

Esoteric Aspects of Said Nursi's Interpretation of Tawhid: Influence and Thought

Muhammad Thoriqul Islam*, Raisya Miftakhul Rahma**, Nawa Marjany*
Universitas Darussalam Gontor*, Universitas Islam Negeri Walisongo Semarang**
islamthoriqul95@gmail.com

Keywords: Esoteric, Qur'anic interpretation, Islamic scholar, Said Nursi, <i>tawhīd</i> verses.	Abstract Nowadays, Muslims need a concept of monotheism that is not only academic but also increases faith. Nursi divided the idea of monotheism into two dimensions: birth monotheism and true monotheism. These concepts focused on growing faith related to current life. Both interpretations of exoteric and esoteric monotheism verses were critical to understand. The research explored Nursi's esoteric approach to monotheistic verses and their influence on Islamic theology. The qualitative research design employed the literature review method by obtaining data from journals, proceedings, books, and documentaries. Then, data were analyzed using content analysis techniques and esoteric and historical approaches. The research results indicated that Nursi's esoteric interpretation of monotheistic verses aligned with other <i>sufi mufassirs</i> but had two significant differences. <i>First</i> , Nursi's esoteric approach, especially in <i>tafakkur</i> , provided concrete examples that could be felt physically. <i>Second</i> , as a member of the Naqshbandi Tariqa, Nursi consistently referred to <i>asmā' al-ḥusnā</i> and associated it with manifestations reflected in all entities when interpreting the Qur'an. Nursi's interpretation of monotheistic verses in Islamic theological thought became more dominant at the international level. Meanwhile, at the national level, the influence was more socio-religious. Nevertheless, Nursi's interpretation remains essential in addressing religious realities in Indonesia.
Kata Kunci: Esoterik, tafsir al-Qur'an, ulama, Said Nursi, ayat-ayat tauhid.	Abstrak Saat ini umat Islam membutuhkan konsep tauhid yang tidak hanya akademis, tetapi juga meningkatkan keimanan. Nursi membagi konsep tauhid ini menjadi dua dimensi: tauhid lahir dan tauhid hakiki. Hal ini menekankan peningkatan keimanan dan sangat relevan dalam kehidupan saat ini. Penting untuk dipahami bahwa penafsiran ayat-ayat tauhid tidak hanya bermakna eksoterik, tetapi juga esoterik. Penelitian mencoba menggali pendekatan esoterik Nursi terhadap ayat-ayat tauhid dan pengaruhnya dalam teologi Islam. Jenis penelitian termasuk kualitatif menggunakan metode studi pustaka (<i>literature review</i>), dengan memperoleh data melalui jurnal, prosiding, buku, dan dokumenter. Kemudian, data dianalisis menggunakan teknik analisis isi, pendekatan esoterik, dan historis. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa penafsiran esoterik Nursi terhadap ayat-ayat tauhid sejalan dengan <i>mufassir</i> sufi lainnya, tetapi memiliki dua perbedaan signifikan. <i>Pertama</i> , pendekatan esoterik Nursi, terutama dalam konteks <i>tafakur</i> , memberikan contoh konkret yang dapat dirasakan secara fisik. <i>Kedua</i> , sebagai anggota tarekat Naqsyabandiyah, Nursi secara konsisten merujuk pada <i>asma' al-husna</i> dan mengaitkannya dengan manifestasi yang tercermin dalam seluruh entitas ketika menafsirkan al-Qur'an. Pengaruh penafsiran Nursi terhadap ayat-ayat tauhid dalam pemikiran teologi Islam ternyata lebih dominan di tingkat internasional. Sementara di tingkat nasional, pengaruhnya lebih bersifat sosio-religius. Meskipun demikian, penafsiran Nursi tetap relevan sebagai rujukan penting dalam menyikapi realitas keagamaan di Indonesia.
Article History :	Received: 2024-02-02 Accepted: 2024-05-25 Published: 2024-05-27
MLA Citation Format	Islam, Muhammad Thoriqul, dkk. "Esoteric Aspects of Said Nursi's Interpretation of Tawhid: Influence and Thought." QOF: Jurnal Studi al-Qur'an dan Tafsir, vol. 8, no. 1, 2024, hlm. 15-34, https://doi.org/10.30762/qof.v8i1.2062 .
APA Citation Format	Islam, M. T., Rahma, R. M., & Marjany, N. (2024). Esoteric Aspects of Said Nursi's Interpretation of Tawhid: Influence and Thought. QOF: Jurnal Studi al-Qur'an dan Tafsir, 8(1), 15-34. https://doi.org/10.30762/qof.v8i1.2062

Introduction

Nowadays, Muslims need a concept of monotheism that does not only teach the Oneness of Allah but also prioritizes faith due to the fragility of faith. This innovative idea emerged from a contemporary Turkish interpreter in the 20th century, Badiuzzaman Said Nursi.¹ Nursi divided the concept of monotheism into two types.² First, *tauḥīd al-zāhirī* is a general belief in the Oneness of Allah that He is One, has no allies, and is the Owner of the entire world. Second, *tauḥīd al-ḥaqīqī* is a deep belief in the Oneness of Allah that He has One Power over anything, has no allies in His *uluhiyah*, no enslaved people in His *rububiyah*, and no rivals in His kingdom; the belief that provides calm and serenity to its Owner because He has witnessed the sign of His Power.³

Nursi's view implied that *tauḥīd al-zāhirī* was only limited to recognizing the oneness of God, while *tauḥīd al-ḥaqīqī* created calm and tranquility for the soul.⁴ In this case, Nursi had the privilege of interpreting monotheistic verses, such as those in QS. al-Anbiya (21): 22.⁵ Nursi interpreted this verse by emphasizing the oneness of God because of the inseparable nature of His *uluhiyah* and *rububiyah*. According to Nursi, absolute power rejects various forms of intervention, competition, and alliances. He employed an analogy that even weak humans will not accept intervention from other people in their affairs, let the power of the Almighty God, the Sustainer of the universe, commit His will. Nursi also highlighted the perfect order in the universe as solid evidence of God's oneness, including everything from flies' wings to the stars in the sky, inviting awe and recognition of His majesty.⁶

Analysis of Nursi's interpretation of this verse shows a deep understanding of monotheism in Islam, especially regarding the oneness of God (*tauḥīd uluhiyah* and *rububiyah*) and its implications for the universe and human life. From this statement, Nursi put forward a strong argument for the importance of recognizing, respecting, and admiring the oneness of God in every aspect of life. This interpretation shows a deep understanding

¹ Sukran Vahide, *Islam in Modern Turkey (an Intellectual Biography of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi)*, ed. oleh Ibrahim M. Abu Rabi' (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2005), xiii; Shumaila Majeed, "An Analytical Study of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi's Intellectual Development and Composition of Risale-i Nūr (A Thematic Qur'ānic Exegesis)," *Journal of Islamic Thought and Civilization (JITC)* 10, no. 2 (2020): 170–89, <https://doi.org/10.32350/jitc.102.10>; Muhammad Labib Syauqi, "Mengenal Risalah Nur Karya Said Nursi dan Metodologi Penafsirannya," *Maghza* 2, no. 1 (2017): 109–12, <https://doi.org/10.24090/maghza.v2i1.1547>; Badiuzzaman Said Nursi, *Jendela Tauhid*, trans. oleh Fauzi Faisal Bahreisy (Jakarta: Anatolia, 2011).

² Badiuzzaman Said Nursi, *Al-Kalimāt*, ed. oleh Iḥsān Qāsim Al-Shālihī, 6 ed. (Mesir: Syirkah Sozler li al-Nasyr, 2011), 326.

³ Ahmad Nabil Amir dan Tasnim Abdul Rahman, "Telaah Ringkas Kitab Risalah al-Nur Oleh Said Nursi," *Jurnal Kajian dan Pengembangan Umat* 6, no. 2 (2023): 186–93, <https://doi.org/10.31869/jkpu.v6i2.4905>.

⁴ Moh Salis Fitrowan, "Integrasi Agama dan Sains dalam Pendidikan Keimanan: Perspektif Rasail al-Nur Karya Said Nursi," *Tawazun: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 16, no. 2 (2023): 299–316, <https://doi.org/10.32832/tawazun.v16i2>; Himmawan Ayathurrahman dan Sadam Fajar Shodiq, "Integrasi Ilmu Agama-Sains Badiuzzaman Said Nursi dan Relevansinya dengan Pendidikan Agama Islam Era Digital di Indonesia," *Bulletin of Indonesian Islamic Studies (BIIS)* 2, no. 1 (2023): 1–18, <https://doi.org/10.51214/biis.v2i1.512>.

⁵ "Had there been gods besides Allah (in the heavens and the earth), both would have been ruined. Glorified be Allah, the Lord of the Throne, (High is He) above what they attribute to Him!"

⁶ Nursi, *Al-Kalimāt*, 806–7.

of the relationship between humans, the universe, and its creator and the importance of relying on Allah in facing life's challenges and trials.

