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The Scientific Authority of the Quran in Creating Transformative Frameworks

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Abstract

The scientific authority of the Quran encompasses a breadth of concepts and subjects centered on the word of God, playing an irreplaceable role in the system of religious knowledge. The scientific authority of the Quran, which involves multiple interpretations, has a direct relationship with the comprehensiveness of the Quran and the perfection of religion. One dimension of the authority of the word of God is the modeling of the transmission of Quranic teachings in accordance with the varying situations and conditions of the target community. The present study aims to explore the model of the scientific authority of the Quran in relation to the process of social transformation among Muslims. A descriptive-analytical examination of this issue traces the various cognitive topics in the gradual descent of the revelations, aligning with the circumstances and conditions of society and its audiences, and demonstrating an intelligent and hopeful authority for the Quranic teachings in fostering growth and transformation within society. Based on verse 29 of Surah al-Fatḥ

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(order of revelation: 112), the teachings of the Quran encompass four transformative stages: The germination of the religious identity of believers; growth alongside the strengthening of the believing community in the face of cultural and ideological aggression against them; the development and perfection of the impact of religion in all spheres of human life; and the creation of opportunities for designing a cyclical evolution for the expansion of Islam in the period following the revelation of the Quran. This presents a comprehensive program for all cultural administrators and stakeholders in transformation-seeking communities.

Keywords: Process of Revelation, Scientific Authority, Religious Change and Transformation, Verse 29 of Surah al-Fatḥ.

Introduction

The danger of colonial influence, the anxiety of modernism in Islamic countries, and the struggle against the West, which sought to undermine the power of Islam in these nations, gave rise to the emergence and growth of a Quranic perspective and the necessity of returning to the Quran among Islamic thinkers in recent centuries. The West, primarily, sought to express its frustrations with ecclesiastical governance through resentment and hatred of any form of religiosity. Western reference groups, by designing a minimalistic religion, constricted the space for religion and relegated it to absolute democracies. However, this minimalistic view of religion only provided limited management and guidance to people in aspects such as maintaining a heartfelt and internal relationship with God, preserving social order, and comforting the weak and downtrodden, while remaining absent from many spheres of life. The *Jihād* of Muslim thinkers to establish the comprehensiveness of religion formed the basis for the idea of returning to the Quran. Scholars such as *Sayyid Jamāl al-Dīn Asadābādī*, *Muḥammad ʿAbduh*, *Sayyid Quṭb*, and others, in response to the assaults of modernity, proposed the idea of returning to the Quran and reviving religious thought as the only path to escaping civilizational decline and resisting the intellectual and cultural onslaughts of colonialism (Movathaqi, 1996 AD/1375 SH: 292; ibid: 2001 AD/1380 SH: 113).

The efforts of scholars such as Imam Khomeini in jurisprudence and politics, *Allamah Ṭabāṭabā'ī* in philosophy and exegesis, and others can be analyzed as extensions of these concerns (Khoshmanesh, 2009 AD/1388 SH: 286). Although the angles and dimensions of this authority in the thoughts of Islamic thinkers require separate investigations, the fundamental belief in the authority of the Quran is considered a given. In the later part of this period, the comprehensive concept of the Noble Quran and the efforts to prove or elucidate its dimensions gained a special significance in the interpretative writings of Islamic thinkers (ibid: 162). The idea of returning to the Quran was able to somewhat prevent or delay the decline of the power of Muslims and Islamic countries; however, the changing colonial styles,

especially in the post-World War I and II periods, hindered the effectiveness of the idea of the Quran's comprehensiveness and religion. Therefore, despite many Islamic countries gaining independence in the years following World War II, the trend of syncretism and the inclination towards complementary systems such as liberal democracy, capitalism, communism, etc., continued among some thinkers and elites of Islamic countries. The root of this inclination is partly found in the acceptance of the non-comprehensiveness of religion and the Quran and the inability to address the issues and needs of humanity.

The scientific authority of the Quran in establishing fundamental thematic transformation systems may have originated with the formation of the Quran and the establishment of the Islamic Ummah, with the focal point of this theory being in scientific fields. In the overarching theory of authority, "Science" refers to a set of data structured conceptually and based on principles. Various theories by thinkers on the scientific authority of the Quran have emerged. Some advocate for the absolute scientific authority of the Quran (Qāsimī, 1997 AD/1418 AH: 384), striving to derive all religious and worldly matters from the Quran: "...*Tibyānan li Kulli Shay'*..." (al-Naḥl/89)[1], and they seek to enumerate all propositions that can be labeled as knowledge (Zarkashī, 1990 AD/1410 AH: 320; Suyūṭī, 2019 AD/1440 AH: 247; Ghazālī, 1989 AD/1409 AH: 33). However, addressing several topics in various forms of verbal implications, connotations, commitments, or conditions does not necessarily make the Quran encompassing all sciences (Mohammadi Reyshahri, 2018 AD/1397 SH: 11).

Other scholars believe in the scientific authority of the Quran specifically in the field of religious issues. This means that they see the scientific authority of the Quran as addressing human needs in the legal and doctrinal aspects of Islam with all its details: "*Hudan Linnāsi wa Bayyinātin minal Hudā wal Furqān*," (al-Baqarah/185) and they consider it essential for achieving happiness (Ṭabāṭabā'ī,

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1. Also in al-An'ām/154; al-A'rāf/52; Hūd/1; Yūsuf/111;al-Naḥl/89;al-Isrā'/9;al-Kahf/54;al-Furqān/33;al-Naml/75.

2011 AD/1390 SH: 324; Ālūsī, 1995 AD/1415 AH: 451; Quṭb, 2005 AD/1425 AH: 2188; Ibn Āshūr, 2000 AD/1420 AH: 204; Ṣādiqī Tehrani, 1986 AD/1406 AH: 450; Faḍlullāh, 1999 AD/1419 AH: 279; Makarem Shirazi, 2001 AD/1380 SH: 110). This viewpoint, if reduced to mere reliance on the Quran, is deemed incorrect (Jawadi Amoli, 2009 AD/1388 SH: 277). Some others assert the scientific authority of the Quran in the domain of general religious matters; they consider the Quran a general reference for all educational and religious issues: "*Wa Nazzalnā 'Alaykal Kitāba...*," (al-Naḥl/89) in a broad sense rather than a detailed one (Ālūsī, 1995 AD/1415 AH: 452; Shāṭibī, 2005 AD/1425 AH: 274; Ma'rifat, 2007 AD/1386 SH: 19).

