

نشر به علمی

## قرآن و روشنگری دینی

«مقاله پژوهشی»

# گفتمان‌های مؤثر در شکل‌گیری نوآوری‌های تفسیری در دو سده اخیر

مرضیه میرزایی<sup>۱</sup>، مهدی مهریزی<sup>۲\*</sup>، سید محمدعلی ایازی<sup>۳</sup>

### چکیده

نظریات تفسیری، معرفت بشری شامل فهم انسان از کلام الهی است. و هیچ نظریه‌ای در خلا شکل نمی‌گیرد. وقایع و جریان‌های مبرز در جامعه اعم از سیاسی، فرهنگی، گفتمان‌هایی را در جامعه ایجاد می‌کند. در سده اخیر رویدادهای اجتماعی چون ورود مارکسیسم و لیبرالیسم و ناسیونالیسم و دیگر مکاتب و تشکیل نهادهای بین‌المللی و حقوق بشری و رخدادن اصلاح‌گرایی دینی، مبارزه با استعمار در کشورهای اسلامی، و غیره، گفتمان‌هایی در جامعه ایجاد کرد که موجب تغییر نگرش‌های علمی و علوم انسانی و اسلامی و به تبع آن تفسیر قرآن داشت. این گفتمان‌ها در نسبت با تفسیر سنتی چهارده قرن گذشته، به شکل تفسیر بازاندیشانه یا نواندیشانه روی داد و از با توجه به ادعای جاودانگی قرآن، این جاودانگی و امدار تناسب آن با زمانه است و تفسیر و خوانش قرآن عهده‌دار این به‌روزآوری است. لذا این نوشتار تلاش می‌کند، با استمداد از مباحث اجتماعی و نگرش تحلیلی به گفتمان‌های مؤثر در سده‌های اخیر پرداخته و انعکاس این گفتمان‌ها و نظرات جدید و نوآورانه مفسران و محققان به شکل مصداق‌های عینی از تأثیر این گفتمان‌ها بسنجیم. مهم‌ترین گفتمان‌های منتخب؛ گفتمان اصلاح‌گری دینی و بازگشت به قرآن، گفتمان مکاتب جدید و ایسم‌ها، گفتمان علوم تجربی بود. البته گفتمان‌های مؤثر دیگری قطعاً وجود دارد که در این نوشتار مجال پرداختن به آن نیست. هدف از این پژوهش دستیابی به خودآگاهی در تفسیرهای گفتمان محور و تلاش برای مفهومی‌کردن گفتمان‌هاست. و سعی در ارائه چارچوبی برای بخشی از عوامل مؤثر در نوآوری تفسیری است.

### واژه‌های کلیدی

نوآوری تفسیری، "گفتمان"، "اصلاح‌دینی"، "مکاتب بشری"، "تفسیر علمی".

۱ دانشجوی دکتری علوم قرآن و حدیث، دانشکده حقوق، الهیات و علوم سیاسی، واحد علوم و تحقیقات، دانشگاه آزاد اسلامی، تهران، ایران.  
۲ دانشیار، گروه تربیت قرآن، دانشگاه آزاد اسلامی، واحد علوم و تحقیقات، تهران، ایران.  
۳ استادیار گروه علوم قرآن و حدیث، دانشکده حقوق، الهیات و علوم سیاسی، واحد علوم و تحقیقات، دانشگاه آزاد اسلامی، تهران، ایران.

نویسنده مسئول:

مهدی مهریزی

رایانامه: [m-mehrizi@srbiau.ac.ir](mailto:m-mehrizi@srbiau.ac.ir)

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# Quran and Religious Enlightenment

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## ORIGINAL ARTICLE

### Effective Discourses in the Formation of Interpretive Innovations during Last Two Centuries

Marziyeh Mirzayi<sup>1</sup>, Mehdi Mehrizi<sup>2\*</sup>, Seyed Mohammad Ali Ayazi<sup>3</sup>

1 PhD student of Quran and Hadith Sciences Candidate of Law, Islamic Azad University, Sciences and Research Branch, Tehran, Iran

2 Associate Professor, Department of Training the Qur'an, Islamic Azad University, Sciences and Research Branch, Tehran, Iran..

3 Assistant Professor, Department of Qur'an and Hadith Sciences, Faculty of Theological Law and Political Sciences, Islamic Azad University, Sciences and Research Branch, Tehran, Iran

#### Correspondence

Mehdi Mehrizi

Email: [m-mehrizi@srbiau.ac.ir](mailto:m-mehrizi@srbiau.ac.ir)

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#### ABSTRACT

Exegetical theories of human knowledge include human understanding of the divine word. No textual theory is formed in a vacuum. The prominent events and currents in the society, both political and cultural, create discourses in the society. Social events such as Marxism, liberalism, nationalism and other schools, the formation of international institutions and human rights, the occurrence of religious reformism, the fight against colonialism in Islamic countries, etc. during the last century created discourses in the society that caused changes in scientific attitudes and human and Islamic sciences, and then, the interpretation of the Qur'an. Compared to the traditional interpretation of the past fourteen centuries, these discourses placed in the form of a re-thinking or new-thinking interpretation. According to the claim of the immortality of the Qur'an, this validity is responsible for its relevance to the times. The interpretation and reading of the Qur'an is responsible for this update. Therefore, this article tries to refer to the effective discourses in recent centuries with the help of social issues and analytical approach and to measure the reflection of these discourses and the new and innovative opinions of commentators and researchers in the form of concrete examples of the impact of these discourses. The selected discourses are the discourse of religious reformation and return to the Qur'an, the discourse of new schools and isms, and the discourse of experimental sciences. However, there are definitely other effective discourses that cannot be discussed in this article. The purpose of this research is to gain self-awareness in discourse-oriented interpretations and attempt to conceptualize discourses. It is an attempt to provide a framework for some of the effective factors in interpretive innovation.