Meanwhile, Quraish Shihab interpreted this verse by explaining three possibilities in human minds if there are two Gods.⁷ Hamka's thought also strengthens the idea of God's unity by revealing that the existence of more than one God would lead to destructive conflict in the universe, something that is not observed in reality.⁸ Quraish Shihab's interpretation and Hamka's thoughts on this verse provide a deep understanding of the oneness of God in Islam and its impact on the universe and human life. They emphasize the importance of recognizing and understanding the oneness of God in Islam as the basis for order and harmony in the universe and human life.

On the other hand, Ibn Taimiyyah used this verse to explain monotheism *uluhiyah*, which states that the universe's destruction occurs due to worship directed at others other than Allah.⁹ Quraish Shihab and Hamka's interpretation of surah al-Anbiya (21): 22 provided a view that reflects criticism of Ibn Taymiyyah's theological thought. Even though there are similarities between their interpretations and Nursi's, Nursi showed significant differences by reflecting the beauty of the universe, even the most minor things, such as fly wings. Nursi considered it a path to true monotheism, which involves deep belief in Allah Swt.¹⁰ The interpretations of Quraish Shihab, Hamka, and Nursi each provide a unique contribution to understanding the concept of monotheism in Islam and the relationship between the universe and God's existence. Although there are differences in emphasis and approach, they all emphasize the importance of recognizing God's oneness as a solid foundation of faith in Islam.

Nursi's interpretation is important in combining *rububiyah* and *uluhiyah* monotheism without distinguishing them. Nursi emphasized that the oneness of God requires a complete understanding of these aspects. Different interpretations create a group debate, frequently considering monotheism through formal dimension and ignoring its substance.¹¹ Therefore, the author conveyed that an esoteric approach was needed to understand monotheistic verses. This approach encourages humans to dig deeper and seek the hidden nature of religious teachings. Thus, the esoteric approach can find a deep essence of monotheistic verses.

A comprehensive overview of recent research in Qur'anic interpretation emerges from multiple theses and journals. Didik Purnomo's thesis delves into Fakhruddin al-Rāzī's interpretation of tawhid verses, highlighting similarities with Sunni scholars and emphasizing the concept of *ghair* in interpreting *lā ilāha illā huwa*.¹² Mirza Hasanul Yani explores the perspectives of al-Ṭabāṭabā'ī and Quraish Shihab on tawhid verses, focusing

⁷ M. Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Misbah: Pesan, Kesan, dan Keserasian Al-Qur'an*, 8 ed. (Jakarta: Lentera Hati, 2002), 435.

⁸ Hamka, *Tafsir Al-Azhar*, 6 ed. (Singapore: Pustaka Nasional PTE LTD, 2001), 4555.

⁹ Amal Fathullah Zarkasyi, *Dirāsah fī 'Ilmi al-Kalām Tārikhu al-Mazāhib al-Islāmiyyah wa Qaḍāyāhā al-Kalāmiyyah*, cet. ke-6 (Ponorogo: UNIDA Gontor Press, 2020), 262.

¹⁰ Badiuzzaman Said Nursi, *al-Mathnawī al-Nurī* (Istanbul: The Light, 2007), 326.

¹¹ M. Iqbal, "Memahami Agama dengan Pendekatan Esoterik," *Kalam: Jurnal Studi Agama dan Pemikiran Islam* 9, no. 1 (2015): 1–16, <https://doi.org/10.24042/klm.v9i1.317>.

¹² Didik Purnomo, "Tafsir Kalimat Tauhid dalam al-Qur'an: Studi Tafsir Mafatih al-Gaib Karya Fakhruddin al-Rāzī" (Thesis, Surabaya, UIN Sunan Ampel, 2016).

on differences regarding Shia influences and historical narratives.¹³ Cemal Sahin analyzes Said Nursi's integration of Kalam science and Sufism, proposing a spiritual theory rooted in Qur'anic interpretation.¹⁴ Lutfi Farhan Desky and Zarfi Rizal examine Nursi's Sufistic interpretive style and the concept of *tafakkur*, respectively, elucidating thematic methods and the significance of contemplation in *Risālah al-Nūr*.¹⁵ Irwansyah's research investigates esoteric dimensions in interpreting worship verses through KH. Ahmad Hasyim Muzadi's lens emphasizes Sufi al-isyārī exegesis and the utilization of taqiyya and 'aliyah arguments.¹⁶ Additionally, Kerwanto's journal underscores the epistemological nuances of esoteric interpretation, stressing the unique set of epistemologies required for its acceptance, which informs contemporary approaches to understanding Qur'anic verses.¹⁷

This research used a literature review method.¹⁸ In this case, the researcher carries the theme of Nursi's esoteric approach to monotheistic verses and their influence on Islamic theology so that the literary sources used are sources such as books, journals, proceedings, magazines, and articles related to this theme. The literary sources related to books are the work of Said Nursi, such as books entitled *Rasail al-Nur*, *Al-Kalimāt*, *Al-Mathnawí Al-Nurí*, *Window of Tauhid*, *Risale-i Nur Kulliyatin* dan, and others. Data analysis uses content analysis techniques,¹⁹ esoteric approach,²⁰ and historical approach²¹. From the research background, this research aimed to explore Nursi's esoteric approach to monotheistic verses and their influence on Islamic theology.

¹³ Cemal Sahin, "Integrasi Ilmu Kalam dan Tasawuf Menurut Said Nursi dalam Tafsir Risālah (Analisis Konsep Teospiritual dalam al-Quran)," *Disertasi* (Disertasi, Jakarta, Institut PTIQ, 2020), <https://repository.ptiq.ac.id/id/eprint/438>.

¹⁴ Sahin.

¹⁵ Luthfi Farhan Desky, "Corak Tafsir Sufistik Badiuzzaman Said Nursi (Studi Tafsir Kulliyāt Rasāil Al-Nūr)," *Thesis* (Tesis, Lampung, Pascasarjana UIN Raden Intan, 2021), <http://www.theseus.fi/handle/10024/341553%0Ahttps://jptam.org/index.php/jptam/article/view/1958%0Ahttp://ejurnal.undana.ac.id/index.php/glory/article/view/4816%0Ahttps://dspace.uui.ac.id/bitstream/handle/123456789/23790/17211077> Tarita Syavira Alicia.pdf?; Zarfi Rizal, "Dimensi Sufistik Said Nursi dalam Kulliyat Rasail An-Nur (Studi Terhadap Ayat-Ayat Tafakur)" (Tesis, Jakarta, Pascasarjana Institut Ilmu Al-Qur'an, 2021), <http://repository.iq.ac.id/handle/123456789/1578>.

¹⁶ Rizal, "Dimensi Sufistik Said Nursi dalam Kulliyat Rasail An-Nur (Studi Terhadap Ayat-Ayat Tafakur)."

¹⁷ Iryansyah Iryansyah, "Dimensi Esoterik dalam Penafsiran Ayat-Ayat Ibadah (Studi Analisis Terhadap Tafsir Syafahi KH. Ahmad Hasyim Muzadi)" (Tesis, Jakarta, Pascasarjana Institut Ilmu Al-Qur'an, 2021), <http://repository.iq.ac.id/handle/123456789/1263>.

¹⁸ Ahmad Fahrudin, *Dasar-Dasar Metodologi Penelitian: Kompetensi dan Strategi Jitu Riset Peneliti* (Tulungagung: UIN Satu Press, 2020), <https://scholar.google.com/scholar?cluster=14627732572684782697&hl=en&oi=scholar>; Chitu Okoli dan Kira Schabram, "A Guide to Conducting a Systematic Literature Review of Information Systems Research," *Communications of the Association for Information Systems* 37, no. 43 (2010): 879–910, <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.1954824>.

¹⁹ Jumal Ahmad, "Desain Penelitian Analisis Isi (Content Analysis)," *Jurnal Analisis Isi* 5, no. 9 (2018): 1–20; Elita Sartika, "Analisis Isi Kualitatif Pesan Moral dalam Film Berjudul 'Kita Versus Korupsi,'" *ejournal Ilmu Komunikasi* 2, no. 2 (2014): 63–77.

²⁰ Ikbal, "Memahami Agama dengan Pendekatan Esoterik," 185–208.

²¹ Sri Haryanto, "Pendekatan Historis dalam Studi Islam," *Manarul Qur'an: Jurnal Ilmiah Studi Islam* 17, no. 1 (2017): 127–35, <https://doi.org/10.32699/mq.v17i1.927>; Topik Pirdaus dan Uyu Muawanah, "Pendekatan Historis dalam Studi Islam," *Jusma: Jurnal Studi Islam dan Masyarakat* 3, no. 1 (2024): 15–19, <https://doi.org/10.32699/mq.v17i1.927>; Khoiru Ridwan dkk., "Pendekatan Historis dalam Studi Islam Tradisi Kenduri di Indonesia," *Jurnal Kajian Pendidikan Islam* 3, no. 1 (2024): 42–54, <https://doi.org/10.58561/jkpi.v3i1.79>.

