

«مقاله پژوهشی»

بررسی تطبیقی جامعیت قرآن از دیدگاه ابن عربی و امام خمینی

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چکیده

جامعیت قرآن، یکی از موضوعات اساسی مباحث علوم قرآنی است. دانشمندان مسلمان از گذشته تا به حال با محور قرار دادن آیات قرآن و روایات فریقین به تبیین این مبنا پرداخته‌اند. عده‌ای با طرح جامعیت مقایسه‌ای، معتقدند که قرآن به عنوان آخرین کتاب نازل شده در مقایسه با سایر کتاب‌های آسمانی جامعیت دارد. بعضی جامعیت حداکثری را برگزیده و قرآن را جامع همه علوم و فنون دانسته‌اند. برخی با بیان جامعیت حداقلی، جامعیت قرآن را در باب مسائل ارزشی و اخلاقی دانسته‌اند. عده‌ای با پذیرش جامعیت اعتدالی قرآن را کتاب هدایتگر انسان در امور مادی و معنوی معرفی کرده‌اند. این پژوهش به شیوه توصیفی تحلیلی، جامعیت قرآن را از دیدگاه ابن عربی و امام خمینی، به شکل تطبیقی کاویده است. یافته‌های پژوهش نشان می‌دهد که هر دو متفکر بزرگ اسلامی، با پذیرش جامعیت مقایسه‌ای و رد جامعیت حداقلی، دیدگاه جدیدی با عنوان جامعیت قرآن به فراخور فهم مخاطبان مطرح کرده‌اند که بیانگر رمز جاودانگی قرآن در هر عصر و مکانی است. در این میان وجه افتراق دیدگاه ابن عربی و امام خمینی، در این نکته است که ابن عربی، جامعیت حداکثری، اشاره آیات قرآن به علوم گذشته و آینده، را می‌پذیرد، درحالی که در اندیشه امام خمینی، قرآن کتاب هدایت و آدم‌سازی بوده و اشاره به کلیات و مسلمات علوم مادی در آیات قرآن در جهت تربیت و هدایت انسان است.

واژه‌های کلیدی

قرآن، جامعیت قرآن، ابن عربی، امام خمینی.

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ORIGINAL ARTICLE

A Comparative Study of the Comprehensiveness of the Qur'an from the Perspectives of Ibn 'Arabī and Imam Khomeini

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ABSTRACT

The comprehensiveness of the Qur'an (Jami'yyat al-Qur'an) is one of the fundamental topics in Qur'anic studies. Muslim scholars from the past to the present have explained this principle by focusing on Qur'anic verses and narrations from both Sunni and Shi'a sources (Farīqayn). Some, by proposing comparative comprehensiveness, believe that the Qur'an, as the last revealed book, is comprehensive compared to other divine books. Some have chosen maximum comprehensiveness, considering the Qur'an to encompass all sciences and arts. Others, by expressing minimal comprehensiveness, have limited the Qur'an's comprehensiveness to ethical and moral issues. Some, accepting moderate comprehensiveness, have introduced the Qur'an as a guide for humans in material and spiritual matters. This research, using a descriptive-analytical method, has comparatively explored the comprehensiveness of the Qur'an from the perspectives of Ibn 'Arabī and Imam Khomeini. The research findings show that both great Islamic thinkers, while accepting comparative comprehensiveness and rejecting minimal comprehensiveness, have proposed a new view titled "the Qur'an's comprehensiveness according to the understanding of its audience," which explains the secret of the Qur'an's timelessness in every era and place. The point of difference between Ibn 'Arabī and Imam Khomeini's views is that Ibn 'Arabī accepts maximum comprehensiveness, referring to the Qur'an's verses indicating past and future sciences, while in Imam Khomeini's thought, the Qur'an is a book of guidance and human development, and references to generalities and established material sciences in Qur'anic verses are for the purpose of human education and guidance.

KEYWORDS

Qur'an, Comprehensiveness of the Qur'an (Jami'yyat al-Qur'an), Ibn 'Arabī, Imam Khomeini.



Introduction

The Qur'an, as evidenced by numerous verses, is a revelation that clarifies every parable and reminder for humanity, illuminates every matter, explains everything, and is a detailed book. Its teachings and instructions are not confined to any specific race, society, group, or class, and its commandments are eternal and everlasting (Qur'an 16:89; 6:114; 12:111; 17:89; 18:54; 30:58; 39:27; 21:107; 68:52; 34:28; 25:1; 15:9; 41:42; 5:3).

Furthermore, based on narrations from the Impeccable Imams (AS), such as those that describe the Qur'an as encompassing all sciences, arts, and human needs (Fayḍ Kāshānī, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 1, 56; Baḥrānī, 1995 AD/1416 AH: 1, 30), those that emphasize that the Qur'an contains news of the past and future as well as all the rulings people need (Ṣadūq, 1999: 1, 216), those that consider the discovery and extraction of various sciences from the Qur'an to be the task of specific individuals (Kulaynī, 1986 AD/ 1407 AH: 1, 61), and those that identify the Qur'an, along with the Sunnah, as the source of all knowledge (Majlisī, 1982 AD/1403 AH: 73, 212), the concepts and teachings of the Qur'an possess the necessary comprehensiveness and applicability in every time and place. Every individual, according to their level of understanding, can benefit from the ocean of knowledge, news, and teachings of the Qur'an and be its audience.

