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### Muslim-Christian Dialogue in the Modern World: Insights and Lessons from Said Nursi's Legacy

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**Abstract.** Interfaith dialogue is a process of communication and exchange between individuals or groups representing different religions or spiritual traditions. Interfaith dialogue aims to foster understanding and build relationships between people of different faiths, promoting peaceful coexistence and mutual respect. There are and were numerous academicians from the intellectual history of Muslims who have contributed to this field. One such example is Bediuzzaman Said Nursi (1878-1960), a prominent Turkish scholar and theologian on interfaith dialogue. Nursi's thoughts on interfaith dialogue are rooted in his deep commitment to peaceful co-existence and mutual respect among people of different faiths. Nursi believed that interfaith dialogue is essential in promoting understanding and cooperation between different religions, and it can help to build bridges between communities that have historically been divided. Against this backdrop, this paper examines his ideas on the importance of dialogue, the role of religion in fostering understanding, and the potential benefits of interfaith dialogue for both individuals and societies. Drawing on Nursi's ideas, this research paper concludes that Muslim-Christian dialogue can benefit from a renewed emphasis on the shared

values and principles that underlie both traditions, such as the importance of social justice, compassion, and ethical behaviour.

**Keywords:** Muslim-Christian dialogue, Said Nursi, Hutbe-i Samiye, Cross-cultural exchange, harmonious co-existence, promoting social cohesion, interreligious cooperation

## INTRODUCTION

The importance of Muslim-Christian dialogue in today's world cannot be overstated. As the world becomes more interconnected and diverse, it is essential that people of different faiths and cultures learn to understand and appreciate one another. However, this is not always an easy task, and there are many challenges and obstacles that must be overcome in order to achieve meaningful and productive interfaith dialogue.

Said Nursi was a prominent Islamic scholar and thinker who lived in Turkey in the early 20th century. He was a prolific writer, and his works continue to have a significant impact on Islamic thought and practice today. One area in which Nursi made important contributions was in the field of interfaith dialogue, particularly between Muslims and Christians.

Nursi's approach to Muslim-Christian dialogue was grounded in a deep understanding of Islamic faith and ethics. He believed that Islam taught a message of peace and tolerance and that Muslims had a responsibility to engage in dialogue with people of other faiths in order to promote mutual understanding and cooperation. At the same time, he acknowledged the theological differences that exist between Islam and Christianity, and he was careful to avoid any attempts to compromise or dilute Islamic teachings.

One of the key themes in Nursi's writings on Muslim-Christian dialogue is the importance of mutual respect and understanding. He believed that it was essential for Muslims and Christians to approach one another with a spirit of openness and humility and to seek common ground wherever possible. He also emphasized the importance of avoiding stereotypes and prejudices and of recognizing the diversity that exists within both the Muslim and Christian communities. Moreover, Nursi's works were to show that Islam can co-exist with modern science. Today, Nursi's legacy continues to inspire Muslims around the world. His writings on Islamic theology, spirituality, and social issues remain highly regarded, and his ideas on interfaith dialogue and social justice remain relevant in the contemporary world. He is widely regarded as one of the most important Muslim scholars of the twentieth century, and his works have had a profound impact on Islamic thought and practice.

Another important theme in Nursi's writings is the idea of cooperation between Muslims and Christians. He believed that people of different faiths could work together to address common challenges and promote the common good, and he saw 'interfaith dialogue' as an important tool for building bridges between communities. He also believed that Muslims and Christians could learn from one

another and that both traditions had important insights to offer on questions of morality, spirituality, and social justice.

Overall, Said Nursi's insights on Muslim-Christian dialogue offer a valuable perspective on the challenges and opportunities of interfaith dialogue. His approach emphasizes the importance of mutual respect, understanding, and cooperation, and his insights offer a compelling vision of how Muslims and Christians can engage in meaningful and productive dialogue in contemporary times. By studying Nursi's ideas, we can gain a better understanding of the potential of interfaith dialogue 'to promote understanding and cooperation between people of different faiths and cultures,' and we can gain insight into the ways in which religious traditions can contribute to the development of a more just and peaceful world.