Nursi's Esoteric Interpretation of Tauhid Verses

Nursi's esoteric interpretation method in *Rasāil al-Nūr*²² It can be studied through five approaches.²³ These five approaches include: (1) theological approach, that discussing the theological concepts underlying Nursi's thought, such as monotheism, prophethood, and resurrection, and how he connects these concepts to his interpretation of Qur'anic verses, (2) philosophical approach that examining Nursi's philosophical foundations in understanding reality and existence, and their influence on how he interprets religious texts, (3) sufi approach that investigating the influence of the Sufi tradition in Nursi's thought, including the use of contemplation and spiritual mediation in his interpretation of the Qur'an, (4) linguistic approach that analyzing the use of language and sentence structure in Nursi's texts, and how it affects the understanding of the interpreted Qur'anic verses, and (5) historical approach that tracing the historical context and Nursi's life when he wrote *Rasāil al-Nūr*, including events that influenced his thinking and how he responded to the developments of his time in his interpretations.

First, Nursi used external meaning as a basic analogy in exploring esoteric (inner) meaning. It can be found in the interpretation of several verses, such as in Q.S al-Ra'ad (13): 28, where Nursi mentioned the exoteric meaning (*zahir*) that the heart and soul will feel anxious and afraid unless they know Allah SWT. All matters handed over to Him, including the heart and soul, will become calm. Nursi utilized this exoteric meaning to reveal the hidden esoteric meaning in verse: the calm obtained when a servant only relies on Allah Swt.²⁴ It suggests that Nursi's esoteric approach reflects the weakness of a servant who requires consecration in his *ubudiyah*. The literal meaning of the verse became Nursi's primary concern in exploring the inner meaning of the Qur'an, ensuring that the resulting esoteric meaning does not conflict with or deviate from the literal meaning of the verse.²⁵ Nursi even managed to avoid contradiction by paying attention to the literal meaning of the verse.

In another interpretation, Nursi interpreted QS. al-Mulk (67): 2 by equating it with the sun, which reflects the seven names of Allah, such as *al-Hakim*, *al-Karim*, *al-Rahim*, *al-Şamadaniyah*, *al-'Ilm*, *al-Qudrah*, and *al-Razzaq*. Nursi associates the verse Q.S al-Mulk (67): 2 with the sun, suggesting that just as the sun reflects light, warmth, and sustenance to the physical world, it also reflects the divine attributes or names of Allah. Nursi identifies seven specific names of Allah that are reflected by the sun: *al-Hakim* (the Wise), *al-Karim* (the Generous), *al-Rahim* (the Merciful), *al-Şamadaniyah* (the Eternal), *al-'Ilm* (the All-Knowing), *al-Qudrah* (the All-Powerful), and *al-Razzaq* (the Provider). By equating the sun with these divine attributes, Nursi emphasizes that the signs of Allah's existence and attributes are evident in the natural world, including in celestial bodies like the sun. This interpretation underscores Nursi's belief in the interconnectedness of the physical and spiritual realms and highlights the Quranic theme of contemplating the signs of Allah in creation. He also used the metaphor of the seven colors of the sun as a representation of

²² Badiuzzaman Said Nursi, *Risale-i Nur Kulliyatından* (Istanbul: Sozler, 1956).

²³ Reflita Reflita dan Jonni Syatri, "Konstruksi Hermeneutika Tafsir Sufi," *Mashdar: Jurnal Studi Al-Qur'an dan Hadis* 2, no. 2 (2020): 169–98, <https://doi.org/10.15548/mashdar.v2i2.1675>.

²⁴ Nursi, *Al-Kalimāt*, 777.

²⁵ Reflita dan Syatri, "Konstruksi Hermeneutika Tafsir Sufi," 191.

providing sustenance, grace, attention, and wisdom in life.²⁶ In this case, Nursi made the sun a symbol of life, a symbolic approach in the Sufism tradition.

Sufi commentators are depicted as utilizing symbols to convey their interpretations, viewing the Qur'an as a vast sea of symbols with hidden meanings accessible to those who delve into its depths. The paragraph emphasizes how Sufi commentators, including Nursi, employ symbolism to uncover the richness and depth of meaning within the Qur'an. It underscores the significance of symbolic interpretation in providing a deeper understanding of Islamic religious concepts and revealing spiritual aspects that may be challenging to grasp through literal language alone. Thus, the paragraph suggests that Nursi's symbolic approach is rooted in the tradition of Sufism, which frequently relies on symbols in religious interpretation.

Al-Qusayr used the birth-meaning method as a basic analogy in interpreting QS. Ibrahim (14): 32-34. In Zahir, he explained the sky above and the earth below. However, esoterically, al-Qusayr revealed that Allah Swt has decorated the sky of the heart with the lights of reason, the sun of monotheism, and the moon of gratitude has risen in it.²⁷ Al-Qusayr's approach to interpreting the Qur'an reflected an attempt to understand and reveal the spiritual meanings hidden behind its outward meaning. By using symbolism, metaphor, and analogy, al-Qusayr explored the depths of the meaning of the Qur'an to provide a deeper understanding of Islamic religious concepts. His approach, which combines external and esoteric meanings, helped open the door to a deeper understanding of Islamic teachings and humans' relationship with God.

Furthermore, Nursi also used an analogy between exoteric and esoteric meanings in several verses. For example, in QS. al-A'raf (7): 185, Nursi described the throne of Allah as a magnificent Palace that reflected His deeds, names, attributes, and substances. The analogy of a skilled architect implied the existence of neat deeds, perfect qualities, and noble potential.²⁸ This meaning was considered esoteric because it required deep religious reflection, not conventional understanding. Nursi's use of the analogy of exoteric and esoteric meanings in his interpretation showed an approach that focuses on deep understanding and spiritual reflection in understanding the verses of the Qur'an. Through analogies, Nursi helped open the door to the deeper meaning of Islamic teachings and increased the reader's understanding of complex religious concepts.

In the second approach, Nursi equated the outer meaning with the inner meaning (equivalent analogy) in interpreting several verses, such as QS. al-Anbiya' (21): 22. He symbolized the existence of two Gods with the chaos that arose if there were two leaders in one area. Nursi stated that even weak humans do not accept intervention from other people in their affairs; they let the power of the Almighty God, the Sustainer of the universe, commit His will.²⁹ This meaning is considered esoteric because it also requires meditation

²⁶ Nursi, *Al-Kalimāt*, 795.

²⁷ Imam Abil Qasim Abd al-Karim bin Hawazin bin Abd Malik al-Qushayrī, *Laṭā'if al-Isyārāt*, 2 ed. (Beirut-Lebanon: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyah, 2007), 253.

²⁸ Nursi, *Al-Kalimāt*, 785.

²⁹ Nursi, 806.

apart from being hidden.³⁰ Another example is when Nursi interpreted QS. al-Tin (95): 4 and QS. al-Dzariyat (51): 20-21. Nursi compared the human spirit to complete control over the body, similar to Allah, who completely controls the universe.³¹ Through appropriate analogies, Nursi explored the esoteric meaning of these verses, which requires the interpreter's expertise in revealing the similarity of the inner meaning with the text's redaction.³²

Al-Alūsī also used the analogy method of matching exoteric meaning with esoteric meaning in interpreting QS. al-Anbiya' (21): 22. The exoteric verse stated that if there are two gods in the heavens and on earth, both will be destroyed. However, Al-Alūsī explained that this command is to return to God and sever all ties and causes in the heart.³³ The equivalent analogy is that humans who serve a "cause" God other than Almighty God will experience physical and spiritual destruction. Analysis of Al-Alusi's analogy method of matching exoteric meaning with esoteric meaning in interpreting the verse shows an approach similar to Nursi's in using analogies to describe spiritual concepts in the Qur'an. Al-Alusi's approach showed that using analogies as a means of understanding can help unlock the depth of the Qur'an's meaning and reveal complex spiritual concepts. By using analogies, al-Alusi helped readers understand the esoteric meaning of the verse and stimulated deeper spiritual reflection.