These characteristics and attributes of the Qur'an have created a suitable foundation for Islamic scholars and exegetes to discover new dimensions of the Qur'an's eternity and universality through contemplation and reflection on this divine book. Among these dimensions are the sciences derived from the Qur'an and the scope of its comprehensiveness, which contemporaries have referred to as the "Comprehensiveness of the Qur'an." This concept has always been a focus of

attention for Islamic scholars, both past and present, from the early centuries of Islam to the present day, with Muslims proving new aspects of it in every era.

The term "Comprehensiveness" (*Jāmi'īyyah*) is structurally a derived noun (*Maṣḍar ṣinā'ī*) formed from the active participle (*Ism Fā'il*) of the triliteral root "J-M-ʿ." In lexicology, "J-M-ʿ" means to gather scattered things or to unite the parts of something (Ibn Manẓūr, 1993 AD/1414 AH: 8, 53; Rāghib Iṣfahānī, 1991 AD/1412 AH: 201). "*Jāmi'*" means comprehensive or all-encompassing, and "comprehensiveness" (*jāmi'īyyah*) refers to the state or quality of being comprehensive (Ṣadrī Afshār, 2002: 1, 422; Sayyāḥ, 1989: 282).

In terminology, this term has occupied a special place, and contemporary thinkers and exegetes, considering rational, scientific, educational, and social approaches in Qur'anic interpretation, have provided various definitions for it. Some have merely defined it without commenting on the scope of the Qur'an's comprehensiveness, stating: "Comprehensiveness in terminology means universality and inclusiveness, whether in the realm of religious teachings or extending to non-religious matters." (Shafī'ī, 2006: 2) Others, by defining the scope of the Qur'an's comprehensiveness, have considered it to include matters of the hereafter and religion (Ṭayyib, 1999: 5, 178). Some have stated that the universality and inclusiveness of the Qur'an's teachings encompass all aspects of human life in all places and times (Mu'addab, 2007: 233). Others have adopted a moderate approach: "The comprehensiveness of the Qur'an means the explanation of all matters necessary for the perfection of the individual and society in all spiritual and material aspects; however, it does not mean that the Qur'an is a vast encyclopedia containing all the details of mathematical,

geographical, chemical, physical, botanical sciences, and the like. Therefore, the comprehensiveness of the Qur'an refers to its inclusiveness and universality in addressing matters related to material and spiritual happiness and perfection." (Makārim Shīrāzī, 1995: 11, 361) Finally, some have focused on the social and educational dimensions of the Qur'an, believing that: "Comprehensiveness means the existence of a set of guidelines and instructions that respond to human needs in achieving happiness and well-being in every era and time, without which humans cannot attain happiness and perfection." ('Ayāzī, 2001: 18)

In determining the scope of the Qur'an's comprehensiveness, some exegetes have adopted a maximalist view, believing that the apparent meanings of the Qur'anic verses refer to all sciences, even human and natural sciences (Ibn Kathīr, 1998 AD/1419 AH: 4, 510; Suyūṭī, 1982 AD/1404 AH: 4, 127; Ālūsī, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 4, 144; Ḥawwī, 2003 AD/1424 AH: 6, 2965; Fayḍ Kāshānī, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 1, 57; Ja'farī, 1997: 6, 194). Others have considered the Qur'an a guide for humans in both material and spiritual matters, adopting a moderate view (Ṭabāṭabā'ī, 1995: 12, 469; Makārim Shīrāzī, 1995: 11, 362; Rashīd Riḍā, 1993 AD/1414 AH: 7, 38). Some have taken a minimalist approach, limiting the scope of the comprehensiveness of religion, and by extension the Qur'an, to matters of values and ethics (Soroush, 1998: 2-9). Additionally, another group of exegetes, in explaining the scope of the Qur'an's comprehensiveness, have introduced the concept of comparative comprehensiveness, believing that the Qur'an, as the last revealed book, possesses comprehensiveness in comparison to other divine scriptures (Ālūsī, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 3, 321; Ibn 'Āshūr, 1999 AD/1420 AH: 5, 123; Marāghī, n.d.: 6, 129; Sayyid Quṭb, 2004 AD/1425 AH: 2, 902;

Ṭabāṭabā'ī, 1995: 5, 348; Makārim Shīrāzī, 1995: 4, 401).

Among these, *Ibn 'Arabī* and Imam Khomeini, two great Islamic mystics and thinkers, have expressed valuable and noteworthy opinions on the comprehensiveness of the Qur'an and its scope. Therefore, questions such as what *Ibn 'Arabī* and Imam Khomeini meant by the comprehensiveness of the Qur'an, the extent of its scope and dimensions, and whether they held a specific view on the Qur'an's comprehensiveness, highlight the importance and priority of this research.