This kind of holistic belief in the verses is incompatible with other verses of the Quran[1]. Some others believe in the scientific authority of the Quran over other heavenly books and refer to verses such as: "*...Muṣaddiqan Limā bayna Yadayhi minal Kitābi wa Muhayminan 'Alayh...*" (al-Mā'idah/48) to argue that the authority and comprehensiveness of the Quran relate to the finality of prophethood and the heavenly scriptures (Mughnīyah, 2003 AD/1424 AH: 3, 68; Ibn 'Arabī, 1955 AD/1375 AH: 11, 56; Marāghī, n.d.: 6, 130; Qurṭubī, 1944 AD/1364 AH: 6, 210; Zamakhsharī, 1986 AD/1407 AH: 1, 640; Ṭūsī, 2010 AD/1431 AH: 3, 535). However, reducing the scientific authority of the Quran to these limits is incorrect. In any case, the scientific authority of the Quran, regardless of the perspective taken, encompasses meanings derived from revelation, reason, and experience. The scientific authority of the transformative frameworks of the Quran aims to produce knowledge through the use of the Quran rather than discovering knowledge and human propositions. The transformative system of the Quran is also regarding its gradual revelation, which has been designed for educational purposes; thus, the divine intents are not limited just to content but also cover the methods and processes of transformative systems in this path. Therefore, based on the educational methods of the Quran aimed at

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1. Such as: al-Mā'idah/3; al-An'ām/145.

achieving happiness and eternal life, the authority of the Quran in creating transformative systems takes on a different manifestation.

1. Research Question

The present study aims to answer the question of 'What impact the gradual revelation of the Quran has on understanding its authority in establishing systematic transformations of the concepts and teachings of the Quran?'

2. Research Methodology

This study has approached its problem-solving using a descriptive and analytical method, referencing library sources.

3. Theoretical Framework of the Research

The theoretical framework of this research consists of:

3.1. The Concept and Scope of Scientific Authority

Authority refers to any kind of return to a source or an expert to answer questions, consults, or arbitrate between what is correct and incorrect, or to resolve issues (Anvari, 2002 AD/1381 SH: 7, 123). Thus, when we consider Amir al-Mu'minin (AS) as the reference for Quranic interpretation, it means that if a disagreement arises among the interpreters from the Companions regarding the interpretation of a verse, and we encounter difficulties in determining the correct interpretation, we would refer to Ali (AS) for judgment, and his opinion would serve as the reference to distinguish right from wrong in interpretative views (Ibn Bābawayh, 2013 AD/1434 AH: 659; Thaʿlabī Nishābūrī, 2001 AD/1422 AH: 5, 303; Ḥākim Ḥaskānī, 1990 AD/1411 AH: 1, 402).

Similarly, the scientific authority of the Quran refers to the notion that the Quran possesses the highest scientific competence in providing knowledge related to its functions and acts as the reference for correcting and judging other sources in case of conflicts with other scientific and religious sources. An evident requirement of the Quran's authority is its comprehensiveness and perfection:

- Comprehensiveness (*Jāmi'īyyat*): Derived from the root meaning "Gathering *(Jam')*," it signifies inclusiveness and coverage (Rāghib Iṣfahānī, 1991 AD/1412 AH: 201) of all scientific and methodological needs of the individual and society (Ayazi, 2001 AD/1380 SH (a): 19; ibid: 2001 AD/1380 SH (b): 201). The comprehensiveness of the Quran entails outlining the boundaries of scientific sources, organizing relationships among them, and determining the share of the Quran within the scientific network related to human life's domains. Although comprehensiveness as an independent concept is not explicitly mentioned in the verses and traditions of the Ahl al-Bayt (AS), some scholars have inferred the idea of the Quran's comprehensiveness or its inclusion of various sciences from verses like: "A clear explanation for everything," (al-Naḥl/89) or from traditions such as: "I was given the keys to comprehensive knowledge." (Majlisī, 1982 AD/1403 AH: 16/323; Hashimi Khui, 2020 AD/1400 SH: 19, 315; Kāfijī, 1998 AD/1419 AH: 52; Nadhīr, 1995 AD/1416 AH: 66)
- Perfection: This means that the religion encompasses all stages of human progress in the journey of evolution, from beginning to end, aimed at achieving happiness and liberation from misery: "And He who determined [the course of His creation] and then guided." (al-A'lā/3) God has defined the potentials of creatures and guides them towards perfection and blooming. Just as, in the realm of creation, plants are brought forth from the ground and guided to eventually become black compost or even coal (Makarem Shirazi, 2001 AD/1380 SH: 26, 388).

Thus, the authority of the Quran is accompanied by two necessities: The comprehensiveness of all causes and the removal of barriers to development, along with the continuous presence of a guide throughout all stages of perfection, until the ultimate goal of human evolution is achieved.

3.2. The Concept and Scope of the Transformational Framework of the Quran

The Holy Quran contains a collection of key concepts such as lordship, warning, guidance, facilitation, salvation, and others, each of which represents a step toward the comprehensive guidance and education of individuals and society. The wise and divine arrangement of these fundamental and significant steps displays the transformational educational framework of the Quran. This means that education is a systematic endeavor, and religious education is based on a set of principles and key concepts that must be organized in a specific order to be effective. Discussing the educational system or the guiding system of the Quran indicates the acceptance that the Quran includes a collection of factors and components effective in guidance and education, specifically gathered to create individual and social transformation. Some elements serve as prerequisites for others, while others play complementary roles to ensure the structure of transformative guidance and education is properly organized. The practical approach to achieving this transformative educational and guiding system is through pursuing the natural order of the Surahs and verses revelation and identifying key concepts and principles of religious transformation (Bahjatpour, 2013 AD/1392 SH: 275-277).

Identifying these principles and arranging them alongside each other while explaining the relationships established among them contributes to the transformational framework of the Quran, effectively illustrating the cultural engineering of beliefs and religious behaviors in the individual and society. Many factors must be considered in this process, including the role of the Prophet (PBUH) as an educator, his experiences with challenges, unforeseen events, and contemplation of these events, the differences among social groups, and addressing ambiguities and questions. It is through the integration of this vast array of elements that the silent sections of the Quran come to life, creating the framework for religious transformation. This significant achievement cannot be realized except through the lens of the chronological order of the revelations of the

Surahs, constant comparisons between them, and the repeated references to the verses in their natural context.