#### KEYWORDS

Interpretive Innovation, Discourse, Religious Reform, Humanitarian Schools, Scientific Interpretation

## 1. Introduction

Interpretations of the Holy Qur'an are one of the most basic genres of writing Islamic books from the early centuries of Islam. In the belief of Muslims, the Prophet of Islam was the first interpreter of the Qur'an; As Ubay ibn Ka'b from the class of Sahaba and Ibn Abbas from the class of Tabi'in had tied their first interpretations to the hadith of the Prophet. Tafsir, like other Islamic sciences, has had various inclinations over the centuries. Some interpretations do not have any new points and have repeated what the predecessors have said. They have been stagnant. Meanwhile, innovative and different interpretations have also written. In response to these changes, some thinkers have presented innovative words in interpretation, which have innovative and creative ideas arising from genius and scientific ability and combined with the awareness of the time.

Today's Muslim was looking for answers to his questions from the text of the Holy Book through interpretation. Issues such as human rights, equality, social justice, freedom, women's rights, the relationship between religion and government needed to be answered and reconsidered. The interpreters of the Qur'an in the contemporary era tried to eliminate such gaps in this area. Therefore, interpretations have actually gone beyond the academic and scientific areas of students of religious sciences and reached the libraries of the general public. Most of the educated people, even if they do not read the commentaries completely, in cases where a question and problem involves the minds of individuals or the community, they explore the commentaries to find the true opinion of the Qur'an. Also, in the most important social events, they have benefited from the guidelines of the Qur'an in its educational and guidance aspects and have written short, comprehensive or concise

commentaries. The prevalence of writing commentaries in the official languages of their countries, such as Persian and Urdu, also shows the change in the audience level of commentaries.

In the 14<sup>th</sup> century of Hijri, following cultural, political and social events, there was a change in interpretation. Progress in sciences, including humanities, also changed the attitude towards the science of interpretation, and so new interpretations with different opinions were formed in various fields. The tradition of Muslim interpretation during the past centuries had advanced theological, jurisprudential, Sufi, and philosophical approaches. In these two centuries, only commentaries that were popular and had a new message revealing a new layer for a better understanding of the Qur'an, are under the high attention. The formation of new interpretative opinions, including reformist, political, scientific, and interpretative with an emphasis on science, was the result of the spread of common discourses in Muslim societies. These discourses in the new era and the encounter of Muslims with modernity exposed them to a dream with issues that the understanding of these issues with the teachings of the Qur'an became important. Therefore, delving into this process will definitely help the path forward in the interpretation and comments of the commentators.

In the interpretations of the new centuries, many people with different knowledge dared to write and were not afraid of the accusation of self-interpretation. Before, only jurists and writers were allowed to interpret the Qur'an, while in these centuries we saw the emergence of commentators who had knowledge other than Islamic sciences and were influential in creating innovations. An example of this movement was Bazargan and Sahabi. Bazargan discovers new concepts of the Qur'an with the

tools of science of history and calculations in the book of *A Glance at the Evolution of the Qur'an*. Sahabi, with a geological education, also deals with the interpretation of the verses on the creation of man in the Qur'an, or the Eskandarani, a physician of the experimental scientists from Alexandria, concerned the conflict between the readings of science and religion. He has done extensive research and tried to match these researches with religious findings, showing the advancement of Muslims in fourteen centuries ago, whose examples are mentioned below. The new commentators have broken the literary fence of interpretation in the form of a series of bulky books. They did not observe its structure in monographs or even indirectly. However, the preservation of the literary form of interpretation in the order of the Ottoman Mushaf still exists. Even some works that caused innovation in interpretation, were not basically interpretative books. For example, one may point to the books of Shahid Sadr, Master Motahari, and many Qur'anic monographs.

All the events of a society including political, social, scientific, and cultural events will create discourse. Discourses will always have their spiritual and effective ability. Some common discourses in the last two centuries were influenced by the industrial progress of powerful societies, which encouraged Muslim societies to discover their identity and display their possessions. Among these actions, reactions, cultural, scientific, and social interactions, the knowledge of interpretation was not left out; Because in the realm of ideas and opinions, it is also important to consider what issues should be considered in the interpretation so that while using the verses of the Qur'an and divine commands, they can also benefit from the achievements of human knowledge without intellectual or cultural domination.

In the following, an attempt will be made to answer the question that although we generally know that in the last two centuries, the developments and modern discourses have caused the formation of interpretative innovations, but can we improve our knowledge about the influence of each category by presenting a more detailed classification and introducing each of these categories? Accordingly, this article will show the most important discourses affecting interpretive innovations fall into four categories: anti-colonial and anti-authoritarian discourses, discourses arising from humanist schools and isms, discourses influenced by experimental sciences, and religious revival and reform discourse based on the return to the Qur'an.

Regarding the innovations of interpretations and new interpretive opinions, few references have been made in articles and books. They have often paid attention to the features of the commentator or interpretation and its innovative aspects. In some works, they have mentioned a few factors and reasons for these new opinions. Also, in the books that refer to the cultural and social events of Muslim societies, including the beginning of religious reformism, the return to the Qur'an, Islamic awakening, and the independence of colonized Islamic countries, there are references to the intellectual and cultural evolution of Muslim societies, while to the formation of discourses and the impact of these discourses in Tafsīr and Qur'anic studies are not mentioned directly. Among these books are "A Glance at Arab Thought" by Hamid Enayat, "International Islamic Awakening" by Khoshmanesh, and other works that depict the cultural and social situation of Muslim countries. However, none of them directly pay attention to the influence of these discourses on the interpretations of the Qur'an. Therefore, from the researcher's point

of view, this article seeks to pay attention to a new issue by analyzing and exemplifying this effect.

## **2. Anti-colonial, anti-authoritarian political discourses**

Considering that all the Islamic lands from North Africa to Indonesia were mostly colonized by Christian countries, the religion of Islam and Muslim scholars became defensive. Therefore, the anti-colonial characteristics of the colonized nations and peoples of these lands affected on Islamic scholars and commentators.