1. Research Background

Numerous articles have been written on the comprehensiveness of the Qur'an, such as: Qāsimpūr (2023): "A Comparative Analysis of the Intrinsic and Comparative Comprehensiveness of the Qur'an from the Perspectives of Ayatollah Javādī Āmulī and Ayatollah Mišbāḥ Yazdī," Muḥaqqiq Gharamī (2022): "Critique and Explanation of the Concept of the Qur'an's Comprehensiveness," Ḥusaynzādeh (2022): "A Comparative Interpretive Reading of the Scope of the Qur'an's Scientific Comprehensiveness from the Perspectives of Ayatollah Javādī Āmulī and Ayatollah Ma'rifat," Ḥusaynī Kāshānī (2021): "The Scope of the Qur'an's Comprehensiveness from the Perspective of Nahj al-Balāghah," Dilafkār (2021): "A Comparative Study of the Qur'an's Comprehensiveness from the Perspectives of Mughniyah and Shaltūt," and Mehmandust (2019): "A Comparative Study of the Views of 'Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā'ī and 'Allāmah Majlisī on the Comprehensiveness of the Qur'an," among others.

Among these, no independent article has been written specifically on the comprehensiveness of the Qur'an from the perspective of *Ibn 'Arabī*. However, in the article by Kākā'ī (2009): "The Qur'an and the Method of Interpretation from

the Perspective of *Ibn 'Arabī*," in the discussion titled "The Status of the Qur'an and the Levels of People's Understanding of the Qur'an," brief and passing references are made to the comprehensiveness and authenticity of the Qur'an in comparison to other divine scriptures, the discovery of all sciences revealed in the Qur'an, and the varying levels of people's understanding of its verses. Similarly, regarding the comprehensiveness of the Qur'an from the perspective of Imam Khomeini, articles such as Akbarī Dastak (2015): "The Comprehensiveness of the Qur'an from the Perspective of Imam Khomeini," Diyārī (2015): "The Foundations and Pillars of the Qur'an's Comprehensiveness in the Thought of Imam Khomeini," and the thesis by Mūsawī Karāmātī (2010): "An Examination of the Qur'an's Comprehensiveness with Emphasis on the Views of Imam Khomeini," have been written. The authors of these works have discussed the comprehensiveness of the Qur'an and its scope from the perspective of Imam Khomeini (ra). However, they have not addressed the theory of "Comprehensiveness According to the Audience's Understanding," which is one of his unique views in the field of the Qur'an's comprehensiveness. This indicates the novelty of the current research and its non-repetitive nature. Therefore, to date, no independent work titled "A Comparative Study of the Comprehensiveness of the Qur'an from the Perspectives of *Ibn 'Arabī* and Imam Khomeini" has been written.

2. The Comprehensiveness of the Qur'an and Its Scope in the Thought of *Ibn 'Arabī*

Ibn 'Arabī's perspective on the Qur'an is deeply mystical, and the foundation of his thought in most of his works, such as *al-Futūḥāt al-Makkīyyah* and *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam*, is based on an interpretive-mystical understanding of the Qur'anic verses. From *Ibn 'Arabī*'s viewpoint, the Qur'an is the character of the Prophet

(PBUH), and the Prophet's character is the Qur'an. Those who have not seen the Prophet (PBUH) can perceive his existence by contemplating the Qur'an, as each serves as a mirror for the other. In his thought, the Qur'an is the speech of Allah (*kalām Allāh*), and speech is an attribute of God; thus, the Prophet (PBUH) is also an attribute of God (*Ibn 'Arabī*, n.d.: 4, 61-62). For *Ibn 'Arabī*, the Qur'an is a comprehensive and complete book, embodying comprehensiveness (*Jāmi'īyyah*). It was revealed by Allah, the All-Encompassing and Perfect Name, to the Prophet (PBUH), the perfect and comprehensive human being. Therefore, a proper understanding of *Ibn 'Arabī*'s statements regarding the scope and extent of the Qur'an's comprehensiveness first requires an explanation of the various perspectives and theories on this topic, such as comparative, maximalist, moderate, and minimalist comprehensiveness, followed by aligning these with his statements and uncovering his unique perspective on the scope of the Qur'an's comprehensiveness.

2.1. Comparative Comprehensiveness

Comparative comprehensiveness is an aspect of the Qur'an's comprehensiveness that emphasizes that since Islam is the completion of divine religions and the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) is the seal of the prophets, the Qur'an, as the last revealed book, possesses comprehensiveness in comparison to other divine scriptures (Ālūsī, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 3, 321; Ibn 'Ashūr, 1999 AD/1420 AH: 5, 123; Marāghī, n.d.: 6, 129; Sayyid Quṭb, 2004 AD/1425 AH: 2, 902; Ṭabāṭabā'ī, 1995: 5, 348; Makārim Shīrāzī, 1995: 4, 401).