4. Scientific Authority in Creating Transformational Frameworks

Examining the prevailing views on the scientific authority of the Quran reveals that the belief in its scientific authority has, until now, encountered either the claims of secularists, who separate the realm of the Quran from that of science and regard the scope and purposes of the Quran as unrelated to knowledge, or the belief that deriving all or some sciences from the Quran is self-evident. Such a perspective on the authority of the Quran, regardless of its extent, leads to a minimalistic view of the Quran, limiting it to narrow domains and diverting this divine book from its original purpose and goal: to create change, growth, transformation, and hope across all societies from the time of its revelation until the end of existence.

Over the course of twenty-three years of insightful movement, the Wise Quran activated the inherent capacities of the people contemporary to its revelation and took necessary measures to guide individuals through the challenges they faced. It transformed polytheism into monotheism, disbelief into faith, ignorance into rationality, immorality into righteous actions, and lawlessness into piety. It elevated Arabia, a region distant from knowledge and wisdom, to superiority over all the civilizations of its time, such as those of Iran, Yemen, Rome, and Egypt, aided by the education provided by the Quran and the efforts of the Prophet (PBUH), establishing a cultural authority derived from the Quran (Le Bon, 1999 AD/1378 SH: 203; Durant, 1998 AD/1377 SH: 4, 331; Bahjatpour, 2010 AD/1389 SH: 19). It presented a systematic transformation of target societies based on Quranic concepts and teachings; according to the verses: "Do not hasten with it, [O! Muhammad], your tongue, to cause it to be omitted. Indeed, upon Us is its collection and [prophetic] recitation. And when We have recited it, then follow its recitation. Then, upon Us is its clarification," (al-Qīyāmah/16-19) the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) was not permitted to alter or interfere with the revelations beyond the extent of what was

revealed at each instance of the revelation; he was not even allowed to explain them according to his own opinion but had to wait for subsequent revelations to clarify the ambiguities of the verses.

The fundamental practical theory of the scientific authority of the Quran is a method based on the transformative framework of the Quran founded on the creation of human nature. In this method, the Creator is the Owner of the worlds and all existence; He knows humans as they are, is aware of the relationships between humans and other phenomena, and the mutual effects among them. The phenomena surrounding the earth are conquered for the benefit of humans, and familial and social relationships are established in the creation of the two genders, male and female. Bonds are created among spouses, parents, children, and relatives, making individuals of every race, ethnicity, and language interdependent on one another to establish social relations based on mutual human needs and utilize the diverse capacities and abilities among them: "So that some may take others into service." (al-Zukhruf/32) In general, the best method for religious invitation and responding to the inherent needs of humanity is provided in the Quran. Therefore, an aware human should clearly recognize the harmony between the teachings of the Quran and their own needs: "Indeed, We have sent down to you a Book in which is your mention," (al-Anbīyā'/10) "It is nothing but a Reminder for the worlds," (al-Takwīr/27) "And indeed, it is a Reminder for you and your people." (al-Zukhruf/44) Thus, the Quran's authority, in terms of both content and method, indicates the compatibility of the Quran with human nature and its transformative movement towards perfection. It is noteworthy that "Hope" is a central element in transformation; this means that throughout the gradual descent of the Quran, the believer's faith in Allah is strengthened, and with the reinforcement of faith, hope is ignited in the heart (Hosseini Khamenei, 14/3/1402). Therefore, the hope and faith generated through the transformative method of the Quran's authority mutually influence one another, and the realization of hopes, from the lowest to the highest levels, will increase faith.

4.1. Quranic Basis of the Systemic Scientific Authority of Transformation

The Quran's process-oriented view of transformation and its effects have led divine revelation to shower upon thirsty hearts like rain, while the guidance of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) acts as a caring and compassionate farmer, nurturing and cultivating this growth. Verse 29 of Surah al-Fatḥ (order of revelation 112) vividly portrays this metaphor of guiding humanity: "Muhammad, the Apostle of Allah, and those who are with him are hard against the faithless and merciful amongst themselves. You see them bowing and prostrating [in worship], seeking Allah's grace, and [His] pleasure. Their mark is [visible] on their faces, from the effect of prostration. Such is their description in the Torah and their description in the Evangel. Like a tillage that sends out its shoots and builds them up and they grow stout and settle on their stalks, impressing the sowers, so that He may enrage the faithless by them. Allah has promised those of them who have faith and do righteous deeds forgiveness and a great reward." In this verse, Allah likens the growth of the companions of the Prophet to that of agricultural produce through three stages:

- First stage *Akhraja Shaṭʿahū*: This represents the emergence of a small, weak shoot emerging from the soil, revealing its identity.

- Second stage *Faāzarahū*: At this stage, the plant has risen, grown taller, and produced thousands of stems and leaves. This growth is principally vertical, but the agriculture is holistic and gaining strength.

- Third stage *Fastaghlaẓ*: This is the period of thickening in agriculture. The roots, stems, leaves, and branches become robust, gaining enough strength to bear fruit.

- Fourth stage *Fastawā ʿalā Sūqihī*: The crop that has gone through the previous growth stages is now firmly established on its own and bears fruit, able to produce seeds of its kind, which do not require anything else for their reproduction.

The four stages described above are clearly illustrated in the image below:

Based on this verse, the believers who accompanied the Prophet (PBUH), like the crop, continuously pursued their path of evolutionary growth and continued their movement until achieving self-sufficiency and the reproduction of individuals of their kind. This transformation, which entails repeated cycles of transformation and culture, will also be four-stage in future generations, astonishingly bringing about a continuous flourishing in society. This is because, according to the Quran, "[This is] a Book We have sent down to you that you may bring mankind out from darkness into light, by the command of their Lord, to the path of the All-mighty, the All-laudable." (Ibrāhīm/1) The goal of the efforts of the prophets, including the Messenger of Allah (PBUH), has been to guide and establish the community of believers on the straight path. Persevering on the straight path and enduring its hardships will lead to the establishment and continuity of the straight path for future generations. The criterion for moving toward the guidance of the Quran lies in the degree of movement and stability on the straight path and the invincibility of those who walk it: "To the path of the All-mighty, the All-laudable."

