



An Analytical Examination of “The Interdisciplinary Thematic Exegesis of The Quran,” Theorized by Dr. Muḥammad ‘Alī Riḍā’ī Iṣfahānī

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Abstract

Research Article

The Holy Quran comprises a comprehensive program that meets all needs in all aspects of human life, including personal, social, moral, political, and economic issues. To find a correct and precise understanding of such a unique program, we are required to know Quranic sciences and teachings, as well as the correct exegesis of the verses, both within the scope of terms and concepts. In this respect, Quranic scholars and great Shia exegetes have turned to explain and propose important and very applicable innovations that made a basis for a more accurate and complete understanding of Quranic verses. As an instance, we can name the “Interdisciplinary Thematic Exegesis of The Quran,” theorized by Dr. Muḥammad ‘Alī Riḍā’ī Iṣfahānī. In an analytical method, this study tried to analyze the theory in diverse sections. Hence, it is found that the adaptive relationship between the Quran and science, accountability of the Quran to human needs throughout history, the validity and permissibility of methods applied in scientific and thematic exegeses of the Quran, and the inaccuracy of imposing scientific theories on the Quran all serve as the foundations for this theory. The aforementioned theory consists of some positive consequences such as updated exegesis of the holy Quran and better comprehension of the verses, responding the new questions, scientific theorizations of the Quran, orientating the fundamentals of human sciences and subject building for sciences, and producing new science and methodizing the interactions of the Quran and new sciences.

Keywords: Theory, Interdisciplinary, *Tafsīr*, The Quran, Riḍā’ī Iṣfahānī.

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Introduction

The research method of Quranic studies might be classified into four following categories;

1. In-textual (*darūn-matnī*) method, like the exegesis of the Quran by the Quran Itself
2. Extra-textual (*burūn-matnī*) method
3. Comparative (*muqāyisi 'ī*) method
4. Interdisciplinary (*miyān-rishti 'ī*) method

Although the origins of the above-mentioned methods date back to exegetical books, they were first examined in detail in the past century. The interdisciplinary research method has fostered growth and progress in Quranic studies, sometimes producing science and dealing with the challenges at other times. Thus, the history, significance, and position of interdisciplinary studies, as well as the explanation of theory, fundamentals, elements, and consequences, are all essential, as will be described below.

Research Background

Comparative studies of the Quran and experimental sciences as one of the subjects of Quranic studies have long been studied by Quranic exegetes as well as certain experts and thinkers in experimental and human sciences. The earliest examples of interdisciplinary exegesis are found in the works of *Sheikh Al-Rais Avicenna* (c. 980—1037), the prominent Iranian philosopher, and physician. For instance, he interpreted the term '*Arsh*' (Arabic: عرش, lit. Throne) in the 17th verse of *Sūrat al-Hāqqa*³ as *Falak Al-Aflāk* (Arabic: فلک الأفلāk, lit. the superior firmament) which is the ninth Draco (constellation) of Ptolemy, and the term [the eight] *Malā'ika* (Arabic: ملائكة, lit. Angels) as the eight Draco, namely The Moon, The Sun,

³. "with the angels all over it, and the Throne of your Lord will be borne that day by eight [angels]."



Venus, Mercury, Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, and Falak al-Thawābit (Dhahabī 1976, 2:24).

Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 606 AH) has modified several scientific subjects with the Quranic verses. For instance, he interpreted and argued that the Earth is static by the 22nd verse of *Sūrat al-Baqara*⁴ (Rāzī 1999, 2:94).

The author of the book *Biḥār al-Anwār* in various volumes has investigated *Samāwāt* (Arabic: السماوات, lit. the heavens) and dealt with the scientific exegesis in many instances. For example, regarding the 29th verse of *Sūrat al-Baqara*⁵, he wrote, "The fact that there are seven heavens does not conflict with their being nine which has been proven in astronomy because the 8th and 9th heavens are interpreted as 'Arsh (Throne) and Kursī (Seat) in religious explanations (Majlisī 1984, vol.57,5th Hadith).

The author of the book *Al-Jawāhir fī Tafṣīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm* has largely interpreted the Quran in a scientific method. His commentary might be considered the pinnacle of scientific exegesis of the Quran. He has interpreted the Quran using diverse sciences on several occasions; for example, he has extracted the science of calling spirits from the 67th to 72nd verses of *Sūrat al-Baqara*⁶ concerning *Banī Isrā'īl*'s cow. He contributed

4. "He who made the earth a place of repose for you, and the sky a canopy..."

5. "It is He who created for you all that is in the earth, then He turned to the heaven and fashioned it into seven heavens, and He has knowledge of all things."

6. And when Moses said to his people, 'Allah commands you to slaughter a cow,' they said, 'Are you mocking us?' He said, 'I seek Allah's protection lest I should be one of the ignorant!' (67) They said, 'Invoke your Lord for us that He may clarify for us what she may be.' He said, 'He says, she is a cow, neither old nor young, of a middle age. Now do what you are commanded.' (68) They said, 'Invoke your Lord for us that He may clarify for us what her colour may be.' He said, 'He says, she is a cow that is yellow, of a bright hue, pleasing to the onlookers.' (69) They said, 'Invoke your Lord for us that He may clarify for us what she may be. Indeed, all cows are much alike to us, and if Allah



to several new sciences alongside his interpretation of exegetical issues (Ṭaṇṭāwī Jawharī 2004, 1:84-89).