Ibn 'Arabī, relying on the verse: "And We have certainly given you, [O! Muhammad], the seven oft-repeated verses and the great Qur'an" (Qur'an 15:87), considers Sūrah al-Fātiḥah and

the great Qur'an to be the Umm al-Kitāb (Mother of the Book) and the source of all divine scriptures. All divine books have emerged from it and have been expressed in different languages (Ibn 'Arabī, n.d.: 3, 60-61). This mystical view of the Qur'an's comprehensiveness stems from *Ibn 'Arabī's* belief in the *'Ālam al-Amr* (the world of command), the realm of abstract entities where the existence of beings occurs without the need for temporal or spatial conditions, in contrast to the *'Ālam al-Khalq* (the world of creation), where the existence of beings occurs gradually and under specific material conditions. In his thought, the Qur'an is no exception to this principle and, in the *'Ālam al-Amr*, is the origin and root of all divine scriptures. Furthermore, he emphasizes, based on the narration "I have been given the comprehensive words (*Jawāmi' al-Kalim*)," that all truths and knowledge have been granted to the Prophet (PBUH), and the Qur'an has gathered all the meanings of previous scriptures. Thus, his Sharī'ah (divine law) is all-encompassing and comprehensive, incorporating the laws of other prophets. In his mystical thought, the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was sent as a prophet even before the creation of Adam, and other religions branched out from the pure religion of Islam. Other prophets, due to the physical absence of the Prophet (PBUH), are his deputies and successors. *Ibn 'Arabī* supports this view with the narration "If Moses were alive, he would have no choice but to follow me," and the verse: "Indeed, We sent down the Torah, in which was guidance and light. The prophets who submitted [to Allah] judged by it for the Jews, as did the rabbis and scholars by that with which they were entrusted of the Scripture of Allah, and they were witnesses thereto. So do not fear the people but fear Me, and do not exchange My verses for a small price. And

whoever does not judge by what Allah has revealed—then it is those who are the disbelievers" (Qur'an 5:44). He considers the Prophet (PBUH) to have been sent for all of humanity and the Sharī'ah of Islam and the Qur'an to encompass all religions and divine scriptures (Ibn 'Arabī, n.d.: 2, 107). Therefore, in *Ibn 'Arabī's* mystical thought, the Prophet (PBUH) is the culmination of prophethood, and other prophets are his successors and deputies. The pure religion of Islam completes all other religions, which are branches of it, and the Qur'an, as the final divine book, gathers all divine scriptures, with other books emerging from it. This reflects his acceptance of comparative comprehensiveness, meaning that the Qur'an is comprehensive in encompassing all religions and divine scriptures.

2.2. Maximalist Comprehensiveness

According to this view, the Qur'an encompasses all sciences, including natural and human sciences, within the apparent meanings of its words. Some have also referred to this theory as "absolute comprehensiveness." (Khosrowpanāh, 2005: 41-46) The basis of this perspective lies in verses such as Qur'an 5:3, 12:111, 6:38, 16:89, and others, as well as narrations like "Indeed, Allah, the Blessed and Exalted, has not left anything..." and "That is the Qur'an, so seek its interpretation...", along with reports from *Anas ibn Mālik* and *Ibn Mas'ūd*. Among the exegetes of both schools of thought, *Ibn Kathīr*, *Suyūṭī*, *Ālūsī*, *Ṭanṭāwī*, *Ḥawwī*, *Fayḍ Kāshānī*, and *Ja'farī* are proponents of this view (Ibn Kathīr, 1998 AD/1419 AH: 4, 510; Suyūṭī, 1983 AD/1404 AH: 4, 127; Ālūsī, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 4, 144; Ḥawwī, 2003 AD/1424 AH: 6, 2965; Fayḍ Kāshānī, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 1, 57; Ja'farī, 1997: 6, 194).

Opponents of this view argue that the Qur'an is a book of guidance, and if there are

references to various sciences in its verses, it is from this perspective (Ṭabāṭabā'ī, 1995: 12, 325). Additionally, such an apparent comprehensiveness contradicts intuition and would require us to derive new meanings from the Qur'anic text that differ from those understood at the time of its revelation. Furthermore, since modern sciences and theories are constantly evolving, adopting a maximalist view would subject the Qur'an to the same errors and changes, whereas the Qur'an is free from falsehood (Dhahabī, 1976: 492).

In the Qur'anic perspective of *Shaykh al-Akbar, Muḥyī al-Dīn*, famously known as *Ibn 'Arabī*, the Qur'an is a book that contains the sciences of the past and the future. He bases this belief on the statement of his teacher, *Shaykh Abū Madyan al-Maghribī*: "A seeker cannot truly be a seeker until he finds in the Qur'an everything he desires, and any speech that does not possess this universality is not the Qur'an." *Ibn 'Arabī* asserts that a spiritual seeker cannot attain perfection unless he finds answers to all his questions in the Qur'an (*Ibn 'Arabī*, n.d.: 3, 94). By referencing verses such as "We have not neglected in the Book anything..." (Qur'an 6:38) and "Falsehood cannot approach it from before it or from behind it..." (Qur'an 41:42) *Ibn 'Arabī* regards the Qur'an as a complete light that encompasses all sciences. He believes that whoever is granted the Qur'an has, in fact, been granted complete knowledge, and through the Qur'an, all sciences mentioned and unmentioned in other divine scriptures are revealed. The Qur'an contains the essence of all sciences, the sciences of the prophets and angels, and it is a light that can only be explained and elucidated by those who are deeply connected to the Qur'an (*Ibn 'Arabī*, n.d.: 2, 107). Therefore, from *Ibn 'Arabī*'s perspective, the Qur'an contains all sciences of the past and the future,

and it is a light that only the people of the Qur'an can comprehend. This description of the scope and comprehensiveness of the Qur'an indicates his acceptance of the maximalist view.