In the third approach, Nursi explained the inner meaning of the verse by highlighting the context (*siyaq*) in QS. al-Isra' (17): 44. He conveyed that "everything" mentioned in verse includes things visible on earth, not the unseen. Nursi stated that everything in the universe glorifies Allah, like the Rahmani letter, which reflects its Creator.³⁴ This meaning encourages humans to reflect on the universe, known as *afaki tafakkur*. Al-Qusayr also used the explanation method of the esoteric meaning of verses in interpreting QS. al-Sajadah (32): 7. He described the beauty of God's creation by detailing the images of His throne, the wings of angels, Gabriel as a peacock, and the beauty of angels, showing that "everything He created in the best way" was not limited to visible things, but also to invisible things.³⁵

Besides that, Nursi strengthened the interpretation with the evidence of the Qur'an and Sunnah in the fourth approach. This approach was based on *mukāshafah* science and used historical information. Nursi's interpretation method involved strengthening his interpretations with evidence derived from both the Qur'an and the Sunnah (traditions and practices of the Prophet Muhammad). This approach is rooted in *mukāshafah* science, which refers to mystical or spiritual insight and also incorporates historical information. By utilizing this approach, Nursi aimed to provide a comprehensive and well-founded interpretation of the Qur'an, drawing upon divine revelation and historical context. This method allowed Nursi to present his interpretations in a spiritually profound and

³⁰ Betania Kartika Muflih dan Dato' M.Y. Zulkifli Haji Mohd Yusoff, "Bediuzzaman Said Nursi's Methodology in the Discourse of Moral Education in His Thematic Exegesis Rasa'il Al-Nur," *Teologi* 24, no. 1 (2013): 21-43.

³¹ Nursi, *Al-Kalimāt*, 810.

³² Reflita dan Syatri, "Konstruksi Hermeneutika Tafsir Sufi," 191.

³³ Abū Abdurrahmān al-Sulamī, *Haqāiq al-Tafsīr: Tafsīr al-Qur'an al-Aziz*, 2 ed. (Beirut-Lebanon: Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyah, 2001), 5.

³⁴ Nursi, *Al-Kalimāt*, 779, 786, dan 805.

³⁵ Qushayrī, *Laṭā'if al-Isyārāt*, 2007, 140.

intellectually rigorous manner, aligning with his broader goal of elucidating the deeper meanings of Qur'anic verses. Additionally, by grounding his interpretations in both textual evidence and historical context, Nursi sought to ensure the credibility and authenticity of his interpretations, thereby enhancing their impact and relevance to readers.

In symbolic interpretation, Sufi commentators analogized things based on the Qur'an and the Prophet's hadiths. They applied the *al-ma'thūr* exegesis method by interpreting the Qur'an with the Qur'an and the Prophet's hadiths.³⁶ For example, in Najm ad-Din al-Kubra's interpretation, there is an "*al-Barq*" word in QS. al-Baqarah (2);20.

يَكَادُ الْبَرْقُ يَخْطِفُ أَبْصَارَهُمْ كُلَّمَا أَضَاءَ لَهُمْ مَشَوْا فِيهِ وَإِذَا أَظْلَمَ عَلَيْهِمْ قَامُوا ۗ وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَذَهَبَ بِسَمْعِهِمْ وَأَبْصَارِهِمْ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

Meaning: "It is as if the lightning were about to snatch away their sight. They walk in its light whenever lightning strikes, but when darkness covers them, they stand still. Had Allah willed, He could have taken away their hearing and sight. Surely Allah is Most Capable of everything."

This verse implied that Najm ad-Din al-Kubra interpreted "*al-Barq*" as the light of remembrance and the Qur'an, which guides the heart and body to remember Allah. He connected this verse with Allah's words in QS. al-Mā'idah (5): 83,

وَإِذَا سَمِعُوا مَا أُنزِلَ إِلَى الرَّسُولِ تَرَىٰ أَعْيُنُهُمْ تَفِيضُ مِنَ الدَّمْعِ مِمَّا عَرَفُوا مِنَ الْحَقِّ ۖ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا آمَنَّا فَاكْتُبْنَا مَعَ الشَّاهِدِينَ

Meaning: "When they listen to what has been revealed to the Messenger, you see their eyes overflowing with tears for recognizing the truth. They say, "Our Lord! We believe, so count us among the witnesses."

This verse emphasized that the light of remembrance and the Qur'an almost grab the vision of the *Nafs*. However, the darkness of the *nafs* and emotions overwhelmed them, causing them to be seduced by the world and fall into perdition. It explained the relationship between verses (*munāsabah*) in the Qur'an, where one verse explains another.³⁷ Hence, this interpretation implies that Sufis, such as *al-kubra*, did not only rely on intuitive knowledge but also their reading of the Qur'an. They studied the relationships between verses (*munāsabah*) to understand the inner meaning. Sufis also referred to the Prophet's explanations to reveal the esoteric meaning of verses, as contained in the interpretation of QS. al-Ḍuhā: 8,

وَوَجَدَكَ عَائِلًا فَأَغْنَىٰ

Meaning: "And He found you as someone who was lacking, then He gave you sufficiency."

The interpretation of al-Kubra above highlights the importance of studying and reading the Qur'an in-depth and using the Prophet's explanations to understand the esoteric meaning

³⁶ Reflita dan Syatri, "Konstruksi Hermeneutika Tafsir Sufi," 193.

³⁷ Najm al-Dīn al-Kubrā, *Al-Ta'wīlāt al-Najmiyyah fī Tafsīr al-Isyārī aṣ-Ṣūfī*, 1 ed. (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyah, 2009), 129.

of these verses. The combination of intuitive knowledge and study of the Qur'an allows Sufis to better understand its spiritual messages.

Sahl at-Tustarī, in the word of *'āilān* understanding, emphasized that it did not only refer to a lack of wealth but also to the *nafs'* longing for *ma'rifah* (knowledge of God) and the soul's need for its Creator. According to him, God found that the human soul longed to know Him and needed Him. Allah provides sufficiency to the soul through the Qur'an and wisdom. For Sahl, wealth (*ginā*) is the wealth of the soul; meanwhile, according to the hadith of the Prophet, wealth is not the most significant number of worldly possessions but rather the wealth of a heart that feels sufficient.³⁸ Sahl at-Tustarī's views on the meaning of "āilān" and the richness of the soul demonstrate a deep approach to spiritual concepts in the Sufi tradition. A broad understanding of wealth, an emphasis on sufficiency through the Qur'an and wisdom, and the distinction between spiritual wealth and worldly wealth are essential elements in the Sufi view of life and true blessings. This understanding is based on the Prophet's word;

لَيْسَ الْغِنَى كَثْرَةُ الْعَرَضِ، إِنَّمَا الْغِنَى غِنَى النَّفْسِ.

Meaning: "Rich is not measured by the amount of luxury in the world, but rich is a rich heart (a heart that always feels enough)."³⁹

This approach emphasizes that Sufi *bāṭiniyyah* interpretation does not only rely on intuitive understanding but is also supported by a solid textual foundation from the Qur'an and Sunnah.

In the fifth approach, Nursi expressed an understanding opposite to the denotational meaning of several verses. First, in QS. al-Zumar (39): 62, he stated that the highest cause of occurrence cannot be created and affected, similar to the rain that falls not due to external causes but God's will. Nursi strengthened his interpretation with the proposition of the QS. Hūd (11): 123, which states that everything returns to Allah.⁴⁰ Second, in QS. al-Ra'd (13): 28, Nursi expressed an understanding opposite to its exoteric meaning that anxiety and fear are signs that humans need their Creator as a place where the peace rests.⁴¹ Third, in QS. al-Qaṣash (28): 88, Nursi expressed a meaning opposite to its exoteric meaning. He conveyed that the death of a creature is also a witness to the immortality of the Eternal Being.⁴² Fourth, in QS. al-Tīn (95): 4 and QS. al-Dhariyat (51): 20-21, Nursi described human weakness as a mirror that introduced God's strength, wealth, and mercy. He also mentioned the darkness of the human condition as the light at night and day and gained a point of support in Allah Swt.⁴³

Al-Qusayr and al-Sullamī also expressed understanding, the opposite of the exoteric meaning, to obtain the esoteric meaning in several verses. Al-Qusayr interpreted QS. al-Ra'd (13): 28 by stating that if a servant does not find peace in his heart by remembering

³⁸ Reflita dan Syatri, "Konstruksi Hermeneutika Tafsir Sufi," 194.

³⁹ Abi 'Abdillāh Muḥammad bin Ismā'il al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 1 ed. (Beirut: Dār Ibnu Kathīr, 2002), 1606; Abi Hasan Muslim bin al-Hajjaj bin Muslim al-Qushayri al-Naysaburi, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 2 ed. (Riyād: Dār al-Ḥaḍarah lil Anṣr wa al-Tawzi', 2015), 312.

⁴⁰ Nursi, *Al-Kalimāt*, 801-3.

⁴¹ Nursi, 777.

⁴² Nursi, 797.

⁴³ Nursi, 810.

reveal that although Allah wants to insult everything, He maintains all creatures with the clothes of creation and keeps insults away from His nature and words.⁴⁴ Al-Qusayr and Al-Sullamī's approach to interpreting the Qur'an showed their efforts to explore the esoteric and spiritual meaning hidden behind the exoteric meaning of these verses. Their approach prominently emphasizes equanimity, God's protection of His creatures, and the importance of contemplation and spiritual reflection. This reflects their efforts better to understand Islamic teachings and man's relationship with Allah. Hence, it can be implied that Nursi applied five methods of esoteric interpretation of *sufi mufassir*, including making external meaning the basis of analogy, substituting external meaning with inner meaning (equivalent analogy), explaining inner meaning by considering the context, strengthening interpretation with the evidence of the Qur'an and Sunnah, and expressing understanding that is opposite to the denotational meaning.

