshop in particular have great relevance to address many issues.” Prof. A.R. Trag, Vice Chancellor of IUST, spotted out that *Nûrsî* by way of logic and reasoning conveyed the message of Islâm to the followers of other faiths.

Moreover, Prof. ɬarîs Kâya, the secretary of IFSC, and Prof. Ḥamîdullâ’h Marâzi gave a detailed account of life, works and thought of *Said Nûrsî*, wherein they mainly highlighted his struggle, contribution and selfless dedication to the cause of Islâm.

Students and scholars who actively took part in the entire workshop also presented their papers highlighting various aspects of *Said Nûrsî*. Moreover, IFSC enriched the Library of *Islâmic* Studies Department of the University of Science and Technology with two sets of *Risâle-al Nûr* Collections (English and Arabic) and other relevant books on the subject. It was decided that the University will not only establish a ‘Nûrsî Corner’ at the Library but will also initiate student-faculty exchange program.
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 Islāmic Studies, translation of his works (in the local languages of Urdu, Kashmiri, Hindi, Bengali, Gujrati, and Malayalam), write-ups, and research papers published in various newspapers, magazines, and journals. A special issue of Islām aur ‘Aṣrī Ḥādir “Islām and Modern Age” (quarterly journal of Department of Islāmic Studies, JMI) dedicated to Mu’allimi ‘Aṣr: Sa‘īd Nūrsī (Said Nūrsī: A Contemporary Scholar) is a significant example in this regard. Abdul Rashid Āfāq from Kashmīr is engaged in translating the works of Said Nūrsī into Kashmīrī language with an aim to disseminate the message of this Turkish reformer among the Kashmīrī masses. He has translated a book of Said Nūrsī into Kashmīrī under the title Hashr teh Akhrāt. Similarly, Ḥafiz Muhammad Ahmad Nadwī and Dr Nasīm Akhtar Nadwī have rendered the Life of Said Nūrsī in Urdu Language under the title Dastan-al‘Azm wa Imān: Bedīūzzamān Said Nūrsī ki Mukhtaṣar Sawāniḥ Ḥayāt. 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 Gujrati.

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), Irfān Jalāl (IUST), Gōwhār Qadrī Wānī (JMI) 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. In addition, the research scholars working on the various dimensions of Said Nusri’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.
Conclusion

Betülzamân Said Nursî—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. From the last three or four years, IFSC is yearning heavily to struck Said Nursî’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-energize morality, re-energize religious fervour and revive the society.

In India, acquaintance with the works of Said Nursî, 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 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 Nursî. 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 Nursî’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 Nursî (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 Nursî 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 Nursî 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 Nursî 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 Gulrece 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.


3 Molla Fatah Allah of Siirt presented him the title because of his exceptional ability and the speed with which he mastered different sciences.


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


9 Isra Yazicioglu, “Perhaps Their Harmony is not that Simple: Bedûuzzamân Said Nürsi on the Qur‘ân and Modern Science,” *Theology and Science*, vol. 11, no. 4, 2013, 339-355, 342


11 Assembling together and then reading Said Nursi’s works is what is called Dersane. Mustafa— one of the followers of Said Nursi who lives in Delhi— revealed (when asked about these gatherings) that we use to read one chapter from *Risale-i Nur* after every Salah. So, it therefore, implies that these gatherings are a means of communicating Said Nursi’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


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 Nûrsî 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 Nûrsîan 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


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 Nûr,” op. cit.

20 Ibid.


22 Ibid.

23 India Welcomed Risale-i Nûr,” 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

The lectures and speeches of these personalities were published in the Conference Brochure, *Islam and Modernity: The Perspective of Bediuzzaman Said Nūrsi*, available online at http://www.iikv.org/images/tools/bulten/16.pdf


Speech delivered at the inaugural session in AMU’s Kennedy Auditorium.

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.


The authors were also among participants who presented the papers there.

Details of the Propgramme http://www.iikv.org/en/international-Nūrsi-studies-seminar-2016-programme


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 Nūrsi, Islamic Revivalism in Turkey etc.

For more details about Barla Publications and the books which they have published in various languages, see http://www.barlapublications.com/

For more on this visit; http://www.barlapublications.com/index.php?cPath=24

Zubair Hamid—A PhD student enrolled in Aligarh Muslim University is currently working on the topic Islam and the West: A Critique of Said Nūrsi

Irfan Jalal—doing integrated Mphil-PhD in Islamic University of Science and Technology is carrying research on A Comparative Study of NūrNama and Mathnavi Nūrī

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 Nūrsi’s Risale-i Nur

See for more details http://jmi.ac.in/upload/programme/cs_fhl_is_ma_islamic_studies.pdf


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 Nūrsi. So, Colin Turner, Sukran Vahide, Prof. Ian S. Markham, Dr Ihsan Colak etc who have profusely worked and are regarded as experts on Said Nūrsi and his Risale-i Nūr, are regular hosts in most of their events.