The non-exclusive nature of this scientific authority of the Quran to the era of the Quran's revelation and the presence of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) necessitates that leaders, managers, and cultural caretakers of Islamic societies strive to achieve a correct understanding of the method of religious education in the communities after the Prophet (PBUH) throughout all ages. By committing to their faith with the Lord and obeying the Messenger of Allah (PBUH), they should work towards realizing this Quranic method in Islamic societies, ensuring the growth and transformation of its faithful components.

4.2. The Scientific Authority of the Quran in the Systemic Transformation of Islamic Society

The revelation of the Quran addresses the realities of transformation in all individual and social spheres; thus, it holds the best position in establishing the scientific authority of transformation. This means that

transformation is the conversion of an undesirable state into a desirable one, such as turning disbelief into faith, ignorance into knowledge, polytheism into monotheism, sin into servitude, and sexual impurity into chastity. This transformation occurs through a process of changes from the starting point to the completion of the transformation. Transformation is subject to spiritual, moral, cultural, and social factors and components, which the wise transformer guides in the process of transformation. Therefore, various fields of knowledge, political, educational, social, mystical, and ethical, aim to organize these transformations and establish rules, regulations, and systems arising from experience and skills to serve as a reference for distinguishing right from wrong.

It should be noted that the transformative power of the Quran became apparent in the contemporary Arab society during its revelation, particularly among the Quraysh tribe, who were illiterate, ignorant, and ultimately steeped in ignorance and fanaticism, far removed from civility and culture. The teachings of the Quran initially extracted those with potential from within the ignorant society and turned them into a group of believers. Then, it empowered this group, creating an ideal society with a strong government. Subsequently, to facilitate the development and expansion of the believing faithful as a forward-looking nation, it devised the following: "Yet it is not for the faithful to go forth in masse. But why should not there a group from each of their sections go forth to become learned in religion, and to warn their people when they return to them, so that they may beware?" (al-Tawbah/122) The scholarly authority of the Quran, which is systematic and transformative, is inherently related to the stages of the advancement of Islam, and understanding various topics in the stages of the advancement of Islam is associated with the creation, growth, and consolidation of values (Bahjatpour, 2017 AD/1396 SH: 10-11). Thus, some topics entered into the religious lives of the people when the Islamic community had not yet formed, while others had to be normalized once the establishment of the Muslim community was ensured.

The stages of the scholarly authority of the Quran based on the systematic advancement and transformation of Islamic society are as follows:

First Stage: Surahs al-ʿAlaq to al-Ḥijr (Revelation 1 to 54) - Social Transformation: Identity Formation

Agriculture requires a caring farmer, water, light, and mineral nutrients for favorable growth. Water plays a very important role in the production of plants. It allows the hard shell of the seed to break away, facilitating the plant's sprouting.

Similarly, revelation acts like water for plants in the hearts of people. On the one hand, it softens the hard shell of the ignorant culture surrounding the seed, creating conditions for the growth of human potential. On the other hand, it nurtures the internal capacities of the seeds, allowing them to take root in the soil of faith and nourish from it, thereby beginning to sprout. The first stage of the Quran's revelation was accompanied by this process. The Messenger of Allah (PBUH), as the farmer of this field, first dispelled the heavy layer of ignorance that enveloped the people by delivering the revelation to them. Then, by liberating the inner capacities of the people, he prepared them to take root in the soil of Islam and religious life. In this stage, the identity of the followers became evident.

The first stage of the revelation of the Quran, in the author's view, includes the interval from Surah al-ʿAlaq to Surah al-Ḥijr (1 to 54) (Bahjatpour, 2016 AD/1396 SH: 25-52). The mission of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) marked the beginning of the end of this culture of ignorance. He pitched his tent in the camp of polytheism, openly announcing a new Islamic movement and conveying the foundations of truth to the Quraysh; the Islamic identity of the believers responding to his call sprouted in the shade of the revealed verses and then took shape. Despite enduring many hardships, such as being labeled insane (al-Qalam 2/1-3), facing defiance (al-Muzzammil 3/15-19), being denied and called a magician (al-Muddaththir/11-31; al-Masad/1-5), denial of revelation, and being called possessed by evil (al-Takwīr/15-28), mockery (al-Ḥijr/54), he did not cease in his call

and warning to the people. He invited them to Islam in both solitude and public, and by extracting a group with an Islamic identity from among the people of that time and accompanying them, he gifted them with sufficient insight: "Say: This is my way; I invite to Allah with insight, I and whosoever follow me." (Yūsuf/108)

An examination of the verses revealed in this period of revelation—fifty-four Meccan Surahs from ‘Alaq to Ḥijr—clearly shows that the call of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH), based on the guidance framework of the Quran, raised individuals who accepted Islamic identity with the following characteristics: Submission to the sovereignty of Allah and piety (al-Qalam/34-35), belief in divine verses (al-Muddaththir/31), worshippers seeking the guidance of divine oneness (al-Ḥamd/5-7), belief in character development under the light of the Quran (al-Takwīr/28), people of reverence (al-A‘lā/10), attaining salvation through self-purification and the remembrance of the Lord, performing prayers (al-A‘lā/14-15), giving wealth for the purpose of self-purification (al-Layl/17-20), faith coupled with righteous deeds and advising truth and patience (al-‘Aṣr/3), doing good and being kind while refraining from all sins (al-Najm/31), prepared to pay the cost of faith amidst the sedition of disbelievers (al-Burūj/11), possessing weighty standards (al-Qāri‘a/6-7), returning to Allah out of reverence for Him (Surah Qāf, verses 31-33), being deserving of righteous deeds and patient (al-Balad/17), pure servitude through attention to the hereafter (Ṣād/83), faith in Allah and the Messenger and following the Messenger (al-A‘rāf/158), adhering to the Quran (al-A‘rāf/170), accepting divine authority (al-A‘rāf/196), being devoted to remembrance and insight (al-A‘rāf/201), serving Allah and respecting the rights of others (al-Furqān/63-74), engaging in the recitation of the Quran, establishing prayers, and giving charity (Fāṭir/29), abundant in remembrance (al-Shu‘arā’/227), possessing certainty about the hereafter (al-Naml/3), transforming into a well-educated, cohesive group with certainty (Surah An-Naml, verse 86), striving for the highest levels of guidance (al-Naml/92), turning away from vain talk (al-Qaṣaṣ/55), being repentant (al-Qaṣaṣ/67), being grateful (al-Qaṣaṣ/75), striving for the Day of Resurrection (al-