2.3. Minimalist Comprehensiveness

Some have referred to this view as "Non-comprehensiveness," while others have termed it "Relative comprehensiveness." According to this theory, religion has provided us with the minimum necessary in areas such as natural sciences, humanities, and even jurisprudence. From this perspective, only ethics is maximalist, and religion has only addressed ethical and value-based issues, being complete solely in the realm of ethics. The perfection of religion is understood in this sense (Soroush, 1998: 2-9). Although this view pertains to the non-comprehensiveness of religion rather than the Qur'an, it extends to the Qur'an as well, since religion is derived from Qur'anic verses and narrations.

This view contradicts the Qur'anic verses and narrations that indicate the comprehensiveness of the Qur'an, as well as the correct perspectives on the scope of the Qur'an's comprehensiveness. Additionally, the Qur'an addresses various theological, jurisprudential, general human virtues, and individual and social laws (Ṭabāṭabā'ī, 1995: 5, 23).

In the Qur'anic thought of *Ibn 'Arabī*, the minimalist view, which limits the scope of the Qur'an's comprehensiveness to ethical and value-based issues, has no place. This is because the Qur'anic verses refer to the sciences of the past and future and address both the material and spiritual needs of humanity.

2.4. Comprehensiveness According to the Audience's Understanding

According to this view, every individual, based on their level of understanding, can benefit from the ocean of the Qur'an's knowledge and

be its audience. Primarily, the Prophet (PBUH) and the Impeccable Imams (AS) are the true audiences of the Qur'an, as they can derive various sciences and knowledge from the entirety of the Qur'an. This theory aligns with numerous Qur'anic verses that call humans to reflect, ponder, and deliberate on the divine verses, as well as narrations that posit another level of meaning beyond the apparent meaning, known as the esoteric meaning (*Bāṭin*). Understanding the Qur'an is a shared objective in both levels, as the Qur'an's responsiveness to human needs in individual and social life depends on their level of understanding of the divine speech. This understanding is achieved through reflection, deep comprehension, and grasping the esoteric meanings of the Qur'anic verses. The levels of understanding vary according to a narration from Imam *Ḥusayn* (AS): "The Book of Allah, the Almighty, is based on four things: expression (*'Ibārah*), allusion (*Ishārah*), subtleties (*Laṭā'if*), and truths (*Ḥaqā'iq*). The expression is for the common people, the allusion is for the elite, the subtleties are for the saints, and the truths are for the prophets." (Majlisī, 1983 AD/1403 AH: 89, 20)

This view can be considered one that was first articulated by *Ibn 'Arabī*. From his perspective, every entity has four levels or layers: the apparent (*Zāhir*), the outward form of everything; the esoteric (*Bāṭin*), that which the apparent relies upon; the limit (*Ḥadd*), that which distinguishes it from others; and the point of emergence (*Maṭla'*), the ultimate layer that is unveiled (*Ibn 'Arabī*, n.d.: 4, 411). *Ibn 'Arabī* also describes the ranks of the men of God in these four levels: Men of the apparent, men of the esoteric, men of the limit, and men of the point of emergence. He cites Qur'anic verses such as "Among the believers are men true to what they promised Allah. Among them

is he who has fulfilled his vow [to the death], and among them is he who awaits [his chance]. And they did not alter [the terms of their commitment] by any alteration" (Qur'an 33:23) for the men of the apparent, "Men whom neither commerce nor sale distracts from the remembrance of Allah and performance of prayer and giving of *Zakāh*. They fear a Day in which the hearts and eyes will [fearfully] turnabout" (Qur'an 24:37) for the men of the esoteric, "...And on the elevations are men who recognize each by their mark..." (Qur'an 7:46) for the men of the limit, and "And proclaim to the people the Hajj [pilgrimage]; they will come to you on foot and on every lean camel; they will come from every distant pass" (Qur'an 22:27) for the men of the point of emergence. Based on a narration from the Prophet (PBUH), "There is no verse in the Qur'an that does not have an apparent, an esoteric, a limit, and a point of emergence," *Ibn 'Arabī* considers every verse of the Qur'an to have these layers of meaning, and each person can reach these meanings according to their level of understanding (*Ibn 'Arabī*, n.d.: 1, 187).

From *Ibn 'Arabī*'s perspective, whoever comprehends the Qur'an as the Qur'an, views it with a single eye, and for them, it is the unity of all. Similarly, whoever comprehends the entirety of the Qur'an, it becomes the criterion (*Furqān*) for them, and for such a person, the apparent, esoteric, limit, and point of emergence of the Qur'an become observable. However, for the first person, who views the Qur'an merely as the Qur'an, these distinctions do not hold due to the difference in their spiritual taste (*Ibn 'Arabī*, n.d.: 3, 94). Inspired by the verse "This is a proclamation for the people and a warning to them, and that they may know that He is but one God and that those of understanding may be reminded" (Qur'an 14:52), *Ibn 'Arabī* divides

people into four groups based on their understanding and comprehension of its meanings: those who reflect, the rational, the knowledgeable, and the people of understanding (*Ulul Albāb*). According to this, the Qur'anic verses serve as a proclamation for some, a warning for others, a source of knowledge of monotheism for some, and a reminder for others (Ibn 'Arabī, n.d.: 3, 85).