### **Brief Biographical Sketch of Said Nursi**

Said Nursi (1878–1960 CE) was also known as “Bediuzzaman” (Marvel of the Age), and his admirers called him “Ustad Nursi”. Nursi was born to a family of farmers in the village of Nurs, a province of Bitlis (Kurdish), during the period of the Ottoman Empire in 1877 CE. His father, Sofi Mirza, who died in 1920 CE, was related to the grandson of the Messenger of God (PBUH) Hasan (May God be pleased with him d. 669 CE) through Abd al Qadir al Gilani, who died in 1166 CE. His mother, Nure Hanim, died during World War I. She was related to the other grandson of the Messenger of God (PBUH), Husayn, who died in 680 CE. Nursi is a *Sharif*, which means he is a descendant of Hasan, and a *Sayyid*, which means he is a descendant of Husayn (may God be pleased with both of them)<sup>1</sup>.

Nursi left his home when he was nine years old to study in the *madrasahs* of what was then called Kurdistan. He finally realized the rich ground at the *madrasah* of Muhammed Celali Hazrat (1851-1914 CE) in Dogu Beyazit. Here, he moved quickly through the whole *madrasah* programme during the winter of 1892-1893 CE. He memorized many of the books that the other students were studying, and Muhammed Celali Hazret gave him his first '*ijazah*', or certificate of knowledge and teaching, when he was about fifteen years old. His knowledge was both *kasbi*, which means he worked hard to learn, and *wahbi*, which means God gave it to him as a special gift.<sup>2</sup>

As a young man, he went to Istanbul to study at the famous *madrasa* of “Haci Imdat.” There, he did well in his studies and earned a reputation as a brilliant scholar. Afterwards, completed his formal schooling. Nursi went back to the area where he grew up and started teaching at a *madrasa*. Soon after, he became involved in efforts to reform Islamic education and promote a more balanced and holistic understanding of Islam. He wrote several important books about Islamic thought and practice, including “*Risale-i-Nur*” (The Compendium of the Epistles of Light), a collection of writings that remained a core text in modern Islamic thought.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> For the full autobiography of Said Nursi, see (<https://www.reflections-rn.org/bibliography>) (The Istanbul Foundation for Science and Culture Lighthouse for Humanity). Last assessed on 02 April 2023.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*,

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*,

### **Damascus Sermon (*Hutbe-i Samiye*): The Timeless Message of Nursi**

The Damascus Sermon (*Hutbe-i Samiye*), also known as the 'Sermon of the Gulf', is one of the most famous works of Nursi. The sermon was delivered by Nursi in 1911 CE during his pilgrimage to Makkah while he was in transit in the Syrian city of Damascus.<sup>4</sup> The sermon consists of a series of reflections on the meaning and significance of Islam in contemporary society and a call for Muslims to recommit themselves to the teachings and values of their faith. One of the underlying themes of Nursi's 'Damascus Sermon' is the importance of social justice in Islam. And Islam strongly emphasises the value and dignity of all human beings, regardless of their social status or background. Nursi emphasized the importance of intellectual engagement and critical thinking in understanding and practising Islam, arguing that blind adherence to tradition or authority was inadequate.

Furthermore, Nursi projected his innovative beliefs on the near renewal of Islam in the modern era, as well as a 'revitalised Christianity'. It is true that at that time in his life, Nursi looked forward to a revitalised Christianity that, in his opinion, would eventually give rise to Islam. He questioned the Damascus audience if they did not draw the conclusion from his opening remarks that a 'revitalised Islam' would bring happiness to humanity and "that true Christianity, stripping off supervision and corrupted belief, will transform into Islam; following the Qur'an, it will unite with Islam"?<sup>5</sup> While this hope may not seem to be a Christian-friendly statement to modern Christian readers, one must keep in mind that just a few years later, in 1915 CE, almost eight years after his remarkable conversion, Louis Massignon (1883-1962 CE)<sup>6</sup> expressed similar sentiments regarding Islam.<sup>7</sup> He proposed that considering the existence of Muslim thinkers such as al-Hallaj, who in Massignon's opinion expressed ideas with a Christian hue, one might conclude that Muslims had finally arrived at doctrinal statements of a Christian tendency. This was part of his effort to find a religiously positive role for Islam in the world from a Christian perspective.<sup>8</sup>