Isrā'/19), being dutiful and speaking kindly to parents (al-Isrā'/24), paying the rights of relatives, the poor, and wayfarers (al-Isrā'/26), refraining from excess in killing (al-Isrā'/33), not approaching the property of orphans except on good terms, being faithful to promises, avoiding speech without knowledge, not behaving arrogantly (al-Isrā'/34-36), speaking kindly (al-Isrā'/53), being knowledgeable and pious believers (Yūnus/5-6), not fearing or grieving (Yūnus/62-63), being submissive (fully subdued and surrendered with satisfaction) before the Lord (Hūd/23), being steadfast (Hūd/112), not trusting oppressors (Hūd/113), inviting others to monotheism and prophethood (Yūsuf/108), and emerging from the control of devils (al-Ḥijr/41-42).

The process of transformation at the beginning of the call for change clarifies that if the scientific and insightful motivations, along with cultural and social norms, are rightly realized, the reactions will correspond to the transformation of the oblivious human who is receptive to the call, leading to believers who are able to invite others to monotheism and prophethood. A careful examination of the guiding principles of the Quran in the initial stage can well reveal the level of success or failure of cultural custodians, parents, and responsible educational institutions at the start.

Stage Two: Surahs al-An'ām to al-Muṭaffifīn (Revelation 55 to 86) - Social Transformation: Elevation of the Believers Identity

The second stage of growth in the cultivation, which began with the sprouting of the plant, now allows the roots to start reaching into the ground, drawing nourishment from minerals and water to raise the stems. The growing stems cause the identity of the plant to become apparent. The farm is considered a unified collection of a specific crop, like wheat. In this stage, all parts of the plant grow proportionately, aiming for height and visibility.

The descent of the Quran in the second stage of the believers' growth was such that the purpose was to make the believers and the pious visible. Along with the growth of the monotheistic and believing group and the continuation of attracting and synergizing with other groups of people toward Islam, a significant weakening of the

ideological and behavioral bases of ignorance and polytheism became apparent through several actions: comparing the situation of believers with disbelievers, comparing the status of each believer and disbeliever with one another, especially on the Day of Resurrection, elevating believers to higher degrees of faith and piety, arranging the relationships of the monotheistic individuals with polytheists in communities such as family, clan, and the general public, and strengthening them to withstand the social pressures from opponents.

The Quran refers to the growth and strengthening of Muslims during this period with the expression "*Fa Āzarahū*." The term "*Fa Āzarahū*" is defined as: "The crop supports each other when it grows and intertwines; it means to aid and assist him, from *A Z R*: Strength and power." (Farāhīdī, 1988 AD/1409 AH: 7, 382) In the verse "*Kazar'in Akhraja Shaṭ'ahū fa Āzarahū,*" (al-Fatḥ/29) God compares the followers of the Prophet (PBUH) to a crop that, upon sprouting, becomes fruitful and, with its abundant leaves and produce, intertwines with and supports one another (Zabīdī, 1993 AD/1414 AH: 6, 20; Ibn Āshūr, 1999 AD/1420 AH: 26, 175). Since this word in the form of *Mufā'alah* signifies the strength of an action: "The form of *Mufā'alah* in *fa Āzarahū* is a metaphor for the strength of the action," (Rāghib Iṣfahānī, 1991 AD/1412 AH: 1, 74; Ibn Manẓūr, 1993 AD/1414 AH: 4, 17) it serves to strengthen the cultivation. Believers also became strong and flourishing by engaging with the polytheistic society and resisting the blows from the pre-Islamic community. Consequently, at this stage, what became "Visible" was that the most important social transformative statements of this stage are:

1) Continuing the elevation of the identity of the pious believers as a group and community (Luqmān 57/3-4; al-Zumar 59/17-18 and 23; al-Shūrā 62/36-39 and 43; al-Aḥqāf 66/13-15; al-Dhārīyāt 67/15-19; al-Naḥl 70/41-42; al-Anbīyā' 73/49; al-Mu'minūn 74/1-9 and 57061; al-Sajdah 75/15-16; al-Ma'ārij 79/20-35; al-Rūm 94/39).

2) Distinguishing and differentiating the group of believers and the pious from the polytheists and disbelievers: The comparison between the forces of truth and falsehood has been

specified with clear indicators. Among them: Vitality versus lifelessness (al-An'ām 55/122),*sincere obedience (*Qunūt*) and being among those who prostrate and stand in prayer at night, those hopeful for God's mercy against the certainty of punishment for polytheists (al-Zumar 59/9), the expansion of the hearts of believers and the hardness of the hearts of polytheists in accepting the truth and Islam (al-Zumar/23), the piety and good deeds of believers versus the denial of the divine verses by polytheists (al-Zumar/24-34), the adherence to God's prophets by believers and the rejection of God's prophets by polytheists (al-Zumar/71-74), the firmness of the friendship of the pious and the disintegration of relationships among disbelievers in the hereafter (al-Zumar/67), the respect and gratitude of believers to their parents, and the suffering of parents due to unworthy children (al-Aḥqāf 66/15-19), the investment of disbelievers in the fleeting worldly gains while having disbelief in divine verses, the nullification of their deeds on the Day of Resurrection (al-Kahf 69/104-105), the steadfastness and solid faith roots of believers in contrast to the polluted and unstable beliefs of disbelievers (al-Kahf/26-24), the belief of believers in witnessing the fruits of their deeds in this world and the vain hopes of sinners on the Day of Resurrection regarding the absence of accountability (al-Ḥāqqah 78/18-37), the faith of believers in the hereafter and the denial of divine signs and resurrection by disbelievers (al-Naba' 80/21-36), fear of the Lord's status and the prohibition of following desires imposed by believers, while their opponents are rebellious (al-Nāzi'āt 81/31-47), the good deeds of believers in this world and the corruption of the inhabitants of hell (al-Infiṭār 82/13-16).