The political behavior of the innovative commentators shows that most of them were fighting colonialism. Although some of them were conservative and moderate, mostly they sought to achieve an Islamic government and a type of religious government that is compatible with science and reason. The observation of various contradictions in social and economic life, the prosperity of industries and commerce, the awareness of the intellectual minority and the ignorant majority, the interests of urbanization, and the competition between European countries created a wide-ranging identity crisis in the Islamic society. "In such a situation, a small group of educated people, as they saw the difference between what they had seen and read and the bitter realities of people's lives, became zealous and wrote books and articles that shook people's thoughts. This is how Cairo became the center for the Arab movement" (Enayat, 2017: 15). Egypt became the leader of this trend. In Egypt, the formation of the Muslim Brotherhood with the founding of thinkers such as 'Abduh and Rashid Reza in the religious field and the interpretation as well as the leadership of Hasan al-Banna in the political dimension, were able to awaken the youth. This movement also created a new cultural and religious discourse in the society; 'Abduh

clarified that the Qur'an contains all personal, social, family, governmental, and international affairs and laws. "The Muslim Brotherhood has played a significant role in the Islamic and national developments of Egypt for several decades. According to reports, in those years, the Muslim Brotherhood was considered a great source of education in the ideology of fighting against the West and the most effective center for attracting young people from Arab countries to revolutionary groups. A group whose influence was once limited to the Palestinian and Jordanian neighbors of Egypt or the North African region, expanded its branches to Southeast Asia and the heart of Europe and began a new round of its life in the role of a large trans-regional movement." (Khoshmanesh, 2010: 221) Napoleon's invasion to Egypt in 1798 was the beginning of the westernization of Egyptians. If there is any doubt about the influence of Napoleon or France on the social reforms of Egyptians, there is no doubt about the influence of French civilization and culture on the cultural life and orientation of Egypt towards the West. "Along with Napoleon's army, a demonstration of Western art and craft reached Egypt. Including the printing industry, which soon published many works of Arabic and Islamic literature and culture in Egypt and strengthened the collective sense, self-confidence and ethnic and cultural pride of Egyptians. In addition to translation, the writings of Western political and social thinkers became available to literate people and introduced them to aspects of European thought" (Enayat, 2017: 23). The bitter memories of the occupation of Egypt by France and the history of Egyptian uprisings did not prevent French cultural and scientific influence on Egypt. The first nation that sought independence was Egypt and the first religious changes, including the interpretation of the Qur'an, also began in Egypt.

In Iran, one of the most important political and social events was the roots of Constitutionalism and the emergence of the *Shawrā*. At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, in the last years of the Qajar dynasty, we witnessed glimpses of political and social changes. Iran was not a colony of any country, but practically experienced a situation similar to semi-colonized countries; Because it was under the economic and political domination of England and Russia. The Iranian-Russian wars and the bitter memory of defeat had hurt the feelings of Iranians and led to the tobacco movement (1890) and the demand for the Constitution and its approval. This social model later increased in the struggles of Ayatollah Mahmoud Kashani and Dr. Mosadegh and the nationalization of the oil industry. *Fada'ian-e Islam* was also formed based on existing Islamic and Qur'anic discourses. Whispers of freedom were heard and Constitutionalism was sprouting. The students of Mirza Shirazi, including Akhund Khorasani and Mirza Mohammad Hossein Na'ini, were attracted to Sayed Jamal's thoughts, and social events were formed based on Islamic and Qur'anic opinions. During the Tobacco Movement and the closing of the parliament by the Russians, Akhund Khorasani went as far as issuing a Jihad decree and the first song of Shi'a Jihad against oppressor Sultan began. Such social events lead the commentators of the Qur'an to a new look from the angles of social events and being conscious to society's issues. Constitutionalism was an event due to a new interpretation of the verses of the *Shawrā* in the Qur'an, and the fight against tyranny was a manifestation of the verses of anti-tyranny against the invaders. "Iranian intellectuals gradually got to know the modern cultural characteristics of the West through Russia, Ottoman, India, and Egypt from the last decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The

Constitutional Revolution in 1906 led to the approval of the Constitutional Law and caused fundamental changes in culture. Economic modernism, which was followed later during the reign of Reza Shah and after the First World War, was another factor that accelerated the course of cultural modernism in Iran" (Pakatchi, 2017: 2).

In Lebanon, Imam Musa al-Sadr founded the movement of the dispossessed in Beirut by referring to the Qur'an and Islamic instructions. The Hamas Movement was also formed with the support of the Muslim Brotherhood and became an organization to eliminate poverty and organize the affairs of Palestinians. Mohammad Baqir Sadr in Iraq also became the founder of new interpretation theories during this period.

### 3. Social discourses of schools and isms

One of the most important social phenomena in the societies of the last two centuries is the emergence of new humanistic schools or the so-called isms. One of the characteristics of the emergence of isms is the creation of discourses in favor or against them. The motives of Muslims in understanding the Qur'an had changed. Schools such as socialism, Marxism, imperialism, nationalism, and feminism also appeared. Western colonialism had put Muslim nations and tribes in a new situation. Especially in the last century, Arab nationalism was mixed with Islam and the common language and religion had brought different nations together as the Arab nation under the banner of anti-colonial nationalism. In Iran, in the last one hundred years, these tendencies have sometimes been seen in the religious system (Jezni, 2002). The basic nature of these names is secular. The issue that "how they can be combined with the Islamic suffix and indicate the intellectual viewpoint of a certain group of

religious people?" is not included in the scope of this article, but it is necessary to explain. Basically, religious categories do not agree with such non-divine schools, but because when a discourse is formed in a society, the society inevitably moves towards it. Social and economic necessities make it mandatory to reconsider some matters. Perhaps at first it is possible to resist such discourses in the society and insist on the old and social tradition in religious affairs and resistance to changes, but finally no society can completely resist revisionism, endure, and submit to some of these reformist affairs. Under the influence of these social developments, the intellectuals of Islamic societies believed in the stagnation of some orders of Islam and paid attention to the necessity of its compliance with these requirements and considered the tendency to reform and modernism in Islam as necessary to preserve and continue the life of religion.