Thus, in *Ibn 'Arabī's* mystical thought, everything in existence has layers and levels: the apparent (*Zāhir*), which is the stage of words; the esoteric (*Bāṭin*), which is beyond the literal meaning; the limit (*Hadd*), which is the final stage of the apparent meaning; and the point of emergence (*Maṭla'*), which is the initial stage of the esoteric meaning. Each of these layers can be applied to humans and even to Qur'anic verses, and based on this, the levels of human understanding and comprehension of the Qur'anic verses vary. Consequently, the comprehensiveness of the Qur'an depends on each individual's understanding of its verses. This is the view that was first articulated by *Ibn 'Arabī*, interpreting the scope and comprehensiveness of the Qur'an according to the audience's understanding of the layers of meaning in its verses. Among Shī'a exegetes, Imam Khomeini, Qarā'atī, and Ja'farī, and among Sunnī scholars, *Ālūsī*, are proponents of this view (Imam Khomeini, 2006:20, 408-409; *Ālūsī*, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 7, 70; Qarā'atī, 2009: 4, 569; Ja'farī, 1997: 6, 194-200).

3. The Comprehensiveness of the Qur'an and Its Scope in the Thought of Imam Khomeini

Imam Khomeini was one of the contemporary Islamic jurists, exegetes, and thinkers who authored valuable works in the fields of jurisprudence (*Fiqh*) and principles (*Uṣūl*), such as *al-Rasā'il*, *al-Bay'*, *Tahrīr al-Wasīlah*, *al-*

Makāsib al-Muḥarramah, and *Manāsik*. He also responded to doubts and misconceptions in works like *Kashf al-Asrār* (which is a response to the doubts raised against Shī'a and the establishment of an Islamic government in the treatise *Asrār Hizār*), and wrote commentaries on ḥadīth texts, such as *Forty Ḥadīths* and *Sharḥ Ḥadīth Junūd al-'Aql wa al-Jahl*, as well as exegetical works like his commentary on *Sūrah al-Ḥamd*. Although it may seem that the dominant aspect of his thought and views in his jurisprudential and non-jurisprudential works revolves around the establishment of an Islamic government and the guardianship of the jurist (*Wilāyat al-Faqīh*), it is important to note that the Qur'an was the fundamental source of Imam Khomeini's intellectual and practical conduct. The concepts and teachings of this divine book were truly manifested in his speech, behavior, and actions. One of these concepts, which is also considered one of his exegetical principles, is the issue of the comprehensiveness of the Qur'an, which he addressed in various works.

From his perspective, the Qur'an is a book whose concepts and teachings are eternal and applicable in every time and place, among every people of any race or nationality, and in every region of the world until the Day of Judgment. Imam Khomeini considered the secret of this comprehensiveness and the timelessness of the Qur'an's content to lie in the freshness and vitality of its concepts and teachings regarding spirituality and other matters in every era (Imam Khomeini, 2006: 20, 93).

3.1. Comparative Comprehensiveness

In Imam Khomeini's thought, the Qur'an encompasses all knowledge and truths, and no other divine scripture can match its comprehensiveness. Regarding the dimensions of this type of comprehensiveness, he considered the Qur'an's method of addressing topics such as the

attributes of God, ethics, the call to monotheism and the afterlife, asceticism, and detachment from the material world to be unique to the Qur'an, as these are not found in other divine scriptures in the same way. Thus, the Qur'anic verses sometimes describe, in half a line, arguments that philosophers elaborate on with multiple premises, using concise verses that do not resemble formal proofs (Imam Khomeini, 2003: 62-63).

3.2. Maximalist Comprehensiveness

In Imam Khomeini's Qur'anic thought, the maximalist view regarding the scope of the Qur'an's comprehensiveness is not valid. He interpreted the phrase "A clarification of all things" (Qur'an 16:89) as referring to the instructions and rulings that humans need on their path to happiness (Imam Khomeini, 2002: 29). In his view, the Qur'an is not merely a book of material matters but a guide for humans in all aspects of education. If material matters are given importance in the Qur'an, it is in the light of spirituality, with material matters being subordinate to spiritual ones. Therefore, the Qur'an is a book for the cultivation of humanity (Imam Khomeini, 2006: 7, 532). From this statement, it is clear that if the Qur'anic verses refer to various material sciences; it is in the context of guiding and spiritually educating humanity.

3.3. Moderate Comprehensiveness

According to this view, the Qur'an addresses all matters necessary for human guidance, and the phrase "for all things" in verse 89 of *Sūrah al-Nahl* refers to all matters related to human guidance, such as true knowledge of monotheism and the afterlife, virtuous ethics, divine laws, stories, and admonitions that people need for their guidance (Ṭabāṭabā'ī, 1995: 12, 469). Among exegetes from both

schools of thought, 'Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā'ī, Ayatollah Makārim Shīrāzī, and *Rashīd Riḍā* are proponents of this view (ibid.; Makārim Shīrāzī, 1995: 11, 362; Rashīd Riḍā, 1993 AD/1414 AH: 7, 38).