Another important theme of the Damascus Sermon is the 'need for unity and cooperation among Muslims'. Nursi called on Muslims to put aside their sectarian and ethnic differences and to work together for the common good. He argued that such unity was essential for Muslims to regain their strength and dignity and to confront the challenges facing their communities.

In the same Sermon, Nursi identifies love as the 'Fourth Word' upon which civilization is to be constructed. "The thing that is worthy of love is love," and the thing most worthy of hatred is hatred. It is love and loving that make people's social

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<sup>4</sup> Saritoprak, Zeki. "Said Nursi on Muslim-Christian Relations Leading to World Peace." *Islam and Christian Muslim Relations* vol. 19, no. 1 (2008): pp. 25-37.

<sup>5</sup> Nursi, Said (1996). *The Damascus Sermon*. Trans. Sukran Vahide. Istanbul: Sozler Publications. p. 36.

<sup>6</sup> Louis-Fernand-Jules Massignon (1883-1962 CE) was a French Catholic scholar of Islam and a pioneer of Catholic-Muslim mutual understanding. He was an influential figure in the twentieth century with regard to the Catholic church's relationship with Islam.

<sup>7</sup> Zeki. (2008). pp. 25-37.

<sup>8</sup> Massignon, L. (1915) The Roman Catholic Church and Islam, *Moslem World* 5(2), pp. 129-142.

lives secure and bring them pleasure; therefore, these are the most deserving of love and being loved.<sup>9</sup> He concluded that the time for hatred and enmity had ended. Even today, this appeal to love transcends the boundaries of one's religious community. Events in our world since Nursi first delivered his Damascus Sermon in 1911 CE have highlighted the significance of this message: two World Wars, the conflict between India and Pakistan, the massacres in Rwanda and Burundi, the plight of the Palestinian people, the destruction of Bosnia and now of Kosovo, as well as so many other bloody conflicts around the globe, serve as reminders that love is the only remedy for fratricidal destruction.<sup>10</sup> The world continued to turn to Muslims and Christians, two faith communities founded on a loving and compassionate God, to demonstrate the path of love as the Divine alternative to hatred and war.

### **Said Nursi's Straight Path: Bridging the Gap Between Traditional and Modern Islamic Thought**

The paradigm shift in Nursi's life offers an important perspective on his intellectual legacy and the evolution of his thought over time. Many scholars of Said Nursi speak of his life in terms of three phases, or three Said's.<sup>11</sup> Nursi himself spoke of 'the old Said'. Old Said refers to Nursi's early years as a scholar and teacher in the Ottoman Empire, where he developed his distinctive approach to Islamic thought and education. During this period, Nursi, a student philosopher and political activist, focused on the traditional Islamic sciences and emphasized the importance of spiritual development and moral and believed that reason to be the only guiding light in human affairs. But following December 1919 CE and the "strange revolution of the spirit," which he experienced in a true dream or king of vision.<sup>12</sup> Nursi began to speak of 'the New Said'. 'New Said' refers to Nursi's later years, during which he became more politically active and engaged with the social and political challenges facing Muslim societies in the twentieth century. His expanded understanding of Islam placed emphasis on how Islam can coexist with contemporary science and technology, as well as the significance of social and political transformation. The *Risale-i-Nur* is a multi-volume compilation of commentary on the Qur'an and lectures to the countless individuals who, despite Nursi's arrests and imprisonments, responded to his teachings. He then accepted the Qur'an "as his sole master" and began the decades-long process writing it.<sup>13</sup> Then, in the ten years that had remained of his life after May 1950 CE, Nursi started to talk about "the third Said," the charismatic leader of the *Nurculuk*, or "lay movement," as many refer to it.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Vahidi, S. (1992) *The Author of the Risale-I Nur: Bediuzzaman Said Nursi* (Istanbul: Sozler), pp. 164.