In such a situation where the discourse of isms was formed, the effect of these discourses appeared in several aspects. In order to attract the audience of these discourses, Islamic societies tried to take some positive points and correct teachings of these schools, gave them Islamic color, and rejected and violated or ignored the negative points of these schools. The first step is to fail to recognize some basic principles that the tradition of interpretation of the ancients understood from the Qur'an. The interpretation of the verses and content of the Qur'an in a philosophical way, that is, the language of the Qur'an, became completely an allegorical language, and the gap of fourteen centuries in the evolution of human society, i.e. the gap between the primitive Arabs and the Arabian Peninsula, was filled. The second step of prohibitions and sanctities of religion is justified by appealing to science, and experimental sciences play the role of theology

of the early centuries in explaining the verses. The efforts are made to bring out verses from the Qur'an that are adapted to the progressive social tendencies of our age. In the action and reaction of the schools, some reformers and commentators of the Qur'an, according to the conditions of the times, became the hosts of the ideas of Isms, and an emerging phenomenon was formed to get rid of the weakness and backwardness of the Muslim societies. While trying to clarify the deviations of these thoughts and ideologies, the Qur'anic interpretation tried to attract the audience of these schools, and the radiation of this emergence is visible in some interpretations of this period.

Thinkers and Qur'an scholars in the Islamic society to deal with nationalism, Marxism, and Western liberalism started working. One of the common terms in this era is nationalism or patriotism. It seems that there is no conflict between patriotism and religiosity at first glance and everyone can adhere to their religious obligations and love their fellow countrymen, but where the view of the united nation of the Islamic world conflicted with the view of nationalism, commentators and religious scholars struggled. Is religion supposed to be a tool to serve political or national ideals, or is the country a tool for religious ideals? Some had a completely self-interested view. These kinds of perceptions caused some people to doubt the purity of religion. Nationalism first appeared in Arab and Egyptian forms and was influential in the views of some commentators such as 'Abduh and Rashid Reza. The Muslim Brotherhood movement also became prominent in opposition to the discourse of Arab nationalism. In any case, following these discourses, the writing of the commentary was accompanied by creativity. Just as the popular discourse of the time was effective in interpretation, the interpretation was

also effective in the religious attitude of people and society. Creating a sense of patriotism, nationalism, and pan-Arabism in Arab countries, including Egypt, gained strength. Three important and continuous movements had been formed in Egypt: "First, the movement of those who, based on their faith and patriotic feelings, considered following foreigners to the detriment of Egypt. Second, the movement of those who demanded a constitutional government. Third, the movement of the Egyptian army, which desired to get out of the rule of Ottoman Turkish officers. These three movements were united with the support of Tawfik and by the hands of Arabi Pasha, who practically led the government of Egypt, and won" (Enayat, 2018: 44). If we are looking for a sign of these discourses in Tafsīr, most of the influences would be considered in opposition to this school. The establishment of the Muslim Brotherhood and its religious representatives, most of whom were Rashid Reza and 'Abduh and their students, was therefore a fundamental issue that Arab nationalism is not preferable to Islamism. Additionally, Muslims should strive to elevate the commands of the Qur'an and return to authentic Islam, as Tafsīr al-Manār may be a sign of such Islamism. Apart from the efforts of Arab nationalism theorists to resolve the conflict between Islam and nationality, based on the perspective of Islam, Muslims in the whole world are a single nation with a common identity. While rejecting the idea of Arab nationalism, Islam states that in the Qur'an, most of the addresses are to the general public on earth. The Qur'an does not address "Arabs" or alike. Islamism among the masses also prevailed over pan-Arabism and nationalism, which can be seen in the spread of Islamic movements, including the Muslim Brotherhood.

**Marxism and Socialism** were other schools of this era. The uprisings of intellectuals in 1941 and the growth of Marxism by the Soviet government in Iran along with the occupation of northern Iran during World War II created negative feelings towards the Soviet Union among Iranians. Therefore, Marxists never found a prominent position in Iran, and popular movements often were led by clerics and Islamist and nationalist movements. The process of trusting the clergy in political currents continued from 1941 to the Islamic Revolution of Iran and was a manifestation of the Islamist movement. These political currents were reflected in the works of commentators of the time. In fact, three religious, national, and Marxist thoughts during this period caused the creation of different forms of Qur'anic interpretations. Marxist thought appeared in the Islamic left.

In Iran, Seyed Mahmoud Taleghani (1910-1980) was one of the social reformers. His audience was the young generation and his goal was to provide a social, political, and moral model for life. His Commentary of Glimpse of the Qur'an is very simple and free of any complexity, which has even appeared in the discussion about the meanings of words and literary styles (Pakatchi, 2008).

He believed that everything we understand from the Qur'an is only a ray of truth. It is not possible to understand the depths of its truths, and the progress of science and time can little by little uncover the secrets of the Qur'an (Taleghani, 1985). Taleghani's comments can be seen as an example of the Islamic left. Taleghani himself was a political figure and fought with an Islamic approach. He believed that the Qur'an should rule all affairs like the first half century of Hijri. He believed that the Qur'an is ahead in social justice. Except for Seyed Mahmoud Taleghani, Mohammad Taghi



Shariati has also clearly shown his affiliation to the trend of confrontation with the discourse of isms in his new interpretation. His concern about the intellectual deviations of society, Marxist and materialist thoughts, the youth's distance from the authentic Quranic teachings, and his attention to the political and social issues of the age, such as the issue of Western colonialism and the induction of various speeches and lessons centered on the social issues of Islam and with a Quranic approach, in addition to the writing of the commentary with the style and context of other rationalist social commentaries, proves the importance of this trend. As an example, Taleghani raises the issue of ownership in several places in his commentary. While he rejects the communist system and introduces Islam in favor of social justice, he tries to convince the socialist audience that Islam has positive points in these schools. "The oppressed" (*istid'āf*) finds an economic and political meaning in his interpretation, as his interpretation reflects the way of socialist social governance. However, he clearly admits that the system of Islam and the Qur'an is much more successful than the Marxist one. It talks a lot about freedom. Despite paying attention to the freedom that the Qur'an has brought, he criticizes freedom and liberalism, which has been stretched to limitless expansion and vulgarity under its slogan. He considers the true value of freedom only under the banner of Islam, and opposes freedom to polytheism. He highlights equality and other human rights, which all originate from monotheism. He considers tyranny and colonialism to be against monotheism and polytheism. In the interpretation of the verse "*Lā Ikrāha fī Al-Dīn*" he wrote a lot about the freedom of religious belief. He provides political and social commentary not only under the social verses, but even in jurisprudential and

ideological verses. In the discussion of piety, he explains social piety and the general structure of the social class. He has introduced three classes, each of which enjoys freedom within its own limits and should not enter into other classes. He considers justice to respect the limits of others, and that each class should benefit from the right material and spiritual capital. According to him, not respecting one's class will cause disturbances in society (Taleghani, 1985).