In Imam Khomeini's Qur'anic thought, the Qur'an is a book of guidance and a manual for the spiritual journey of humanity, a nurturer of souls, a healer of heart ailments, a light on the path to God, and a book that revives hearts with the eternal life of divine knowledge. All matters contributing to human progress and educational development are addressed in this noble book (Imam Khomeini, 2001: 184; ibid., 2006: 3, 237). According to him, the comprehensiveness of the Qur'an in expressing the knowledge and truths of the divine names and attributes, monotheism and the afterlife, asceticism, detachment from the material world, and the journey to the abode of truth is aimed at guiding and educating humanity (Imam Khomeini, 2003: 62-63).

Thus, in his words, like the esteemed exegete 'Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā'ī, the comprehensiveness of the Qur'an is a moderate, guidance-oriented comprehensiveness, and this divine book addresses all matters related to human guidance.

3.4. Minimalist Comprehensiveness

In Imam Khomeini's Qur'anic thought, the minimalist view, which limits the scope of the Qur'anic verses to ethical and value-based issues, has no place. In his view, the Qur'an does not merely address personal interests but also discusses social, political, and even governance-related laws, as well as the organization and education of a healthy society (Imam Khomeini, 2006: 18, 423). The comparison between the social aspects of the Qur'an and its ritualistic verses indicates a ratio of one hundred to one or even more (Imam Khomeini, 2002: 11).

From Imam Khomeini's perspective, the Qur'an is a book revealed for the guidance of humans, who possess spiritual, material, apparent, and hidden dimensions. It regulates personal needs, the relationship between individuals and God, with others, with their own society, with other societies, and even with enemies at the individual, social, and political levels (Imam Khomeini, 2006: 4, 44). It outlines the general and fundamental laws of matters such as taxation, judiciary, governance, marriage and divorce, inheritance, transactions like trade, leasing, reconciliation, gifts, sharecropping, partnerships, registration, public punishments like *Hudūd*, retribution (*Qaṣāṣ*), propagation, prevention of vices like alcohol, gambling, music, adultery, sodomy, theft, betrayal, murder, laws of purification and cleanliness, and general acts of worship like prayer, fasting, pilgrimage, ablution (*Wuḍū'*), and ritual bathing (*Ghusl*) (Imam Khomeini, n.d.: 315). Therefore, his statements indicate that the Qur'anic verses address not only individual, jurisprudential, and legal matters but also social issues, political relations, and the methods of educating and organizing a healthy Qur'anic society. The scope of the Qur'an's comprehensiveness includes personal matters, the relationship between humans and God, social relations, political issues, the relationship between Muslims and other religions, and even warfare with disbelievers. Thus, from Imam Khomeini's perspective, minimalist comprehensiveness is not valid.

3.5. Comprehensiveness According to the Audience's Understanding

In Imam Khomeini's thought, the Qur'an is like a vast divine banquet from which every individual, regardless of their status, time, or place, can benefit according to their level of understanding. Thus, he believed that the Qur'anic verses are effective and functional for all segments of

society in every era, including the general public, philosophers, mystics, people of knowledge, and the elite. Every person can utilize it according to their capacity, ability, and expertise (Imam Khomeini, 2006: 20, 249).

From Imam Khomeini's perspective, this divine book is for the happiness of all classes and the entirety of humanity. Since the spiritual states, habits, and morals of humans vary across times and places, the Qur'an does not address all people in the same way. It calls some through the stories of the prophets, others through straightforward and simple expressions, some through the essence of matters, and others through warnings, promises, and glad tidings. To achieve this goal, it employs various techniques and methods, and the repetition of topics in the Qur'anic verses is due to the diversity in its call and admonition, which is a requirement of eloquence (Imam Khomeini, 2001: 187).

In Imam Khomeini's view, the Qur'an addresses different audiences, and most of its verses are understandable to the majority of people, while some verses are specifically for jurists, philosophers, mystics, and the saints of God (Imam Khomeini, 2006: 18, 119-120). Thus, he believed that in the Qur'an, the comprehensive divine book, there are verses about the knowledge of the divine essence and actions. Scholars, traditionists, and jurists understand the apparent meanings of these verses, while people of knowledge uncover their esoteric truths. Although they may offer different interpretations of these verses, both understandings are correct because the Qur'an is a cure for inner ailments, treating each patient according to their condition. Examples include verses like "He is the First and the Last, the Apparent and the Hidden..." (Qur'an 57:3), "Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth..." (Qur'an 24:35), "He is the one who is

God in the heavens and God on earth..." (Qur'an 43:84), "He is with you..." (Qur'an 57:4), "Wherever you turn, there is the face of Allah..." (Qur'an 2:115) and others about divine unity (*Tawhīd*). The verses at the end of *Sūrah al-Hashr* and others about the unity of attributes, the verse "And you did not throw when you threw, but it was Allah who threw..." (Qur'an 8:17), "All praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the worlds..." (Qur'an 1:2), and "Whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth glorifies Allah..." (Qur'an 62:1) pertain to the unity of actions. Some of these verses indicate precise meanings, while others point to even more profound mystical truths, providing healing for the ailments of scholars of both the apparent and esoteric sciences. At the same time, some noble verses, like the opening verses of *Sūrah al-Hadīd* and *Sūrah al-Tawhīd*, are narrated in the ḥadīth of *al-Kāfī* as being for the profound thinkers of the end times, yet they also provide sufficient benefit for those who focus on the apparent meanings. This is one of the miracles of this noble book and an indication of its comprehensiveness (Imam Khomeini, 2001: 185-186).