<sup>10</sup> Vahidi. (1992). pp. 164.

<sup>11</sup> Vahidi. (1992). pp. 164.

<sup>12</sup> Vahidi. (1992). pp. 164.

<sup>13</sup> See, Introduction of the *Encyclopedia of Islam and the Muslim World*. (2004). Ed. By Richard C. Martin. (Thomson Gale), pp. 512-513. [hereafter abbreviated as *EIMW*]

<sup>14</sup> *EIMW*. (2004). pp. 512-513.

Despite these differences, however, Nursi remained committed to the idea of the “straight path”, or the path of balance and moderation in Islamic thought and practice. He emphasized the importance of maintaining a balanced approach to Islam. This concept of the “straight path” remains a central theme of Nursi's legacy and has continued to influence Islamic thought and practice to this day. By examining the evolution of Nursi's thought and the tension between “Old Said” and “New Said” in his work, it can be concluded that scholars and practitioners of Muslim-Christian dialogue can gain a deeper understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing contemporary Islam, and work towards a more just and peaceful world.

### **Europe Through Nursi's Eyes: The Two Sides of a Complex Relationship**

During Nursi's lifetime, the materialistic and positivistic concepts of contemporary European philosophy posed the greatest threat to the moral values of the Qur'an and to religious faith in general.<sup>15</sup> He further states that Europe is of two types; one follows sciences (which serve justice and right, and the industries that are good for the life of society), and the second one is corrupt (which has led people astray through the darkness of Naturalism, which thinks that the bad things about civilization are its virtues). Here, Nursi is not talking about the former one (Europe) but the latter one (Europe).<sup>16</sup>

Nursi argues that Christianity is the source of genuine progress in Europe, but he also asserts that modern civilization is not the exclusive product or possession of Christianity or Europe and that it was incorrect to associate the concept of decline with Islam:

“To think that civilization is the property of Christianity, which it is not, and to show a decline, which is the enemy of Islam, to be its friend, is to say that the firmament is turning in the opposite direction.”<sup>17</sup>

Nursi said that the virtues of civilization belong to everyone because they originate from the coming together of minds and ideas, from the laws of revealed religions, from a natural need, and especially from the Islamic revolution brought about by Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) *Shari'ah*. No one can say they belong to them.<sup>18</sup> However, he was not content with modern civilization with all its aspects. Modern civilization generates a large number of dissatisfied, miserable members of society; thus, it has to offer a number of negative aspects. Furthermore, it “drives a man to wrongdoing and illegal gain.”<sup>19</sup> In this lengthy speech, he criticized Europe for lacking spirituality, concentrating on the materialistic aspects of life, and asserting that people will be happier if they pursue materialism. Nursi addressed to this claim by asserting that human happiness is impossible without a spiritual existence.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Nursi. (1996). pp. 129.

<sup>16</sup> Zeki. (2008). pp. 25-37.

<sup>17</sup> Zeki. (2008). pp. 25-37.

<sup>18</sup> Nursi, Said (1996). P. 36.

<sup>19</sup> Nursi. (1996). pp. 129.

<sup>20</sup> For more details about the Sermon see, above cited reference no 5.

He was critical of Western civilization, which he saw as characterized by materialism, moral decay, and a lack of spirituality. He was deeply concerned about the negative impact of European colonialism and imperialism on Muslim societies and called for Muslims to resist these forces and assert their own cultural and spiritual values. In his view, the key to a fruitful dialogue between Muslims and Christians was a recognition of the two sides of Europe and a willingness to engage with both the positive and negative aspects of European civilization. He believed that Muslims should learn from the achievements of European civilization but also be critical of its excesses and shortcomings.<sup>21</sup>