There are two main differences between Nursi and other commentators: his background from the *Naqshbandi Tariqa*, which emphasizes the practice of *dhikr*,⁴⁵ and the use of *asma' al-ḥusnā* in interpreting the Qur'an. Nursi always referred to the manifestation of *asma' al-ḥusnā* in all entities, especially in interpreting verses. Zaprukhān also stated that Nursi's interpretation always concerns Allah Almighty's name, nature, or actions.⁴⁶ Nursi even emphasized that the practice of *dhikr* and *wirid* is one of the practices of his order, especially reading *dhikr* after prayer.⁴⁷ In addition, Nursi differentiated himself in interpreting certain verses, such as QS. al-Sajdah (32): 7. While other commentators, such as al-Qusayr, tended to mention metaphysical things, such as the throne of Allah Swt, angels with their wings, and angels, Nursi focused on physical examples, such as birds with feathers, as the best of creation.⁴⁸ The author believes that Nursi's esoteric approach, especially in the context of meditation, is relevant because it emphasizes physical things that can be sensed rather than metaphysical things.

The Influence of Said Nursi in the World of Islamic Thought

Nursi's thought had a universal impact in various countries, primarily through the influence of his disciple, Nurculuk. One of Nursi's globally renowned disciples was Fethullah Gülen, a Turkish Muslim scholar known as a Sufi figure, preacher, and contemporary educator. The Gülen Movement, the movement he led, took inspiration from Nursi's concept of monotheism. Gülen's thought construction, especially in monotheism, is based on *al-hubb* or love, both vertically towards God and horizontally towards others, built on divine values.⁴⁹ Gülen said in his book: "God created the universe to manifest His

⁴⁴ Sulamî, *Haqâiqu al-Tafsîr: Tafsîr al-Qur'an al-Azîz*, 203.

⁴⁵ Amir Maliki Abitolkha dan Muhamad Basyrul Muvid, *Melacak Tarekat-Tarekat Muktabar di Nusantara*, vol. 1 (Kuningan: Goresan Pena, 2020), 37.

⁴⁶ Zaprukhān Zaprukhān, *Pengantar Filsafat Islam*, Cet.ke-1 (Yogyakarta: IRCiSoD, 2019), 127.

⁴⁷ Nursi, *Al-Kalimât*, 549.

⁴⁸ Nursi, 781.

⁴⁹ Ah. Fawaid, "Paradigma Sufistik Tafsir Al-Qur'an Bediuzzaman Said Nursi dan Fethullah Gülen," *Suhuf* 8, no. 1 (2015): 91-118, <https://doi.org/10.22548/shf.v8i1.16>.

love for His creatures, particularly humanity, and Islam became the fabric woven out of this love. In the words of Bediüzzaman, love is the essence of creation".⁵⁰

According to Gülen, love is the most critical aspect of human life, with the existence and essence of this world mainly depending on love.⁵¹ This concept was influenced by Nursi's Sufism values, which place love or *al-shafaqah* as the path to Allah. Nursi also associated Allah's names, such as *al-Rahmān*, *al-Rahīm*, and *al-Razzāq*, with the manifestation of Divine love in creation.⁵² In Gulen's interpretation, he also associates Allah's names, such as *al-Rahmān*, *al-Rahīm*, and *al-Razzāq*, with the manifestation of Divine love in creation. Inspired by Nursi, Gülen articulated monotheism by emphasizing the unity of all things as proof of Divine unity. Gulen's view of the role of love in human life, inspired by Nursi's Sufism values, shows a deep understanding of the relationship between humans, love, and God in the Islamic tradition. This view is essential to understanding the concepts of monotheism, Divine love, and unity in human life and the universe.

In the 1995 International Seminar, Sami' Afifi Hijāzī's article discussed three signs of Divine unity according to Nursi: the unity of all things, the order of the universe, and His power expressed figuratively. The critical point is that Nursi linked belief in Divine Oneness to human powers and abilities. According to Nursi, these signs encompass the unity inherent in all things, the harmonious order prevalent in the universe, and the figurative expressions of Divine power. What stands out in Hijāzī's discussion is Nursi's linkage of belief in Divine Oneness with human capacities and capabilities. Nursi's assertion implies that recognizing the unity and order in the universe and the manifestations of Divine power serves not only as a spiritual belief but also as a recognition of the inherent potential and abilities bestowed upon humans by the Divine. This perspective suggests a profound intertwining of faith and human agency, highlighting the importance of understanding Divine unity as a catalyst for realizing and harnessing human capabilities. Through this lens, Nursi's teachings offer a holistic framework that integrates spirituality with empowerment, emphasizing the interconnectedness between belief in the Divine and the potential for human growth and accomplishment.

Sa'ad al-Din Taftazani emphasizes that human knowledge is acquired through healthy senses, accurate information, and reason. He posits that the unity between humans' physical and spiritual dimensions and their collaboration leads to the maturity of personality and the perfection of beliefs.⁵³ Nursi's perspectives, along with the contributions of Taftazani, epitomize a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between the oneness of God, human knowledge, and the development of human character within the Islamic tradition. They underscore the significance of acknowledging the oneness of God in shaping human perspectives and behaviors while emphasizing the critical role of employing reason and senses to acquire genuine knowledge. Moreover, they

⁵⁰ M. Fethullah Gülen, *Toward A Global Civilization of Love and Tolerance* (New Jersey: The Light, 2004), 40, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203790694>.

⁵¹ Muhammad Said, "Rethinking Islamic Theology: Mengagas Teologi Sosial dalam Konteks Pluralisme dan Multikulturalisme," *Potret Pemikiran* 20, no. 1 (2016): 29–60.

⁵² Nursi, *Al-Kalimāt*, 549, dan 754.

⁵³ Sami' Afifi Hijazi, *Tawhid (The Affirmation of Diviny Unity) in Bediuzzaman's Thought* (Istanbul: Sozler, 1997), 77.

highlight the importance of unity between human development's physical and spiritual aspects, emphasizing the necessity of harmony in fostering spiritual growth and nurturing human character.

In addition, Hijāzī asserts that the Qur'an employs evidence that appeals to reason and the senses to instill belief in Divine unity and dispel doubts. Drawing inspiration from Nursi's *Rasāil al-Nūr*, Hijāzī's work adopts methods grounded in reality, human reasoning, and observations of the universe, fostering a connection between the physical and spiritual realms rather than focusing on abstract or lifeless concepts. Through this perspective, Hijāzī underscores the significance of utilizing reason, acknowledging reality, and recognizing the interplay between the physical and spiritual dimensions to strengthen faith. This pragmatic and holistic approach encourages individuals to cultivate a firm belief based on tangible experiences applicable to their everyday lives.

In the 1995 International Seminar, Muhammad Sa'id Ramadhan al-Buṭī⁵⁴ examined Nursi's involvement in the political sphere, highlighting three key aspects of his experience. Firstly, Nursi's foray into politics was driven by lofty ideals and self-respect, as he sought to engage with officials who held him in high regard. Secondly, Nursi ultimately withdrew from politics due to his unwavering sincerity and pure intentions, which he found to be incompatible with the political landscape and the demands of his mission of jihad. Thirdly, an important lesson emerges from Nursi's journey, emphasizing the importance of promoting comprehensive Islam and engaging in sincere da'wah without succumbing to the allure of politics or aligning with exclusive groups that marginalize others.⁵⁵ This analysis underscores Nursi's principled stance and commitment to his mission and the broader significance of maintaining integrity and inclusivity in religious activism and advocacy efforts.

Al-Buṭī's scholarly contributions regarding Nursi's engagement in political endeavors significantly expanded the scope of studies on Nursi's legacy despite his article not directly addressing monotheism. Through an analysis of al-Buṭī's study, it becomes evident that he possessed a profound comprehension of Nursi's intricate journey in advocating for Islamic principles through his involvement in politics. Al-Buṭī's examination shed light on Nursi's multifaceted roles within political spheres, revealing the depth of Nursi's commitment to advancing Islamic values across various domains. By delving into Nursi's political experiences, al-Buṭī's work provided valuable insights into Nursi's broader contributions to promoting and preserving Islamic ideals, underscoring the pivotal role Nursi played in championing Islamic values within the political arena. This comprehensive understanding of Nursi's endeavors in politics serves to enrich our appreciation of his enduring impact on the Islamic landscape, highlighting his enduring legacy as a proponent of Islamic principles in diverse contexts.⁵⁶

⁵⁴ M. Noor 'Ashry dan Umi Wasilatul Firdausiyah, "Pemikiran Sa'id Ramadhān Al-Būthī Terhadap Isu-isu Feminisme (Kajian atas Penafsiran Sa'id Ramadhān Al-Būthī terhadap Ayat-ayat Hijab, Kepemimpinan Perempuan, Hak Waris, dan Poligami)," *Jurnal Studi Al-Qur'an: Membangun Tradisi Berfikir Qur'ani* 18, no. 1 (2022): 111–33, <https://doi.org/10.21009/jsq.018.1.06>.