In Imam Khomeini's view, although Almighty God has expressed the knowledge and truths in the Qur'an and through the prophets (PBUH) and the Impeccable Imams (AS) in a way that is accessible to the general public, the levels of understanding and comprehension of the Qur'an vary according to each individual's capacity and ability. He stated:

"The rational truths are expressed by Almighty God in the noble Qur'an and by the prophets and Impeccable Imams (AS) in the noble ḥadīths, generally in the language of the common people, out of compassion and mercy for humanity, so that everyone may benefit according to their level of understanding. Thus,

they bring down the hidden rational truths to the level of the tangible and familiar experiences of the general public, so that those at this level may gain a share of the unseen world according to their capacity.... Although the prophets and impeccable saints are the ones firmly rooted in knowledge and purified in the absolute sense, and thus the knowledge of interpretation in all its levels is specific to them, the scholars of the community also have a significant share of it according to their level of knowledge and purity." (Imam Khomeini, 2003: 60-61).

Therefore, the comprehensiveness of the Qur'an according to the audience's understanding can be considered Imam Khomeini's unique theory regarding the comprehensiveness of the Qur'an, synthesizing various opinions and views on the scope of the Qur'an's comprehensiveness and the secret of its timelessness for every era and place. According to this view, the Qur'an's responsiveness to the religious and worldly needs of humanity depends on the level of understanding of its audience in every era and place. Thus, all the narrations and traditions that describe the Qur'an as comprehensive, encompassing all sciences, arts, and human needs, the knowledge of the first and the last, the news of the past and the future, and all the rulings people require, indicate that every individual, according to their understanding, can uncover various sciences and knowledge from the Qur'an. In this regard, the foremost role belongs to the Prophet (PBUH) and the Impeccable Imams (AS).

4. Commonalities and Differences Between the Two Perspectives

Both *Ibn 'Arabī* and Imam Khomeini accept the comparative comprehensiveness of the Qur'an, believing that the pure religion of Islam, and

consequently the Qur'an, encompasses all religions and divine scriptures. Both great Islamic thinkers reject the minimalist view, which limits the scope of the Qur'an's comprehensiveness to ethical and value-based issues, and instead propose a new perspective called "comprehensiveness according to the audience's understanding." This view explains the timelessness of the Qur'an for every era and place.

The only difference in the interpretive approaches of *Ibn 'Arabī* and Imam Khomeini regarding the scope of the Qur'an's comprehensiveness lies in their stance on maximalist comprehensiveness. *Ibn 'Arabī* accepts the maximalist view, believing that the Qur'anic verses refer to all sciences of the past and future. In contrast, Imam Khomeini rejects this view, considering references in the Qur'an to certain material matters (general principles of some sciences and arts) as being in the light of spirituality, which guides humanity and strengthens their faith. Thus, Imam Khomeini adopts a moderate, guidance-oriented comprehensiveness.

Conclusion

The comprehensiveness of the Qur'an is a topic accepted by all Islamic scholars, and Muslims in every era have discovered new dimensions of it. Exegetes and Qur'anic researchers from both schools of thought, based on Qur'anic verses, narrations from the Impeccable Imams (AS), and various perspectives, have expressed different views on this matter. Some have affirmed the comprehensiveness of the Qur'an as the last revealed book in comparison to other divine scriptures, adopting the comparative comprehensiveness view. Others, accepting the maximalist view, believe that the apparent meanings of the Qur'anic verses refer to all sciences, including human and natural sciences. A group has chosen the moderate view,

considering the scope of the Qur'an's comprehensiveness to include guidance-oriented comprehensiveness. Another group, based on the minimalist view, limits the Qur'an's comprehensiveness to values and ethical issues.

Among these, in the thought of *Ibn 'Arabī* and Imam Khomeini—thinkers whose primary source of mystical conduct was the Qur'an, and whose speech, behavior, and actions truly reflected the concepts and teachings of this divine book—the minimalist view is rejected, and comparative comprehensiveness is accepted. They propose a new perspective called "Comprehensiveness according to the audience's understanding," which explains the timelessness of the Qur'an for every era and place. This view synthesizes various opinions and theories regarding the scope of the Qur'an's comprehensiveness and aligns with narrations that describe the Qur'an as encompassing all sciences, arts, human needs, news of the past and future, and the rulings people require. According to their perspective, the Qur'an's responsiveness to the religious and worldly needs of humanity depends on the understanding of its audience in every era and place, with the foremost role in this regard belonging to the Prophet (PBUH) and the Impeccable Imams (AS).

The only difference in the interpretive approaches of *Ibn 'Arabī* and Imam Khomeini regarding the scope of the Qur'an's comprehensiveness is that *Ibn 'Arabī* accepts maximalist comprehensiveness, while Imam Khomeini rejects this view. Instead, he considers references in the Qur'an to certain material matters (general principles of some sciences and arts) as being in the light of spirituality, which guides humanity and strengthens their faith. Thus, Imam Khomeini adopts a moderate, guidance-oriented comprehensiveness.

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