Nursi hoped that Europe and the United States would work together with the Islamic world in the future. He cited the views on Islam of numerous individuals who would be influential in the future Islamic world. Many eminent Westerners, like Otto von Bismarck (d.1898),<sup>22</sup> and Thomas Carlyle (d.1881),<sup>23</sup> were quoted in relation to their views on Islam.<sup>24</sup> Also, in his book *Isarat ul ijaz* (The Signs of Miraculousness), a commentary on the Qur'an, he listed 40 American and European intellectuals who said admirable things about Islam.<sup>25</sup> He discovered that the aspiration for improved Muslim-Christian ties was motivated by these thinkers. Nursi believed of them that the intellectual climate of America and Europe had allowed truthful people like Carlyle and Bismarck to come to the fore. Because of this, he was sure that in the future, there would be more positive attitudes towards Islam in America and Europe, as well as more people like Carlyle and Bismarck.<sup>26</sup> Nursi thought that this relationship was very important for the future of all people. As a result, he constantly urged his students to create a dialogue with Christians. Nowadays, many Muslims inside and outside of Turkey follow this trend of talking to each other. People in the Islamic world and the West who are influenced by Nursi's teachings are leading the way towards discussion.

## **Bridging Faiths: Fostering Dialogue and Cooperation Between Muslims and Christians**

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<sup>21</sup> Zeki. (2008). pp. 25-37.

<sup>22</sup> Otto von Bismarck (1815-1898 CE) was the prime minister of Prussia from 1862 to 1890 CE and the founder and first chancellor of the German Empire from 1871 to 1890 CE. A master strategist, Bismarck initiated decisive wars with Denmark, Austria and France to unite 39 independent German states under Prussian leadership.

<sup>23</sup> Thomas Carlyle (1795-1881 CE) was a British essayist, historian, and philosopher from the [Scottish Lowlands](#). A leading writer of the [Victorian era](#), he exerted a profound influence on 19th-century art, literature, and philosophy. Scottish historian and essayist, whose major works include *The French Revolution*, 3 vol. (1837), *On Heroes, Hero-Worship, and the Heroic in History* (1841), and *The History of Friedrich II of Prussia, Called Frederick the Great*, 6 vol. (1858-65).

<sup>24</sup> Zeki. (2008). pp. 25-37.

<sup>25</sup> Ozervarli, M. Sait. "The reconstruction of Islamic social thought in the modern period: Nursi's approach to religious discourse in a changing society." *Asian Journal of Social Science* 38, no. 4 (2010): pp. 532-553.

<sup>26</sup> Griffith, Sidney H. "Bediuzzaman Said Nursi and Louis Massignon in Pursuit of God's Word: A Muslim and a Christian on the Straight Path." *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* 19, no. 1 (2008): pp. 5-16.

More and more individuals are coming to the realization that Islam is an essential component of the contemporary world. It provides more than a billion people, which is roughly one-fifth of the global population, with a sense of shared social identity as well as a platform for religious expression. Public interest in learning about Islam has gained new momentum after the drastic events of 7/7 (7 July 2005; London) and 9/11 (11 September 2001; New York), which led to a desire for knowledge about Islam on a large scale never before seen in the history of Islamic studies in the West.<sup>27</sup>

Nursi argued that all Monotheistic religions should work together to avoid bloodshed amongst religious groups and adopt a critical stance towards the ideals of contemporary materialism. As a result, moral jihad (*jihad-i manevi*), as opposed to physical jihad with wars, must be used to resolve conflicts and opposing viewpoints with followers of other religions.<sup>28</sup> Prior to bringing differences to light, Nursi believed that religious believers had a responsibility to work together to reduce the effects of the gradual development of materialistic atheism. Nursi emphasizes that this is also the responsibility of modern believers by citing a Prophetic tradition concerning events, including earlier Muslim-Christian dialogue. He states:

It is even recorded in authentic traditions of the Prophet [PBUH] that at the end of time, the truly pious among Christians will unite with the people of the Qur'an and fight their common enemy, irreligion. And at this time, too, the people of religion and truth need to unite sincerely not only with their own brothers and fellow believers but also with truly pious spiritual ones among the Christians, temporarily refraining from the discussion and debate of points of difference in order to combat their joint enemy aggressive atheism.<sup>29</sup>