⁵⁵ Muflih dan Yusoff, "Bediuzzaman Said Nursi's Methodology in the Discourse of Moral Education in His Thematic Exegesis *Rasā'il Al-Nur*," 111–19.

⁵⁶ Sa'id Ramadhan al-Buthi, *Bediuzzaman Said Nursi's Experience of Serving Islam by Means of Politic*, t.t.

Nursi's influence on Indonesian thought seemed different from that in Türkiye. Azyumardi Azra stated that Nursi's name was not popular among Indonesian intellectuals.⁵⁷ In answering this, Andi Faisal Bakti mentioned several factors, including the limited dissemination of Nursi's works and the lack of translations into Indonesian in the first half of the 20th century. Moreover, Indonesian students are more interested in political activists' work than Nursi, who was more prominent as a cleric.⁵⁸ Azyumardi Azra's statement and Andi Faisal Bakti's answer about the influence of Nursi's thoughts in Indonesia highlight several factors that influence Nursi's lack of popularity in Indonesia, especially compared to Turkey. Several factors, such as the limited dissemination of Nursi's works, the lack of translations into Indonesian, and the lack of interest in the ulama's works in a political context, contributed to the lack of popularity of Nursi's thoughts in Indonesia. This showed the importance of increasing accessibility to Nursi's work and increased understanding and appreciation of his contributions in the context of Islamic scholarship and thought.

Some efforts have been made to introduce Nursi to Indonesia. The 2001 International Seminar and the 2002 International Conference became platforms to familiarize the Indonesian people with Nursi. Nursi's second-generation disciple, Hasbi Sen, founded the Nur Semesta Foundation in Indonesia in 2007 to spread Nursi's thoughts. Dershane, or study council at this foundation, showed the development of Nursi's influence on socio-religious aspects in Indonesia.⁵⁹ Analysis of the efforts made to introduce Nursi in Indonesia showed that concrete steps have been taken to increase the understanding and influence of Nursi's thoughts in Indonesia, such as through seminars, international conferences, and the establishment of foundations and study councils. These are essential steps in increasing understanding and influence of Nursi's thinking in Indonesia. This showed an awareness of the importance of Nursi's contribution to the context of Islamic thought in Indonesia and the efforts to expand its dissemination among society.

Several Indonesian intellectual figures also spread Nursi's thoughts. Andi Faisal Bakti, in his article "Good Deeds as Positive Actions in Nursi's Work", examined the concept of piety in the Qur'an by emphasizing the horizontal aspect of human interaction. Although it did not explicitly discuss the concept of monotheism, this article provided an appropriate Theo-anthropocentric contribution to the Muslims' needs.⁶⁰ From the analysis above, Andi Faisal Bakti contributed significantly to enriching the understanding of the concept of piety in Islam by emphasizing the horizontal aspect of human interaction. This reflects the relevance and need for Muslims to understand and apply religious values in everyday life. Hamid Fahmy Zarkasyi,⁶¹ In his article "Knowledge and Knowing in Islam," he compared Nursi's concept of knowledge with al-Attas' epistemology. Both agreed that a secularist and

⁵⁷ Azyumardi Azra, *Islam Nusantara, Jaringan Global dan Lokal*, Cet.ke-1 (Bandung: Mizan, 2002), 237.

⁵⁸ Parid Ridwanuddin, "Mendekatkan Said Nursi kepada Umat Islam Indonesia," *Dimuat di dalam kanal Risalah Press: <http://risalahpress.com/eko-teologi-dalam-pandangan-badiuzzaman-said-nursi/>*, 2015, 39–61.

⁵⁹ Edi Amin, "Konsep Komunitas dalam Pemikiran dan Dakwah Said Nursi," *Jurnal Komunikasi Islam* 05, no. 01 (2015): 27–50.

⁶⁰ Andi Faisal Bakti, Mashadi Said, dan Umar Halim, "Good Deeds as Positive Actions in Nursi's Work: Human Communication Perspective," *12th International BediUssaman Symposium* 18 (2020): 1–15.

⁶¹ Asep Sulaeman dkk., *Peran Tokoh Sosial Politik Agama di Indonesia*, 1 ed. (Bandung: Jurusan Bahasa dan Sastra Arab UIN Sunan Gunung Djati, 2022).

atheistic-naturalistic worldview influenced modern science. They connected the scientific process to rational and spiritual aspects and the primordial covenant between humans and God. Although there were differences in knowledge and the process of knowing, both showed a connection between intellectual and spiritual readiness.

Al-Attas used Muslim philosophers' approaches and believed that spiritual preparation would bring a person to a higher position (*maqām*), namely *al-Nafs al-Muthmainnah*. This highest achievement was the arrival of oneself at the level of acquired intellect (*'aql al-mustafad*), which is none other than the Holy Spirit (*al-'aql al-qudsi*). From this spiritual effort, humans can reach the level of the Holy Spirit and, from an intellectual perspective, attain acquired intellect. However, Al-Attas reminded humans that everything will return to Allah.⁶² Several vital points in this analysis included similarities in responding to the influence of the secular and atheistic world, the connection between the scientific process and rational and spiritual aspects, differences in the concept of knowledge and the process of knowing al-Attas's more philosophical approach, reminders of devotion to Allah. From the points above, this analysis comprehensively compared Nursi's concept of science and al-Attas' epistemology. Even though there were differences in approaches and concepts, both emphasize the importance of integration between rational and spiritual dimensions in the search for actual knowledge.

Muhammad Machasin, a professor in Islamic Cultural History, contributed views on Nursi in his article "Bediuzzaman Said Nursi and The Sufi Tradition". Nursi considered the Sufi tradition a valuable treasure of Islamic scholarship and identified Sufi teachings as incompatible with modern times. He emphasized that Sufi practice must be within the corridors of sharia and not abandon Islamic principles.⁶³ Muhammad Machasin's view of Nursi in the context of the Sufi tradition illustrates Nursi's respect for Islam's spiritual heritage while maintaining a critical and conservative attitude towards Sufi practices that are not by Islamic principles and modern times. This showed the complexity and relevance of Nursi's views in the context of Islamic religious and cultural developments.

Zuly Qodir, the author of a book about Muhammad Machasin, conveyed that Machasin's behavior, which was not "bossy" and tended to take care of him, was probably influenced by Nursi and the *Sadjaliyah* Sufism teachings he adhered to. Machasin practiced Nursi's concept of *al-'ajz*, where helplessness is shown only to Allah and not humans.⁶⁴ From the analysis above, Nursi's influence and *Sadjaliyah*'s Sufism teachings have helped shape Muhammad Machasin's behavior and approach to life, especially his dependence on Allah and his ability to take care of himself without being authoritarian towards others. This shows that spiritual teachings can profoundly impact a person's character and attitudes in everyday life.

Gus Dur, or Abdurrahman Wahid, applied Nursi's thoughts to Islamic education. Gusdur emphasized the importance of nurturing a generation of intelligent Muslims who possess modern technology and knowledge while embodying commendable morals. Gus

⁶² Hamid Fahmy Zarkasyi, "Knowledge and Knowing in Islam : A Comparative Study between Nursi and al-Attas," *GJAT* 8, no. 1 (2018): 31–41, <https://doi.org/10.7187/GJAT072018-3>.

⁶³ Machasin, "Bediuzzaman Said Nursi and The Sufi Tradition," *Al-Jami'ah* 43, no. 1 (2005): 1–21.

⁶⁴ Moch Nur Ichwan dan Ahmad Rafiq, *Agama, Kemanusiaan, dan Keadaban (65 Tahun Prof. Dr. KH. Muhammad Machasin, M.A.)*, 1 ed. (Yogyakarta: SUKA-Press UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, 2021), 48.

Dur acknowledged the contribution of Nursi and Fethullah Gülen in Turkey, which focused on the formation of noble morals in the education system.⁶⁵ Gus Dur quoted Nursi, saying that it was not necessary to establish an Islamic state directly. However, building a generation of Muslims with technological intelligence and modern knowledge was more important than upholding commendable morals. Gus Dur also believed that the moral vacuum in the Indonesian education system has led to violations and corruption; thus, learning from Nursi's and Gülen's experiences can help overcome the education crisis in Indonesia.⁶⁶ Based on this analysis, it can be concluded that Gus Dur or Abdurrahman Wahid's application of Nursi's thoughts in the context of Islamic education reflects efforts to integrate modern knowledge with Islamic moral values and awareness of the importance of forming an intelligent and noble generation in overcoming social and moral challenges faced by society.