He interprets Marxist literature, proposing the opinions of Marx and Darwin regarding the origin of evolution, natural needs, conflict in survival, and adapting to the environment and basic survival. He rejects materialism and naturalists by referring to the verses of creation and human creation. Taleghani also challenges hypocrisy through the criterion of Marxist literature. He considers the elite class to be proud of their financial or intellectual power and infected with class, racial, and ethnic prejudices, who consider the classes below them to be stupid and gullible, and whose energies are directed at mocking and finding fault with others. Another example of talking about the class society is in the interpretation of "property", which is considered to include possession, planning, and attracting leadership. He writes that the property is from God, otherwise every non-God property will struggle from the society and in the opposite class of the ruler. Finally, the opposing forces will become empty and alienated from themselves, vulnerable, and the property and honor with all its accessories will be taken away (Taleghani, 1985). However, Iran's reform movement has witnessed other efforts by Seyed Mohammad Hossein Tabātabā'ī, the author of *Al-Mīzan Commentary* and Morteza Motahari. Later, issues such as religious pluralism, secularism, religious authority, and shawrā' in the religious

government were frequently discussed and explored in interpretations. Newer names and discourses surrounding them found their way to new interpretations and were often accompanied by innovations in interpretations. A look at the interpretations of Al-Mīzan, Tasnīm, and Al-Furqān under the verses of Shawrā' and Reluctance in Religion shows the interpretations influenced by the discourses in society.

The school of socialism or the Arabic equivalent of communalism is a ritual that causes harmony and social cooperation. Shimel was one of the first Arab writers who used and popularized this term. He considered socialism to be a set of ideas that have been proposed by sages for reforming mankind since the beginning of history (Shimel Shibli, p. 154, quoted in Enayat, 2018). Shimel did not cut his ties with his old society and adhered to Islamic values. Although Shimel was a Christian, he was one of Sayed Jamaluddin's friends and students. Sayed Jamal himself was accused of spreading socialist ideas. However, Sayed himself considered the reason for such accusations to be a difference in support for Tawfik and his rival (ibid). The growth of socialist discourse in the Muslim community was also evident in Tafsīr. Islamic fundamentalism was formed in interpretation opinions due to confrontation with isms and new interpretations emerged in Islamic countries.

Sayed Qutb (1324-1384 AH) is initially an example for the Islamic left or the Islamic Marxist. He considered the approximation and assimilation of elements of political and social thought such as Shawrā', democracy, and freedom with Qur'anic teachings (As'adi et al., 2010). Sayed Qutb was influenced by the discourse of existing schools. However, at the end of his life, he became a symbol of Islamic

fundamentalism. Qutb's approach to interpretation was highly political, and many of his opinions were controversial. He considered many aspects of modern society to be ignorance and did not consider ignorance to be related to pre-Islam (Saeed, 2018). With a confrontational approach, he tried to prove that the positive points of these schools, such as anti-tyranny, equality, and justice, were already present in authentic and true Islam, and the other negative points of these schools are the continuation of pre-Islamic ignorance. Sayed Qutb tried to warn Muslims from imitation and superstition with his commentary. He was a political figure and despite ups and downs in his beliefs, he had finally turned into a radical personality. For example, regarding economic issues, he emphasizes that the Islamic economic system accepts individual ownership with conditions and is not a capitalist and liberal system because they forbid usury and hoarding, while the capitalist system does not prohibit usury and hoarding (Sayed Qutb, 2011). He had a critical stance towards the West and modernity, and in the political position, he thought more in favor of the left.

In addition to the Arab world, this trend also had fans in the Indian subcontinent. Translation of the Qur'an by Abul Kalam Azad and Tafhīm al-Qur'an by Abul Ali Maududi are examples of Ism discourses. Maududi belongs to the movement called fundamentalist. Maududi also theorizes in opposition to isms. His interpretative view was formed in response to liberalism and believes in returning to authentic Islamic traditions without any temptation to adapt them to human teachings. One of the most obvious characteristics of Maududi is his denial approach towards western phenomena. According to him, Islam is not constitutionalisms or liberalism. Islam is the only Islam and Muslims must decide to be pure

Muslims and avoid confronting the world over Islam and the requirements of their faith. Maududi emphasizes that Islam has many and diverse laws for the social and civil system and is beyond western and eastern ideologies, schools, and isms. Due to the influence of isms, despite trying to show the contrast between Islamic concepts and Western concepts, Maududi adopted ideas such as Islamic ideology, Islamic government, and Islamic revolution from the concepts of Western civilization. (Movahed, 2011). Tafhīm al-Qur'an by Maududi, who was the leader of Jamaat-e-Islami and who thought about the reform of society and the ideal of divine rule, and organized his commentary with the same political attitude, was written following existing discourses such as liberalism, democracy, or secularism.

In Lebanon, Mughnīyah also criticizes these schools. For example, regarding individual ownership, he says: "Islamic divine system considers the interest of all people, but this does not mean accepting or rejecting socialism in its famous sense; It only shows the idea of justice and equality. This issue is not the same as the abolition of individual ownership and the consolidation of group ownership" (Mughnīyah, 1424 AH: 473). Fadlullah also widely criticizes Western liberalism and capitalism (Fazlullah, 1399 AH).