He was aware that European societies had completely replaced divine wisdom with the rational philosophical principles of the Enlightenment, giving priority to individual expectations over social needs and promoting a religious faith that was based on a private, personal commitment that had no role in politics, economics, or social relations. This was something that he was very familiar with.<sup>30</sup> Because religion is viewed as one of the primary pillars of social order and religiosity as a cause of anarchy, Nursi proposed a partnership with members of other religions to counter the spread of their common enemy, materialism: According to him, Materialism's erroneous beliefs were the common cause of all human suffering.<sup>31</sup> In an effort to put his views into practice, he got in conversation with the Catholic Church in 1950 and forwarded a selection of his papers to Pope Pius XII in Rome. Later, on February 22, 1951, he received a letter from him expressing his gratitude. Later in 1953, he also travelled to Istanbul to meet with the Ecumenical Patriarch of the Greek Orthodox Church in an effort to promote understanding and potential collaboration between

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<sup>27</sup> Sidney. (2008). pp. 5-16.

<sup>28</sup> Vahide, S. 2005. *Islam in Modern Turkey- An Intellectual Biography of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi*. New York: State University of New York Press. pp. 323-324.

<sup>29</sup> Nursi, S., "The Flashes," in *Risala-i Nur* 1.0 CD. 2000, Yeni Nesil: Istanbul. pp. 203-204.

<sup>30</sup> *EIMW*. (2004). pp. 512-513.

<sup>31</sup> *EIMW*. (2004). pp. 512-513.

followers of the two monotheistic faiths in the struggle against radical atheism.<sup>32</sup> To succeed in a joint endeavour, he argued, Christians and Muslims must, at least temporarily, refrain from disputes between these two religious' groups. Nursi argues that focusing excessively on these differences can blind both Muslims and Christians to their more important shared task, which is to offer the modern world a vision of human existence and society in which God is central and God's will be the standard for moral values.

### **The Nur Movement: A Legacy of Spiritual Renewal**

The Nur Movement (*Nurculuk*), also called the *Nurcu Movement* or the *Nursi Movement*, is a Turkish Islamic movement that was inspired by a modern reinterpretation of the Qur'an in the books *Risale-i Nur* (Epistles of Light). Nursi, who was the head of the movement and lived from 1876 to 1960 CE, had his letters (called *Risales*) published for the first time in 1926 CE.<sup>33</sup> The Nur is a social movement, not a sect, primarily because it lacks a formal structure and membership requirements. Nur has students, just like a school. The people who follow Nur are part of an Islamic community movement that can be seen as a group of strong personal networks. The Nur Movement originated in the 1950s and 1960s in Turkey, where it emerged as a response to the secularization of Turkish society and the perceived decline of Islamic values. The movement's members, known as *Nurcus*, sought to revitalize Islamic traditions and promote Islamic values through education and activism. They established informal study circles, known as *Sohbet*, to study Nursi's writings and discuss their application to contemporary issues.

The revival of faith in the face of modernization is the movement's main objective. The movement aims to resolve a number of apparent conflicts, including those between modernity and tradition, religion and reason, faith and science, belief and scepticism, and Islam and the West.<sup>34</sup> This movement's middle-ground stance is reflected in its vision of the ideal society, which is a moral yet educated and scientifically competitive collective. The message is spread by its adherents through the expanding use of contemporary mass communication technologies. The Nur movement's supporters are careful in how they embrace modernity. The movement is also a criticism of several aspects of modernization. Nursi's lessons are a challenge to individualism. Serif Mardin (1927-2017) notes that Said Nursi's main goal was to "repersonalize Turkish society through the personalised stamp of the *Risale-i Nur*".<sup>35</sup> This was an effort to thwart modernization's individualistic tendencies while maintaining strong social connections.

The movement is largely an outcome of the conflict between Islamization and secularisation, which began in the late nineteenth century when the Young Ottomans attempted to reconcile Islam with Western constitutionalism during the late

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<sup>32</sup> Mardin, Şerif. *Social Change and Religion in Modern Turkey*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989. p.12.