The interdisciplinary scientific exegesis method would be invalid if it is applied to extract all sciences from the exoteric aspect of the Quran since its fundamentals are twisted. (Riḍā'ī Iṣfahānī 2009, 378). Furthermore, if the method is applied through the accommodation of sciences to the Quran, would be rendered invalid and banned whenever leads to imposing scientific perspectives on the Quran because it is considered a kind of “*tafsīr bi Ra'y*” (personal opinion-based interpretation). However, there is no impediment if it is a simple comparison of experimental scientists' perspectives with Quranic verses on an issue like the origin and end of creation, perhaps it may sometimes clarify the meaning of the Quranic scientific verses and even prove the scientific “*i'jāz*” (miraculous nature) of the Quran (Riḍā'ī Iṣfahānī 2001, 1:81)

Concise Biography of the Theorist

Dr. Muḥammad 'Alī Riḍā'ī Iṣfahānī, a contemporary Quranic scholar, was born in a religious family in *Rehnan*, Isfahan in 1962. He spent primary and guidance school in his birthplace and secondary education at the Martyr *Siddīqī* High School, located in the center of Isfahan. He enrolled in *Dhulfaqār* religious school in 1982, in Isfahan, Iran. He educated various Islamic majors there even at a high level (e.g. *Khārij* course for one year). He married in 1985, entered the Islamic seminary in Qom in 1990, and participated in advanced jurisprudential courses taught by esteemed religious authorities, including Ayatollah Fāḍil Lankarānī, Makārim Shīrāzī, Ma'rifat, Šāliḥī Māzandarānī, and Waḥīd Khurāsānī.

wishes we will surely be guided.' (70) *He said, 'He says, She is a cow not broken to till the earth or water the tillage, sound and without blemish.'* *They said, 'Now have you come up with the truth!'* *And they slaughtered it, though they were about not to do it.* (71) *And when you killed a soul, and accused one another about it—and Allah was to expose what you were concealing—* (72)



He successfully defended his religious jurisprudential thesis in *Hawzah* and synchronously graduated from the special course of *Tafsīr* (Quranic exegesis) in *Hawzah*. He also achieved a Ph.D. degree in the major of Hadīth and Quranic Sciences at Islamic Azad University.

Some of his most remarkable scientific activities come as follows:

- Membership of the scientific staff of Al-Mustafa International University and professor of "Quranic Sciences" and "Exegesis of the holy Quran" in seminaries and universities.
- Writing and publicizing the first collective translation of the holy Quran, which was cooperated by some scholars from seminaries and universities in 2005.
- Compilation of more than 50 books and 130 articles, many of which have been published at national and international levels.
- In 2003, he established the first Quranic Scientific Association Research of Qom Seminary, aided by university and seminary professors.
- Initiating the first Quranic research center in Iran, which consists of the necessary standards for registration in the Ministry of Sciences in 2004. This center, entitled "*Al-Mahdi Quranic Research Center*", took its initiative steps with the contribution of nine professors from seminary and university divided into two groups "Quran and Science" and "Quran and Orientalists."
- Planning and pioneering some new majors in Ph.D. courses e.g. "Comparative Exegesis of the Quran", "Comparative Hadith Sciences", "Quran and Orientalists" and "Quran and Sciences", including 10 sub-disciplines such as Economics, educational sciences, politics, management, sociology, psychology, history, health & hygiene, astronomy, and law which gained their formal approval from Ministry of Sciences, Tehran, Iran.
(<http://rezaeesfahani.com>)



1. Concepts

1.1. Theory

The term ‘Theory’ comes from the ancient Greek word ‘*Theo*’, which means God or Supreme Being, and the two words derived from it, ‘*Theoria*’ or ‘*Theorien*,’ imply thinking about ‘*Theos*.’ However, as the breadth and scope of science have expanded, this term has come to signify the examination and analysis of phenomena. Bernard Cohen states: “There is still no consensus on the meaning of Theory” (Calvin 1998, 46).

Kerlinger writes: “A theory is a set of interrelated constructs [concepts], definitions, and propositions that give a systematic perspective of phenomena through specifying the connections between variables with the goal of understanding and predicting phenomena” (Kerlinger 1998, 29). According to *Kerlinger*, a theory involves a variety of elements such as concepts, variables, objective facts, and the measurement of their interactions, with the purpose of explanation and prediction. Social sciences rely heavily on theory to guide their study. One of its primary reasons is the lack of agreement in defining theory and other sociological concepts as a result of the various paradigms that have dominated sociology; it means, each paradigm has its definition of theory and other concepts, and of course, alternative paradigms are considered distinct due to their differing assumptions; for example, empiricists have their definition of “Theory”. They define “Theory” as “a practical effort to collect data and empirical discoveries, to identify links among them, and to explain them coherently” (Tavassulī 1997, 24).