3) The Organization of the Relationships of Known Believers with the Polytheistic and Disbelieving Society (including the general public and even parents): Instances of the separation and withdrawal of believers from the polluted society include: the avoidance of the Prophet (PBUH) and the pious in

gatherings that promote falsehood in the divine verses (al-Anʿām 55/69-68), not cursing the deities of polytheists to prevent the ignorant reactions of polytheists in cursing God (al-Anʿām/108), refraining from consuming meat slaughtered without the name of God (al-Anʿām 55/118-119 and 121), preparation for the recurring challenges from polytheists due to the devils equipping the disbelievers to contend with believers (al-Anʿām/121), avoiding engagement with those who have lost hope in God's time (al-Jāthīya 65/14), not consuming carrion, blood, pork, and sacrifices to idols by believers (al-Naḥl 70/15), refraining from conflict and the patience of believers until they gain strength to confront oppressive disbelievers (al-Naḥl/126-127), maintaining hope in challenging conditions of conflict with oppressive disbelievers, and distancing from divisive polytheists (al-Rūm 84/32-31).

4) During this period, measures were taken to strengthen the believer group, for instance: piety and fear of God in not aligning with the opposition, striving to engage in good deeds, migration from obstructive environments, patience, and reliance on God (al-Zumar 59/10, al-Naḥl 70/101), resistance against devils, erecting barriers against Satan through worship, obedience, and reliance on God (al-Naḥl 70/91-100), fortifying believers through encouraging them with the promise of their certain victory and the inheritance of worthy servants of God on earth (al-Anbīyāʾ 73/105-106), enhancing the capacity of believers to endure trials (al-ʿAnkabūt 85/1-7), insistence on the pure worship of God even through migration, the promise of new opportunities during migration, the glad tidings of rewards in the hereafter, and God's provision for all beings (al-ʿAnkabūt/56-60), and the promise of guidance to those striving in the way of God while accompanying the benefactors (al-ʿAnkabūt/69).

Therefore, the continuous elevation of believers, the clarification of the key indicators distinguishing between believers and disbelievers as well as monotheists and polytheists, the organization of relations

between believers and the polytheistic society, and the fortification of believers against ideological and cultural assaults from the polytheistic community was pursued in the second phase of the invitation. These are the advanced indicators of believers in the path of the call based on God's wise plan. Based on these criteria, the progress of believers in similar conditions can be examined. Studying these indicators assists observers, educators, custodians, and cultivators of religious communities to evaluate the growth of society during the second phase.

Stage Three: Surah al-Baqarah to al-Fatḥ (Revelations 87 to 112) - Social Transformation: Consolidation of the Believers' Identity

According to the third phase, the cultivation process begins to flourish. This state occurs when cultivation reaches its perfection, with roots, stems, and leaves fully developed, presenting its plant, flowers, and blossoms.

The "Phase of Flourishing" in plant growth reflects the social condition of the companions of the Messenger of God (PBUH) during the third stage of the growth and advancement of this community. This perfection in society means the saturation of various aspects of individual and social life and the establishment of an Islamic governance of the believers based on religious teachings: "The coloring of Allah; and who is better than Allah in coloring? And we are His worshippers." (al-Baqarah 87/138). This divine hue, in the light of servitude and obedience to the Lord, envelops the entire life of the believers. Historically, the fruition of this stage coincided with the beginning of the Prophet's (PBUH) presence in *Yathrib* (Medina) and the establishment of the Islamic community there. During this period, the values accepted by Muslims were completed in the form of social behaviors, transformed into norms, and the comprehensive identity of the religious community reached its perfection. Besides completing and expanding religion into various dimensions of personal, familial, and social life, this stage faced three major challenges, for which Almighty God provided guidance to Muslims through twenty-six Surahs revealed during this phase (from Surah al-Baqarah to al-Fatḥ):

- **The first challenge was the People of the Book:** The Children of Israel residing in Medina and its surroundings were monotheists who, due to some doctrinal deviations and some jealousies, opposed the Islamic invitation. Unfortunately, this group became among the earliest disbelievers against Islam, the Qur'an, and the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Thus, in the Surahs revealed in the early period of the presence in Medina, we witness the most significant clarity for navigating this challenge (examples of the Surahs: al-Baqarah, revealed 87; Āli 'Imrān, revealed 89; al-Aḥzāb, revealed 90). Subsequently, they did not abandon their spite and jealousy, which eventually led to military confrontation, as Almighty God reported the defeat of the People of the Book, particularly *Banī Naẓīr*, in Surah al-Ḥashr (Surah al-Ḥashr, revealed 101). Those who ceased their warfare and deceit and recognized the Islamic government ware regarded as *Dhimmīs* (protected people) (Surah al-Tawbah, 29/114). This elucidates how to interact with the People of the Book and the outcome of their continued hostilities, as well as the manner in which Muslims faced this group. The principle is that other governments formed after the Prophet's (PBUH) era in various lands should interact with the heavenly scripture and religious minorities similarly.

- **The second challenge was from the polytheists:** They continued their struggle against the Muslims in Mecca, engaging in armed confrontations, leading to several battles, including *Badr* (the second year), *Uḥud* (the third year), and *Aḥzāb* (the fifth year) (Surahs revealed: al-Baqarah, Āli 'Imrān, al- Aḥzāb). These conflicts ultimately concluded with the conquest of Mecca and the revelation of Surah al-Ṣaff (revealed 111) and Surah al-Fatḥ (revealed 112), bringing the presence of polytheism in the Arabian Peninsula to an end as stated in Surah al-Tawbah (revealed 114).

- **The third challenge involves the hypocritical Muslims and those with ill hearts:** Some of them originated from the Meccan period (Surah al-Muddaththir 4/31; Surah al-'Ankabūt 85/11), while others were in Medina and, following the revelation of new verses, could not

tolerate the new guidance and fell into hypocrisy and ill-heartedness. This group often took inappropriate stances (Surah al-Baqarah/8-20; Surah al-Aḥzāb/60-73; Surah al-Nisā'/65-83; Surah Muḥammad/16-32), to the point that some of them did not refrain from sowing discord until the end of the Prophet's (PBUH) invitation (Surah al-Tawbah/123-128). The need for careful management of this group became so crucial that an independent Surah titled al-Munāfiqūn was revealed regarding them.