Then, Gus Dur formulated a theory of character education by recognizing the importance of local wisdom, or Islamic indigenization. This concept made traditional norms a moral foundation and religious teachings a guide to life by the guidance of Allah SWT. Gus Dur implemented this concept in Islamic boarding schools, where religious knowledge was taught, and culture was respected as part of the teachings of the Islamic religion.⁶⁷ Although Gus Dur did not directly adopt Nursi's thoughts, the concept of character education he developed can be seen as a response to Nursi's thoughts. Similar to Nursi's success in developing an education system in Turkish culture,⁶⁸ Gus Dur attempted to adapt principles based on Indonesian culture. Analysis of Gus Dur's concept of character education reflects efforts to accommodate local cultural values in education and a response to the challenges and needs of education in Indonesia. Even though he did not directly adopt Nursi's thinking, the influence and relevance of Nursi's thinking in the educational context can be seen in Gus Dur's efforts to develop an education system based on Indonesian cultural values.

Nursi's influence in Islamic theological thought appears to have emerged internationally through Fethullah Gülen's theory of social monotheism and Hijazi's writing entitled "Tawhid: The Affirmation of Divine Unity in Badiuzzaman's Thought". However, Nursi's influence in Indonesia focused on education, communication, knowledge, and individual behavior. It was demonstrated by establishing a dersane in Ciputat before the end of the 21st century as concrete evidence of Nursi's socio-religious influence. Even though it is not directly visible in Islamic theological thought in Indonesia, Nursi's impact is still visible through various dimensions of social and religious life in the country.

⁶⁵ Alvian Muhammad dan Helmi Jacob, *Gus Dur Bertutur*, Cet.ke-1 (Jakarta: Harian Proaksi dan Gus Dur Foundation, 2005), 63.

⁶⁶ Fethullah Gulen Chair, *Mengenal Sosok Fethullah Gulen Chair* (Jakarta: UIN Syarif Hidayatullah, 2013), 76.

⁶⁷ Luk Luk Nur Mufidah, "Pemikiran Gus Dur Tentang Pendidikan Karakter dan Kearifan Lokal," *Al-Tahrir* 15, no. 1 (2015): 91–100.

⁶⁸ Emi Hariyanti dan Moh Roqib, "Relevansi Studi Integrasi Islam, Sains, dan Budaya Nusantara dalam Pendidikan Islam di Era Global," *Innovative: Journal of Social Science Research* 4, no. 1 (2024): 3240–52.

Conclusion

In short, this research obtained two critical points about Nursi's interpretation of monotheistic verses. First, Nursi's esoteric interpretation had similarities with other Sufi commentators, such as utilizing external meaning as a basis for analogy, combining external meaning with inner meaning, focusing on context, strengthening the interpretation with the evidence of the Qur'an and Sunnah, and expressing interpretations that are opposite to the denotational meaning. One significant difference from other Sufi commentators was Nursi's esoteric approach, which always provided sensory and physical examples and references to *asma al-husna* and its manifestations when interpreting the Qur'an.

Second, the influence of Nursi's interpretation of monotheistic verses could be seen in the international arena, influencing Fethullah Gülen in formulating the theory of social monotheism and Sami' Afifi Hijāzī in formulating the theory of the confirmation of Divine Oneness. However, in Indonesia, the influence of Nursi's thinking was more focused on education, communication, knowledge, and individual behavior. It was reflected in figures such as Abdurrahman Wahid, Andi Faisal Bakti, Hamid Fahmy Zarkasyi, and Machasin. Indonesian socio-religiousness also reflected Nursi's influence in establishing *dershane* in Ciputat before the end of the 21st century.

One of the limitations is that the research focuses on Nursi's interpretation of monotheistic verses within the context of Sufi commentary. Even though this research provides valuable insights into his approach and influence, it may overlook other dimensions of his thought and the broader context of his writings. Additionally, the study primarily examines the influence of Nursi's interpretations on specific individuals and contexts, such as Fethullah Gülen, Sami' Afifi Hijāzī, and Indonesian socio-religious movements. Further research could explore additional aspects of Nursi's impact and delve into the reception of his ideas in different cultural and religious contexts.

Based on the findings of this research, further research should expand the scope to encompass a more comprehensive analysis of Nursi's thought and its influence. This could involve examining Nursi's interpretations in comparison with other exegetical traditions within Islam and exploring the reception of his ideas in different regions and among diverse religious communities. Additionally, further research could investigate the practical implications of Nursi's teachings in contemporary society, particularly in addressing social, political, and ethical challenges. Moreover, efforts to promote dialogue and understanding between different religious groups could benefit from a deeper exploration of Nursi's ideas and their potential for fostering interfaith cooperation and harmony.

References

- Abitolkha, Amir Maliki, dan Muhamad Basyrul Muvid. *Melacak Tarekat-Tarekat Muktabar di Nusantara*. Vol. 1. Kuningan: Goresan Pena, 2020.
- Ahmad, Jumal. "Desain Penelitian Analisis Isi (Content Analysis)." *Jurnal Analisis Isi* 5, no. 9 (2018): 1-20.
- Amin, Edi. "Konsep Komunitas dalam Pemikiran dan Dakwah Said Nursi." *Jurnal Komunikasi Islam* 05, no. 01 (2015): 27-50.
- Amir, Ahmad Nabil, dan Tasnim Abdul Rahman. "Telaah Ringkas Kitab Risalah al-Nur Oleh Said Nursi." *Jurnal Kajian dan Pengembangan Umat* 6, no. 2 (2023): 186-93. <https://doi.org/10.31869/jkpu.v6i2.4905>.
- 'Ashry, M. Noor, dan Umi Wasilatul Firdausiyah. "Pemikiran Sa'id Ramadhān Al-Būthī Terhadap Isu-isu Feminisme (Kajian atas Penafsiran Sa'id Ramadhān Al-Būthī terhadap Ayat-ayat Hijab, Kepemimpinan Perempuan, Hak Waris, dan Poligami)." *Jurnal Studi Al-Qur'an: Membangun Tradisi Berfikir Qur'ani* 18, no. 1 (2022): 111-33. <https://doi.org/10.21009/jsq.018.1.06>.
- Ayathurrahman, Himmawan, dan Sadam Fajar Shodiq. "Integrasi Ilmu Agama-Sains Badiuzzaman Said Nursi dan Relevansinya dengan Pendidikan Agama Islam Era Digital di Indonesia." *Bulletin of Indonesian Islamic Studies (BIIS)* 2, no. 1 (2023): 1-18. <https://doi.org/10.51214/biis.v2i1.512>.
- Azra, Azyumardi. *Islam Nusantara, Jaringan Global dan Lokal*. Cet.ke-1. Bandung: Mizan, 2002.
- Bakti, Andi Faisal, Mashadi Said, dan Umar Halim. "Good Deeds as Positive Actions in Nursi's Work: Human Communication Perspective." *12th International BediUssaman Symposium* 18 (2020): 1-15.
- Bukhārī, Abī 'Abdillāh Muḥammad bin Ismā'il al-. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*. 1 ed. Beirut: Dār Ibnu Kathīr, 2002.
- Buthi, Sa'id Ramadhan al-. *Bediuzzaman Said Nursi's Experience of Serving Islam by Means of Politic*, t.t.
- Chair, Fethullah Gulen. *Mengenal Sosok Fethullah Gulen Chair*. Jakarta: UIN Syarif Hidayatullah, 2013.
- Desky, Luthfi Farhan. "Corak Tafsir Sufistik Badiuzzaman Said Nursi (Studi Tafsîr Kulliyât Rasâil Al-Nûr)." *Thesis*. Tesis, Pascasarjana UIN Raden Intan, 2021. http://www.theseus.fi/handle/10024/341553%0Ahttps://jptam.org/index.php/jptam/article/view/1958%0Ahttp://ejurnal.undana.ac.id/index.php/glory/article/view/4816%0Ahttps://dspace.uui.ac.id/bitstream/handle/123456789/23790/17211077_Tarita_Syavira_Alicia.pdf?