Among other discourses was the materialist discourse and **materialism** that originated in this era. Sayed Ahmad Khan Hindi's interpretation is a clear example of such a view that everything that is immaterial and supernatural is condemned to be rejected and not accepted. He interprets the miracles of the prophets, the verses related to the jinn, and otherworldly matters in a completely material way. During this period, Sayed Jamal was in opposite side of Sayed Ahmad Khan, accusing

Sayed Ahmad Khan of Natureism which means naturalism and the originality of nature. With all these oppositions, if we put the opinions and thoughts of these two leaders together, there are many similarities: both of them were against superstitions and fought against the ideas that hindered their progress. Both of them sought to teach new sciences by Muslims and both were intellectuals.

Fazlullah is also influenced by the current discourses and, in clear contrast, he emphasizes the point that understanding the Qur'an is not possible through library studies and scientific records, but the interpreter of the Qur'an must interpret the verses gradually and in accordance with time requirements to understand the needs that happened to him. Fazlullah is the creator of Istihāī Style and believes that it is the only acceptable method. He criticizes liberalism and the capitalist system while interpreting verses.

**Feminism** was one of the emerging schools of the late centuries. Feminist interpretations criticize traditional patriarchal interpretations. Muslim feminists, unlike the secular ones, do not deny Islam itself, but by referring to the Qur'an and the prophetic tradition, they try to defend their claim, that is, the need to reinterpret the Qur'an. Some Qur'anic scholars wrote feminist monographs; Among them, Marnesi, Wadud, Nazeera Zainuddin, 'Asma' Barlas gained courage and often faced the opposition of traditional scholars. Barlas believes that the belief in inequality and patriarchy was included in the interpretation of the Qur'an in order to justify the existing social structures. In the book "Believing Women in Islam", she re-reads patriarchal interpretations of the Qur'an and concludes that the teachings of the Qur'an do not support patriarchy, rather, they are completely egalitarian (Saeed, 2018). Wadud's gender jihad, who believed that the Qur'an both frees and empowers women, was

influenced by the growth of feminism in the current era. These Muslim women wanted to remove the accusations against Islam of being anti-women. The movement for women's rights began with cautious steps. The equal rights of men and women and the determination to eliminate gender discrimination is the main demand of the women's movement and it can open its place in the fair reading of religion (Tofiqi, nd: 42). In addition to the feminists and their monographs, most of the modernist commentators also chose a new approach in the interpretation of the hijab verses and presented a different interpretation from the classical interpretations of the past. With the transformation and innovation in the interpretations, the interpretation of the hijab verses related to women also were changed. Mughnīyah says in the interpretation of the hijab verses: "the veiled women are known for their chastity and self-restraint. Hijab is a barrier between a veiled woman and the greed of a person of immorality and lust" (Mughnīyah, 1424 AH: 236).

Sadeghi Tehrani also says: Both believing women and believing maids must put on their clothes and what has been said about the ruling of free women is a class and racist superstition that is far from the realm of Islam. Hijab is to be known for chastity; It means that a veiled woman shows that she is not a person of dirt. Commentaries of the last two centuries have turned from the obligation to cover the face to the command of men's chastity. They turned from the imprisonment of women at home to the useful and chaste presence in society. In the past interpretations, words such as *Jilbāb*, *Mā Zahara*, *GhairUl al-Irbah*, *Al-Qawā'id min al-Nisā'*, *Zīnat* and their limits were very controversial, but following the discourse of feminism, they were examined and analyzed in a modern way. Sadeghi Tehrani says, if there

were no non-Qur'anic reasons for the obligation of hijab, we should say that hijab is not obligatory for chaste women. The most important benefit of hijab is its symbolic benefit that veiled women show through hijab that they are not untidy (Sadeghi Tehrani, 1406 AH). Commentaries reread the text of the Qur'an with a woman-centered approach. They believed that the dominance of men over women has kept the position of women in society at a lower level than men. In this discourse, the verses based on the supremacy of male leadership, guardianship, submission and subordination of women are deconstructed and new meanings based on the equality of men and women and the limitation of men's powers and the development of women's powers are formed (Bastani & Dastoori, 2007). Although these effects of school discourses sometimes led to good innovations, sometimes they suffered from anomalies such as scientism, materialism, extreme rationalism, expediency, and liberal interpretations. As Mehdi Bazargan was accused in returning to the Qur'an, he took liberal positions under the title of freedom, and Habibullah Paydar was accused of materialistic tendencies in the book *Philosophy of History from the Qur'anic Perspective*. Sayed Ahmed Khan Hindi also was accused of materialistic interpretations.

#### **4. The discourse of religious revival and reformism and returning to the Qur'an**

In recent centuries, Islamic reformism is tied to the life of Sayed Jamal, who stood against colonialism by trusting in the Qur'an. In the era of neglect and stagnation of the Islamic lands, he stood up and faced all kinds of problems of colonization and weakness of the Muslims without having any material facilities and support. He spread the passion of Islamic awakening in the Islamic lands. After him, a

group of reformers, each with a share, participated in this effort.

This discourse spread in Egypt, Iran, Lebanon, and Iraq. One of the most important motivations of contemporary thinkers in understanding the Qur'an is to meet special needs in the field of solving problems in today's life. Some religious reformers considered the Qur'an as a window for construction, responsibility creation, and movement. In a broader view, they considered the Qur'an to contain Islamic civilization and sovereignty. It is certain that he is making more efforts for a new understanding of the Qur'an.

By studying the works of Europeans, Sayed Jamal and 'Abduh were able to better understand the reasons for the backwardness of Muslims, and Sayed Jamal has also mentioned it in his treatise on the Truth of the Nicherian School (Asadabadi, 1298). The impact of the teachings of these thinkers made the reformers pay more attention to the relationship between reforming religious thought and reforming the political and social system. From studying the works of thinkers, he achieved two tasks: "One is to mix and reconcile new ideas with the foundations of Islamic thinking, and the other is to try to prevent breaking the chains of imitation and prejudice, becoming a source of irreligion and weak moral principles" (Enayat, 2018: 130).