As observed, in various social opportunities that arose, the Qur'an first clarifies the traits and actions of the believers, guiding the Prophet (PBUH) and the believers on how to interact and be vigilant regarding this group. Then, it critically observes and analyzes their positions concerning Muslim social movements with extraordinary sensitivity. This method clarifies that the Qur'an does not recommend armed struggle against this group; however, it does continually introduce these deceitful individuals to the believers and prepares Muslims to combat hypocrisy and the hypocrites. Furthermore, the Qur'an threatens the hypocrites, commanding the Prophet (PBUH) to confront them if they engage in acts of rebellion and collusion with the disbelievers: "O! Prophet, strive against the disbelievers and the hypocrites and be harsh with them. Their abode is Hell, and wretched is the destination." (Surah al-Taḥrīm/9; Surah al-Tawbah/73)

- **The Nature of the Flourishing Community of Believers**
The primary factor for transformation during this period can be understood as the infusion of religious teachings into all areas of individual and social life (Bahjatpour, 2015 AD/1394 SH: 407-408). In this regard, various actions were taken, including:
- Initially, the Qur'an addresses the sociology of community groups, affirming the pious and identifying them as the main audience for the guidance of this period. It justifies the behavior of the Prophet (PBUH) and the believers towards the two groups of disbelievers and hypocrites who behave disruptively within society (Surah al-Baqarah 3/19). However, the biggest challenge of this period is the betrayal of the covenant by believers who lack self-control and may not comply

with new laws and social directives. Therefore, with the beginning of the revelation of the Qur'an in Medina and the formation of the Islamic community, the preservation of covenants is emphasized (Surah al-Baqarah/21). It also identifies the pious believers as corrupt individuals and reveals the harms resulting from the covenant-breaking of an individual believer (*Iblīs*), a believer's family (Adam and Eve), and an entire faithful community (the Children of Israel) (Surah al-Baqarah/26-142). Then, by presenting around 31 directives (such as the laws of choosing a spouse, relationships after marriage, family dissolution laws, post-death regulations, *Jihād* laws, obedience to leadership, social patience, laws of pilgrimage, prayer, charity, usury, interest-free loans, and borrowing etiquette, etc.) (al-Baqarah/143-286), it establishes the framework for the Islamic community.

- An Islamic community will not survive without a deterrent power. Therefore, to strengthen the deterrence of the newly established community, the command for *Jihād* has been issued (al-Baqarah 87/216), along with teachings related to the culture of Islamic *Jihād* and its laws (al-Anfāl/88).

- The Islamic community must have internal cohesion and be vigilant against divisions among Muslims. The ways to maintain the unity and coherence of the believers are explained through vigilance against two factors that undermine the cohesion of the Islamic community: the assimilation of the deviants from the Children of Israel who strayed from the guidance of Moses, and the materialism of Muslims and the dangers it poses. The remedy for these two harmful factors lies in promoting enjoining good and forbidding wrong to preserve the unity among Muslims, encouraging believers to practice individual and collective patience within the community, and expanding connections among believers (Āli 'Imrān 89/104-110, and 200). The Islamic leader should possess noble qualities and virtues for leading the Islamic community. Obedience to the leader promotes the cohesion of the religious community; the leader should not be passive before the disbelievers and hypocrites, trust in God, and ensure strict disciplinary adherence within the leader's family (al-Aḥzāb 90). Strengthening the

spirit of distancing from ideological enemies, organizing the relationship between Muslims and polytheists who have become military adversaries of Muslims (al-Mumtaḥana 91), encouraging believers to act justly, and maintaining moderation in behavior, especially towards women (al-Nisā' 92), are important teachings for the formation of a cohesive community that is free from internal disputes and family chaos.

- Compassionate relationships among believers and addressing the financial disadvantaged and poor, alongside the pursuit of justice, are two key aspects of community-building and the formation of an Islamic government, as recommended by God (al-Ḥadīd 94; Muḥammad 95).

- Strengthening the ideological and perceptual foundations of Muslims and discussing important ideological issues are essential for enhancing the capacity of the Muslim community to confront the polytheists of Mecca and engage culturally and ideologically with anti-Islamic societies (al-Raʿd 96; al-Raḥmān 97).

- Addressing some ethical challenges in the behavior of Muslims in social and familial spheres, and preventing these from becoming social harms, such as: Stopping the oppression of men against their divorced wives (al-Ṭalāq 99), reinforcing the trait of reverence and care over the actions of believers, not forgetting the remembrance of God (al-Ḥashr 101), promoting chastity within the community of believers, and upholding public modesty for the internal health of the Islamic community (al-Nūr 103), as well as depicting the party of Satan and warning believers against associating with them (al-Mujādilah 106), the teachings stress the importance of maintaining the bonds of friendship among believers, adhering to proper conduct (al-Ḥujurāt 107), preventing the misuse of association with the Prophet (PBUH) (al-Taḥrīm 108), encouraging believers to keep following the guidance of the Prophet (PBUH), and not severing the relationship of education and upbringing with him (al-Jumuʿa 109). There is also advice on the significance of charity and avoiding greed, opposing disobedience to God and His Messenger (al-Taghābun 110), preparing believers for military *Jihād*, and admonishing Muslims for neglecting

obedience to God and His Messenger (PBUH) regarding *Jihād* (al-Ṣaff 111), all of which illustrate the perfection of faith in various aspects of community-building and the sustainability of the cohesion of the Islamic community.

- During these stages, God eventually aligned the believers' power with progress and addressed related issues by expressing hope for victory (al-Naṣr 102; al-Fatḥ 112; al-Tawbah 114).

An examination of the 28 Medinan Surahs from Surah al-Baqarah to Surah al-Tawbah, which coincided with the migration of Muslims to Medina and their empowerment under the banner of the Prophetic Islamic government, clarifies how the propositions in the verses of the Quran impacted various aspects of believers' lives, giving identity to the community of believers and transforming it into a robust, complete, independent, and flourishing institution. The teachings of this period provide a comprehensive and transformative plan for leaders and social and cultural managers of the Islamic community. With the creation, establishment, and consolidation of the Islamic community, it is essential to nurture it like a young sapling that is now growing stronger. During this period, believers sufficiently enhanced their social growth and development to the extent that they became capable of not only manifesting their individual religious beliefs and understanding but also bringing divine concepts and teachings into the social arena. They were tasked with spreading the invitation of Islam to the farthest corners of the world and engaging in conflict and opposition against manifestations of polytheism and disbelief from a position of strength.

Stage Four: Surahs al-Māʾidah and al-Tawbah (Revelation 113 and 114) – Social Transformation: Institutionalizing the Identity of Believers

The fourth phase of plant growth in verse 29 of Surah al-Fatḥ refers to a stage of agricultural growth where the plant has borne fruit, expanded quantitatively and numerically, and its seeds, enter a new cycle of growth.