<sup>33</sup> *EIMW*. (2004). pp. 512-513.

<sup>34</sup> For more details, see *EIMW*. (2004). pp. 512-513 and also Mardin. (1989). P.12.

<sup>35</sup> Mardin. (1989). P.12.

Ottoman period.<sup>36</sup> Under the rule of the Ottoman Empire, Said Nursi advised making concessions in order to resolve this conflict. He questioned the three independent streams of education that are *medrese* (Ar., *madrasa*, religious school), *tekke* (Sufi hospice), and secular education. He advocated for the reinstatement of religious subjects in public schools. His objective was to include capable ulema in the *tekke*. They also established informal study circles, known as *Sohbet*, to study Nursi's writings and discuss their application to contemporary issues.<sup>37</sup> In addition to its educational activities, the Nur Movement is also involved in social activism.

Besides that, the movement has been active in promoting interfaith dialogue and cooperation, advocating for the rights of religious minorities, and providing humanitarian aid to those in need. The Nur Movement has been a subject of controversy in Turkey, particularly in relation to its political influence and alleged involvement in illegal activities. Some critics have accused the movement of seeking to undermine the secular foundations of the Turkish state, while others have accused it of promoting a narrow and exclusionary form of Islam.<sup>38</sup> Despite these controversies, the 'Nur Movement' continues to be an influential force in Turkish society and beyond. Its emphasis on education, intellectual engagement, and social activism has resonated with many Muslims around the world who are seeking to promote a more just and compassionate society based on Islamic values.

## CONCLUSION

From the above discussion, it can be concluded that Nursi provided original and thought-provoking insights on interreligious dialogue and cooperation between Muslims and Christians. His central argument is that Muslims and Christians can construct, in accordance with God's plan, a true civilization in which human dignity, peace, justice, and fellowship are the norm. His teachings on the universality of religious values, the unity of humanity, and the importance of tolerance and compassion are particularly relevant in today's world, where tensions and conflicts between different religious and cultural groups continue to pose significant challenges. Nursi's approach to interfaith dialogue and cooperation also highlights the need for a deeper engagement with the spiritual dimensions of our lives rather

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<sup>36</sup> Mardin. (1989). P.12.

<sup>37</sup> Mardin. (1989). P.12.

<sup>38</sup> For further reading see, M. Said Ramadan Al- Buti, "Bediuzzaman Said Nursi's Experience of Serving Islam by Means of Politics," in *Proceedings of Third International Symposium on Said Nursi: The Reconstruction of Islamic Thought in the Twentieth Century and Bediuzzaman Said Nursi*, 1997, 105– 14; Ahmet Davudoglu, "Bediuzzaman and the Politics of 20th Century Muslim World," *Proceedings of Third International Symposium on Said Nursi: The Reconstruction of Islamic Thought in the Twentieth Century and Bediuzzaman Said Nursi*, 1997, 286– 311; Zeynep Akbulut Kuru and Ahmet T. Kuru, "Apolitical Interpretation of Islam: Said Nursi's Faith- Based Activism in Comparison with Political Islamism and Sufism," *Islam and Christian- Muslim Relations* 19, no. 1 (2008): 99– 111; Nursi Studies, <http://www.nursistudies.com>; Ibrahim Abu Rabi', *Islam at the Crossroads: On the Life and Thought of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi*, 2003; Risale-i Nur: A Contemporary Interpretation of the Qur'an, <http://www.saidnur.com>; Colin Turner and Hasan Horkuc, *Makers of Islamic Civilization: Said Nursi*, 2009.

than simply focusing on the external manifestations of religion. By promoting a holistic and inclusive understanding of faith, Nursi offers a compelling vision for how Muslims and Christians can work together to address the complex challenges facing our world.

Overall, the intellectual legacy of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi offers a powerful framework for promoting Muslim-Christian dialogue and cooperation. His ideas and teachings are an important resource for anyone seeking to build bridges between different religious and cultural communities and to promote a more harmonious and inclusive vision of our shared humanity.

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