In the 14<sup>th</sup> century, when Sayed Jamal carried the banner of awakening and reforming Muslims, various incidents and events took place in Islamic countries. He, who traveled to many Islamic lands, tried for Islamic unity and liberation of Muslims from the shackles of colonialism with various speeches and lessons that he taught in an attractive and beautiful style. His teachings originated from the Qur'an and his new interpretation. He claimed that Islam has all the conditions and essentials for

human happiness, and with his innovative interpretation of the 11<sup>th</sup> verse of Surah Ra'd, "Allah does not change the destiny of any group, unless they change their destiny themselves", he left a lasting statement in history. This verse is one of the most important elements of Sayed's religious thought. According to him, Islam is a living and active religion that teaches effort and work, not submission and seclusion. He believed that forced belief in predestination and fate is the biggest factor of Muslims' reluctance towards foreigners. Sayed Jamaluddin's intellectual legacy consists of believing in the inherent ability of the Islamic religion to lead Muslims and their progress and return to the main sources of Islamic thought, namely the Qur'an. The efforts of his students in interpretation were a clear example of these discourses. They tried to provide a new interpretation by changing the traditional methods and tendencies. They tried to relate the obsolescence and ineffectiveness of the Qur'an and religion to the margins, illusions, and superstitions mixed with religion.

In the Qur'anic interpretation, when we talk about reformism in the last two centuries, one point should not be left unsaid, i.e. in the history of most of the claimants of returning to the Qur'an in the recent era, there is no insistence on producing a book of interpretation despite the high ability of its authoring and authoring. They saw the principle of the movement based on finding suitable audiences and educating them. Sayed Jamaluddin did not start his Qur'anic movement by writing a commentary. He did not necessarily believe in exegesis and he did not believe that the way to educate people lies in writing exegesis in conventional ways. With the encouragement of the Holy Prophet, he found the duty of the community's teacher and mentor to recite the verses and cultivate and teach the book and wisdom. 'Abduh, his student, also said

that each verse of the Qur'an does not need interpretation; Rather, the intensity and degree of need for the verses and surahs of the Qur'an is a function of the time and place conditions as well as the conditions of the audience. He himself interpreted the verses for the interested audience, which he saw the necessity of the above-mentioned, regarding them (Rashid Reza, 1906). One of the motivations of the commentators after returning to the Qur'an was the revival of Islam based on the Qur'anic thought and an important part of the religious tradition.

In Iran, Mohammad Hossein Naini (1860-1936) was the flag bearer of religious reform in the political and social system. Another cleric was Akhund Khorasani (1839-1911), who was a prominent religious man, and many Iranian thinkers and Qur'anic thinkers sought a solution to create an understanding between tradition and modernism following this process of modernization and industrialization. Also, Sanglaji, Yusuf Sho'ar, Burqi'i, Yadullah Sahabi, and Hossein Ali Rashid are the first generation who attempted to interpret the Qur'an according to the characteristics of the return discourse. Although none of the authors had a collection of written commentary and mostly wrote monographs, their effort was to create a practical method to study and understand the original Qur'an away from the traditions and interpretations added in the past fourteen centuries. In the next generation, when the revolution was the fruit of their activities, people such as Shariati, Motahari, Taleghani, and Bazargan appeared and emerged. This generation showed strong anti-Western tendencies and attention to return to the basic teachings of the Qur'an and the link between the Islamic principles of the Qur'an and the components of the new society (Pakatchi, 2017).

Abul Kalam Azad also had a firm belief in the religious reform movement, and after that, he pursued extensive social activities in India. With his reformed and free attitude, he entered the field of interpretation and wrote the translation of the Qur'an. This interpretation has been considered as the first example of the constructive thinking of that country, which has had a tremendous impact on the religious and moral attitudes in the daily life of modernist Muslims.

Government, social justice, attention to material and spiritual aspects in Islam, answers to doubts about limits, regal money punishments, women's rights, religious issues, and everyday social issues prompted the commentators to make new readings and interpretations according to the developments of science, the doubts, problems and the needs of the age and the discourses affected by these. They found that the Qur'an does not agree with many scientific findings or its teachings and laws are not appropriate for the age of civilization and the progress of science. Its commands are not executable and does not have the necessary flexibility and dynamism, e.g. slavery in Islam, which today is not considered correct by any commentator. Despite the verses of 60 of Surah Tawbah and 13 of Hujurāt, today's human dignity is not buying and selling. The racial and tribal Arab and non-Arab privileges are wrong. Therefore, many other issues, such as slavery, can be changed in today's world (Ayazi, 2009).

### **5. Discourses of experimental sciences**

In this research, I will only pay attention to the impact of experimental and discourse sciences that caused innovation in interpretation after these sciences, and the role and impact of human sciences is not intended; Because the field of human sciences is wide and each one

can be examined in detail. The leadership of Europeans in experimental sciences made Muslims aware of these sciences. The Europeans pursued scientific and economic activities with haste and effort. Muslims were initially apathetic and immobile, however watching this acceleration in the western societies also made them make new efforts. Scientific discourses in this era and new understanding due to the unprecedented growth of sciences were among the necessities that led to the presentation of new interpretations. Muslims observing the scientific growth and development of Europe were trying to say that this book is not unique to the knowledge of fourteen centuries ago and it also includes scientific discoveries. Answers to doubts and new questions always require scientific interpretation. The commentators of scientific interpretation say that the Qur'an has taken the lead in expressing the findings of natural sciences. 'Abduh has not been far from this effort. For example, he considers jinn to be the same as microbes, and Abābīl is considered to be a bunch of mosquitoes or flies whose legs are infected with some kind of virus and deadly infectious disease (Rashid Reza & 'Abduh, 1366 AH). Although 'Abduh was not strongly in favor of scientific interpretation, he wanted to show the non-contradiction of the Qur'an with science and intellect. Later, scientific interpretation was accepted as an interpretative method. The defenders of scientific interpretation seek to prove the historical precedence of the Qur'an in terms of scientific information, as an excellent example of the miracles of the Qur'an. Even the most effective argument in defense of the Qur'an is considered to be the aspect of the scientific miracle of the Qur'an. Meanwhile, there were different positive and negative approaches.