This phase compares the companions of the Messenger of God (PBUH) to a farm where the plant has "*Fastawā 'alā Sūqihī*": A solid and enduring community that reproduces and multiplies itself like a crop. In this stage of growth and perfection of the Prophet's (PBUH) companions, established and solidified in the base of the Islamic civil government, the number of Muslims has multiplied significantly (Ḥākim, 2004 AD/1425 AH: 256; Sadr, 1964 AD/1384 AH: 117), and now, with the struggle of the believers, the Islamic Ummah is in the process of formation and growth.

In this phase, we witness the revelation of the last two Surahs, al-Mā'idah and al-Tawbah. In these two Surahs, the Quran looks to the future and addresses several challenges as they reach the peak of victories and new openings: concerns about the backwardness of Muslims (al-Mā'idah 113/54), recalling the historical lessons of the Jews and Christians, cautioning against accepting the sovereignty of foreigners and losing all created opportunities (al-Mā'idah 113/51-53), emphasizing the leadership and imamate of the believers (al-Mā'idah/55-56), appointing the Prophet's (PBUH) successor in leadership (al-Mā'idah/67), devising plans for groups who migrated to Medina to teach the religion (al-Tawbah 114, 122), issuing commands to end the polytheistic practices (al-Tawbah, 28 and 123), the status of the People of the Book in the Islamic community by paying *Jizyah* (al-Tawbah, 28), identifying damaging elements within the Muslim community such as the Arabs, and referencing weak believers who harm the Islamic front (al-Tawbah/38-50), alongside recognizing the dangerous actions of hypocrites such as:

The stinginess in financial spending in the religious community (al-Tawbah/67-68), the introduction of the sick-hearted who deter believers from divine laws (al-Tawbah/123-128), the connection between believing men and women, and the unveiling of social actions such as enjoining what is right, forbidding what is wrong, establishing prayer, and paying zakat (al-Tawbah/71), as well as the introduction of distinguished elements of the Islamic community, including believers and the *Jihādists* of the community of al-Tawbah, worshipers of God, those who praise the Lord, fasters, those who bow,

those who prostrate, those who enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong, and those who uphold the divine limits (al-Tawbah/111-112).

This stage of advancement in the Islamic community, where cultural education and the institutionalization of insights, values, and faith-based behaviors have taken place, presents guiding regulations and awakening warnings. This is accompanied by cultural monitoring and vigilance.

5. Strategic Policies of Scientific Authority and Transformative Qur'anic Guidance

With its gradual revelation, the Quran initiated the method for changing and reforming society and managed the related topics and potential challenges effectively. The foundation of this authority is based on the most comprehensive and completes understanding of the spiritual and psychological characteristics, social relations, and... aspects of human life, and it has become the reference for all transformative approaches within religious communities after the period of revelation. Therefore, it is essential for Quranic researchers, managers, leaders, and cultural custodians of the country to pursue this type of scientific authority of the Quran in two areas:

- Comprehensive and Universal Transformation: By tracing the stages of the verses' revelation, the necessary knowledge for comprehensive changes in insights, orientations, and behaviors to transform the heedless human into a divine one, and the ignorant, misguided, and backward community into a rational, alert, mature, and progressive society is provided. This involves identifying the relevant topics, issues of transformation, and associated challenges, and following their evolution with appropriate arrangements, coexistence, distribution, and combination of the elements and priorities that provide the religious identity and internalization of these within all realms.

- Thematic Transformations: In such a way that the process of introducing an element, the actions, and responses related to its identity based on the Quran is pursued throughout the revelation's

course. For example, unsuitable elements concerning the divine identity of the people and the Islamic community are examined and the method for eliminating that element within the Qur'anic approach is identified. In this type of authority, the cultural engineering of the post-revelation era is reproduced. This means that with the wise configuration of the Qur'anic elements during the revelation process and the stages of the Islamic invitation's progress, necessary and practical models for the presence, infusion, and internalization of each of the religious elements can be obtained, as well as models for identifying and removing undesirable identity-creating elements.

Conclusion

- The power of the Quran in guiding the misguided human towards their deserving perfection and securing their stages of development, while navigating the challenges of opposition and resistance, as well as skillfully leading human beings and society through the sharp turns on the straight path of their happiness, clearly illustrates that the Word of God possesses not only content but also the capability to lead and manage human beings in practice and action.

- The authoritative role of the Quran in a systematic and transformative approach to its teachings requires studies on the gradual revelation of the Quran. This should be aimed at bringing about change and transformation in the lifestyles of individuals and human communities, thereby realizing the Quran's authority in achieving religious elements and comprehensive transformation within society.

- The four stages of growth and development of the followers of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) are not limited to the era of the Quran's revelation and the Prophet's presence; rather, they pave the way for a systematic transformation of the Islamic society and the followers of the Seal of Prophets (PBUH) from the beginning to the end of the world. It is natural that creating transformation in these four stages requires specific conditions to assess the accuracy and correctness of the believers' progress on the straight path to which the Quran and the Prophet (PBUH) call.

- The scientific authority of the Quran is recognized in light of the religious transformation process and the gradual changes within religious society. Based on verse 29 of Surah al-Fatḥ , there are four stages: Breaking through the shell of polytheism and ignorance and nurturing the innate potential and inner identity of the believers; empowering and elevating the believers' identity in the land of disbelief; establishing the identity of believers in the nascent Islamic society and realizing and recognizing the group identity of the believers; institutionalizing, multiplying, and developing the robust identity of the believers for the transformation and advancement of Islamic society, which can be envisioned and realized in every time and place.

- The correct advancement of Islamic society is achieved when transformative programs aligned with the Quranic method, tailored to the needs and conditions of society, are set in motion. It is incumbent upon those responsible for cultural and social guidance in Islamic society to adopt the transformative approach of the Quran during its gradual revelation, harmonizing the transformative movement of society with it, and to refine the transformative issues of society by referring to the scientific authority of the Quran in designing and correcting the transformative framework. Of course, it is crucial not to overlook that the transformations in the communities targeted for change must first be aligned and compared with the Quranic transformations before moving on to policy-making, strategy formulation, tactical planning, and the Quranic actions within the target society.

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