- Fahrudin, Ahmad. *Dasar-Dasar Metodologi Penelitian: Kompetensi dan Strategi Jitu Riset Peneliti*. Tulungagung: UIN Satu Press, 2020. <https://scholar.google.com/scholar?cluster=14627732572684782697&hl=en&oi=scholarr>.
- Fawaid, Ah. "Paradigma Sufistik Tafsir Al-Qur'an Bediuzzaman Said Nursi dan Fethullah Gülen." *Suhuf* 8, no. 1 (2015): 91–118. <https://doi.org/10.22548/shf.v8i1.16>.
- Fitrowan, Moh Salis. "Integrasi Agama dan Sains dalam Pendidikan Keimanan: Perspektif Rasail al-Nur Karya Said Nursi." *Tawazun: Jurnal Pendidikan islam* 16, no. 2 (2023): 299–316. <https://doi.org/10.32832/tawazun.v16i2>.
- Gülen, M. Fethullah. *Toward A Global Civilization of Love and Tolerance*. New Jersey: The Light, 2004. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203790694>.
- Hamka. *Tafsir Al-Azhar*. 6 ed. Singapura: Pustaka Nasional PTE LTD, 2001.
- Hariyanti, Emi, dan Moh Roqib. "Relevansi Studi Integrasi Islam, Sains, dan Budaya Nusantara dalam Pendidikan Islam di Era Global." *Innovative: Journal of Social Science Research* 4, no. 1 (2024): 3240–52.
- Haryanto, Sri. "Pendekatan Historis dalam Studi Islam." *Manarul Qur'an: Jurnal Ilmiah Studi Islam* 17, no. 1 (2017): 127–35. <https://doi.org/10.32699/mq.v17i1.927>.
- Hijazi, Sami' Afifi. *Tawhid (The Affirmation of Diviny Unity) in Bediuzzaman's Thought*. Istanbul: Sozler, 1997.
- Ichwan, Moch Nur, dan Ahmad Rafiq. *Agama, Kemanusiaan, dan Keadaban (65 Tahun Prof. Dr. KH. Muhammad Machasin, M.A.)*. 1 ed. Yogyakarta: SUKA-Press UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, 2021.
- Ikbal, M. "Memahami Agama dengan Pendekatan Esoterik." *Kalam: Jurnal Studi Agama dan Pemikiran Islam* 9, no. 1 (2015): 1–16. <https://doi.org/10.24042/klm.v9i1.317>.
- Iryansyah, Iryansyah. "Dimensi Esoterik dalam Penafsiran Ayat-Ayat Ibadah (Studi Analisis Terhadap Tafsir Syafahi KH. Ahmad Hasyim Muzadi)." Tesis, Pascasarjana Institut Ilmu Al-Qur'an, 2021. <http://repository.iiq.ac.id//handle/123456789/1263>.
- Kubrā, Najm al-Dīn al-. *Al-Ta'wilāt al-Najmiyyah fī Tafsīr al-Isyārī aṣ-Ṣūfī*. 1 ed. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyah, 2009.
- Machasin. "Bediuzzaman Said Nursi and The Sufi Tradition." *Al-Jami'ah* 43, no. 1 (2005): 1–21.
- Majeed, Shumaila. "An Analytical Study of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi's Intellectual Development and Composition of Risale-i Nūr (A Thematic Qur'ānic Exegesis)." *Journal of Islamic Thought and Civilization (JITC)* 10, no. 2 (2020): 170–89. <https://doi.org/10.32350/jitc.102.10>.
- Mufidah, Luk Luk Nur. "Pemikiran Gus Dur Tentang Pendidikan Karakter dan Kearifan Lokal." *Al-Tahrir* 15, no. 1 (2015): 91–110.

- Muflih, Betania Kartika, dan Dato' M.Y. Zulkifli Haji Mohd Yusoff. "Bediuzzaman Said Nursi's Methodology in the Discourse of Moral Education in His Thematic Exegesis Rasa'il Al-Nur." *Teologi* 24, no. 1 (2013): 21–43.
- Muhammad, Alvian, dan Helmi Jacob. *Gus Dur Bertutur*. Cet.ke-1. Jakarta: Harian Proaksi dan Gus Dur Foundation, 2005.
- Naysaburi, Abi Hasan Muslim bin al-Hajjaj bin Muslim al-Qushayri al-. *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*. 2 ed. Riyāḍ: Dār al-Ḥaḍarah lil Anṣr wa al-Tawzi', 2015.
- Nursi, Badiuzzaman Said. *Al-Kalimāt*. Disunting oleh Iḥsān Qāsim Al-Shālihī. 6 ed. Mesir: Syirkah Sozler li al-Nasyr, 2011.
- . *al-Mathnawí al-Nurí*. Istanbul: The Light, 2007.
- . *Jendela Tauhid*. Diterjemahkan oleh Fauzi Faisal Bahreisy. Jakarta: Anatolia, 2011.
- . *Risale-i Nur Kulliyatından*. Istanbul: Sozler, 1956.
- Okoli, Chitu, dan Kira Schabram. "A Guide to Conducting a Systematic Literature Review of Information Systems Research." *Communications of the Association for Information Systems* 37, no. 43 (2010): 879–910. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.1954824>.
- Pirdaus, Topik, dan Uyu Muawanah. "Pendekatan Historis dalam Studi Islam." *Jusma: Jurnal Studi Islam dan Masyarakat* 3, no. 1 (2024): 15–19. <https://doi.org/10.32699/mq.v17i1.927>.
- Purnomo, Didik. "Tafsir Kalimat Tauhid dalam al-Qur'an: Studi Tafsir Mafātih al-Gaib Karya Fakhruddin al-Rāzī." Thesis, UIN Sunan Ampel, 2016.
- Qushayrī, Imam Abil Qasim Abd al-Karim bin Hawazin bin Abd Malik al-. *Laṭā'if al-Isyārāt*. 2 ed. Beirut-Lebanon: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyah, 2007.
- . *Laṭā'if al-Isyārāt*. 3 ed. Lebanon: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyah, 2007.
- Reflita, Reflita, dan Jonni Syatri. "Konstruksi Hermeneutika Tafsir Sufi." *Mashdar: Jurnal Studi Al-Qur'an dan Hadis* 2, no. 2 (2020): 169–98. <https://doi.org/10.15548/mashdar.v2i2.1675>.
- Ridwan, Khoiru, Alfiana Nur Rahmah, Agus Susetyo, dan Muhammad Saifullah. "Pendekatan Historis dalam Studi Islam Tradisi Kenduri di Indonesia." *Jurnal Kajian Pendidikan Islam* 3, no. 1 (2024): 42–54. <https://doi.org/10.58561/jkpi.v3i1.79>.
- Ridwanuddin, Parid. "Mendekatkan Said Nursi kepada Umat Islam Indonesia." *Dimuat di dalam kanal Risalah Press: <http://risalahpress.com/eko-teologi-dalam-pandangan-badiuzzaman-said-nursi/>*, 2015.
- Rizal, Zarfi. "Dimensi Sufistik Said Nursi dalam Kulliyat Rasail An-Nur (Studi Terhadap Ayat-Ayat Tafakur)." Tesis, Pascasarjana Institut Ilmu Al-Qur'an, 2021. <http://repository.iiq.ac.id//handle/123456789/1578>.

- Sahin, Cemal. "Integrasi Ilmu Kalam dan Tasawuf Menurut Said Nursi dalam Tafsir Risâlah (Analisis Konsep Teospiritual dalam al-Quran)." *Disertasi*. Disertasi, Institut PTIQ, 2020. <https://repository.ptiq.ac.id/id/eprint/438>.
- Said, Muhammad. "Rethinking Islamic Theology: Mengagas Teologi Sosial dalam Konteks Pluralisme dan Multikulturalisme." *Potret Pemikiran* 20, no. 1 (2016): 29–60.
- Sartika, Elita. "Analisis Isi Kualitatif Pesan Moral dalam Film Berjudul 'Kita Versus Korupsi.'" *eJournal Ilmu Komunikasi* 2, no. 2 (2014): 63–77.
- Shihab, M. Quraish. *Tafsir Al-Misbah: Pesan, Kesan, dan Keserasian Al-Qur'an*. 8 ed. Jakarta: Lentera Hati, 2002.
- Sulaeman, Asep, Muhammad Ibrahim, Muhamamd Fa'iq Rusydi, Muhammad Azzahid Sukmana, Muhammad Dimas Al-Furqon, dan Muhammad Dzikrulsyah. *Peran Tokoh Sosial Politik Agama di Indonesia*. 1 ed. Bandung: Jurusan Bahasa dan Sastra Arab UIN Sunan Gunung Djati, 2022.
- Sulamî, Abû Abdurrahmân al-. *Haqâiqu al-Tafsîr: Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Aziz*. 2 ed. Beirut-Lebanon: Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyah, 2001.
- Syauqi, Muhammad Labib. "Mengenal Risalah Nur Karya Said Nursi dan Metodologi Penafsirannya." *Maghza* 2, no. 1 (2017): 109–24. <https://doi.org/10.24090/maghza.v2i1.1547>.
- Vahide, Sukran. *Islam in Modern Turkey (an Intellectual Biography of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi)*. Disunting oleh Ibrahim M. Abu Rabi'. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2005.
- Zaprul Khan, Zaprul Khan. *Pengantar Filsafat Islam*. Cet.ke-1. Yogyakarta: IRCiSoD, 2019.
- Zarkasyi, Amal Fathullah. *Dirāsah fî 'Ilmi al-Kalām Tārikhu al-Mazāhib al-Islāmiyyah wa Qaḍāyāhā al-Kalāmiyyah*. Cet. ke-6. Ponorogo: UNIDA Gontor Press, 2020.
- Zarkasyi, Hamid Fahmy. "Knowledge and Knowing in Islam : A Comparative Study between Nursi and al-Attas." *GJAT* 8, no. 1 (2018): 31–41. <https://doi.org/10.7187/GJAT072018-3>.