In the recent centuries, Mohammad bin Ahmad Iskandarani, Sayed Ahmad Khan Hindi, Tantāwī, Sayed 'Abd al-Rahman Kawākibī, Hibatullah Shahrishani, Mahmoud Taleqani, Mohammad Taqi Shari'ati, and Mehdi Bazargan were influenced by the discourse of experimental sciences in their interpretations. Rezaei Esfahani also wrote the Commentary of Mehr (in 22 volumes) with a scientific method and is one of the defenders and promoters of this method. Following the intensification of the value of empirical science, the primary motivation of these commentators was to prove the absence of contradiction and conflict between the Qur'an and science. They considered the existence of verses based on scientific references and the call to contemplation in the universal verses and the great emphasis on learning science as their best documentation. The presence of scientific verses and frequent scientific references to signs of nature, etc., in the Qur'an, which are even more than jurisprudential verses, are considered the necessary answer to this discourse. Tantāwī, one of the most important people in this discourse, goes to extremes in saying that "the Qur'an is the leader". His book has separated from the commentary mode and has become similar to a scientific encyclopedia. Even in his interpretation of Bismillah Rahman al-Rahim, he considers Rahman to be the great blessings of heaven, earth, health, and intellect, and he considers Rahim to be specific to small and minor blessings such as black eyes, eyelashes, etc. (Tantāwī Jawharī, 1412 AH).

This discourse also had pros and cons. It was not popular among the majority of commentators. Some people like Rashid Reza, Amin Khouli, and Sayed Qutb have completely rejected it. Because it is not defensible from the point of view of lexicography. New meanings were falsely attributed to the words of the

Qur'an. The context of the words and phrases and the means of revelation were ignored and they did not pay attention to the fact that the Qur'an should be understandable to its first audience and should be in the intellectual and linguistic horizon of the Arabs of the era of revelation (Retravard, nd).

The scientific discourse did not only include the field of experimental sciences; Rather, the transfer of science and knowledge has always existed among nations and territories. In the era of Islamic civilization, others took from Indian mathematics to Greek philosophy and politics and Iranian wisdom from Muslims and translated most of the books on medicine, astronomy, mathematics, and arithmetic into Arabic, but as mentioned, due to the spread of human sciences and its impact on interpretation, the Qur'an and dealing with the impact of these discourses require an independent research; Because the sciences of anthropology, semantics, studies of Orientalists, phenomenological and hermeneutic methods all had effects on interpretation and new opinions emanating from it, which require a long and independent discussion.

### Conclusion

It is clear and evident that no text is formed in a vacuum and ideas do not start from zero. The thoughts and opinions of researchers and commentators are formed by the atmosphere in which they grew up and the discourses they experienced in their lives. Influence of discourses in the last two centuries has changed the traditional structure of Tafsīr writing and became a platform for innovative opinions. If we examine innovation in Tafsīr in terms of form and content, the audience of Qur'an Tafsīr became the general public, writing voluminous and long books of Tafsīr were avoided, interpretations were changed with new forms

such as *tadabbur*, thematic interpretation, the key to understanding the Qur'an, and *tanzīlī* interpretation. These changes in the appearance of the literary genre also prepared the ground for changes in content. In the next stage, existing discourses caused changes in the content of interpretations.

Common Qur'anic discourses and interpretations in these two centuries often seek to explain the relationship between the Holy Qur'an and the destiny of the individual and society. Instead of dealing with dry, repetitive, and limiting topics, the commentator deals with the answers of the Holy Qur'an to problems related to the individual and society, politics, economy, human rights, justice, anti-colonialism, and the destiny of man in this big and complex world.

Some of the most important effective discourses in the formation of innovations were political, social, scientific discourses, religious revival, and reformism. The discourse of returning to the Qur'an was one of the other influential discourses. The movement of returning to the Qur'an and following the discourse of Islamic awakening began with the efforts of Muslims who wanted to change their lifestyle. Human rights, international organizations and communities, and the form of human relations created new needs for believing Muslims, and Muslims were interested in receiving the answer from their Holy Book. Among the existing discourses in this era were the political discourses of humanist schools and isms, which were influential in some interpretations, to the extent that even an infidel was interpreted as someone who stood in the way of fighting against imperialism and moving towards socialism. Although it must be stated that in our poor innovations in terms of new theological studies, the academic scientific prosperity in terms of



common discourses in Islamic societies is very insignificant and traditional studies of interpretation still dominate the flow of interpretation, we should take advantage of the few openings. Although in interpretative innovation, it is tried to exploit the existing discourses and its shadows can be seen in confrontation or agreement (in few cases), it has not been able to achieve a good position yet. Through searching the contemporary interpretations, we often see these interpretations in opposition to humanist schools. If there is a favorable vote, it is to the extent that it is claimed that we ourselves have the advantages and privileges of your school. The belief that the Qur'an is the word of God and cannot be compared with other sciences has no inconsistency with the reality of modern sciences and postmodern discourses. Scientific interpretation is the child of these discourses and feminist interpretations are the result of modernity's interaction with Qur'an interpretation. These discourses have a history of 200 years. To interact more with the interpretation of the Qur'an, we need to create a common understanding. Believers in the Qur'an should bring the Qur'an to the ears of the world through global discourse. If Tafsi'r wants to continue its work in the same traditional and ultimately intellectual and rational way and choose silence in the path of discourses, it will become passive, since communities will continue to grow. Interpretations influenced by some discourses of the last two centuries show that this influence is small but valuable and has become more common in scientific interpretation. The efforts of reformist discourses and returning to the Qur'an have gained more acceptance among Muslims, and the discourses of interpretation schools have been more confrontational, or this is our previous existence. As a result, since the

interpretation of the Qur'an is a science and is placed in the category of human sciences, it will be on the path of growth and change, and that is why it is necessary to establish a language of understanding with newer sciences so that interpretation can be removed from passivity.

As a result, by explaining various political, social, scientific, and cultural processes, the impact of these discourses can be addressed. In a general category, discourses effective in interpretation can be divided into social discourses, religious revival and reformism, discourses of isms and schools, and existing scientific discourses. Each of them has had a proportional effect on the topics and opinions of the science of interpretation.

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