1.2. *Tafsīr* (Exegesis)

The term *Tafsīr* (Exegesis) lexically denotes the expression of something and its explanation, and thus the term *Fasr* means to unveil something covered (Ibn Manẓūr, 1993, 5:155). Fīrūzābādī says: “*Tafsīr* originated from the term ‘*Tafsarah*’ which means ‘*Qārūrah*’⁷, a tool that doctors

⁷. A glass container, used in traditional medicine, in which the poured urine



used to look at and diagnose the disease” (Fīrūzābādī 1994, 2:108). Zarkashī, concerning the meaning of *tafsīr*, writes: “*Tafsīr* is to unveil and reveal something perplexing and complicated through its term and to release what is imprisoned from understanding” (Zarkashī 1956, 2:147). Some have stated that *Tafsīr* is to discover what the speaker has meant out of the ambiguous term. (Azharī 2000, “فسر”)

Professor Mustafa Muslim in his definition of *Tafsīr* says: “The science that discovers the meanings and concepts from the verses of the Quran and expresses what Allah (SWT) has meant as much as human endures and is able [as much as the commentator comprehends the Quran]” (Muslim 2005, 15)

Among the above-mentioned definitions, Zarkashī’s seems to be more accurate, where he states: “*Tafsīr* is the science by which the Quran that revealed to [the heart of] His Prophet, Muhammad (s), is comprehended, its meanings are clarified and its rulings are deduced so that it invokes from (some other science such as) linguistics, grammar, syntax, rhetoric, principles of jurisprudence and Qirā’ah (recitations). Furthermore, it needs to know ‘*asbāb al-nuzūl*’ (occasions of revelation), ‘*nāsikh*’ (abrogating), and ‘*mansūkh*’ (abrogated)” (Zarkashī 1956, 1:33).

2. Definition & Elaboration of The Theory

Some contemporary scholars have categorized interdisciplinary activities into five types (Riḍā'ī Iṣfahānī 2019, 15). The interdisciplinary research method is the study of an issue or problem from the perspectives of two sciences. Indeed, two sciences and disciplines are associated with the Quran. In other words, various definitions for interdisciplinary studies have been presented, particularly regarding multidisciplinary topics that

sample was taken to the doctor in order to examine and diagnosis.



require the examination of multiple disciplines, such as the exegesis of the Quran along with other sciences. The following is a list of definitions:

Interdisciplinary study is a methodological pluralism based on influential dialogue and challenge among ranges in the analysis of one single problem. In other words, a phenomenon will be realized in the light of influential conversation among diverse knowledge approaches (Farāmarz Qarā-Malikī 2012, 334)

Dr. Riḍā'ī Iṣfahānī states: “The Interdisciplinary thematic exegesis is an examination of a problem through both Quranic and scientific approaches, determination of common and none-common points, and then benefiting of common points accompanied with Quranic peculiarities as well as true cases of new knowledge through negating of wrong cases from Quranic perspective which leads to the production of new interdisciplinary knowledge. Experimental sciences including both the natural and human sciences are taken into consideration in this theory even though the study is human sciences-based” (Riḍā'ī Iṣfahānī 2019, 253).

Indeed, interdisciplinary thematic exegesis is another means of methodizing the interplay of Quranic knowledge with new sciences on a topic, and it might lead to humanities orientation and even the production of new interdisciplinary knowledge. In other words, it is possible to approach an interdisciplinary issue, such as educational methods from the perspective of the Quran and educational sciences, in various ways:

- 1) Traditional Thematic Exegesis (*Tafsīr-i Mawḍū'ī-ye Sunnatī*): The issue is studied within the Quran through intra-Quranic thematic exegesis, and then educational methods such as “*indhār*” (warning) and “*tabshīr*” (giving good news) are collected.
- 2) Extra Textual Thematic Exegesis (*Tafsīr-i Mawḍū'ī-ye Burūn-Matnī*), theorized by *Martyr Sadr*: It introduces new educational methods, such as the non-physical reproach of “*mutirabbī*” (a person in training) based on the Quran, which involves questioning and requires the



learner to study the verses for probable pros and cons, ultimately drawing a favorable conclusion.

- 3) Comparative Thematic Exegesis (*Tafsīr-i Mawḍū'ī-ye Taṭbīqī*): It is a comparative examination of educational approaches between Quranic knowledge and educational sciences, aimed at discovering similarities and differences.
- 4) Interdisciplinary Thematic Exegesis (*Tafsīr-i Mawḍū'ī-ye Miyān-Rishti*): It examines the topic in an interdisciplinary format between Quranic knowledge and educational sciences.

Using the three methods mentioned above, the first three levels will be passed. Then, a fourth level will be added:

- I. Obtaining common educational methods of two domains.
- II. Acquiring particular Quranic educational methods such as *Tazkiyah* (Arabic: تزكية, sanctification or purification of the self).
- III. Obtaining unique educational methods from educational sciences including both the right and wrong ones from a Quranic perspective.
- IV. Theorizing: It entails presenting new educational methods that include common and specific cases from the Quran and educational sciences, and rejecting incorrect methods of current educational sciences such as non-limited co-educating. As a result, we can anticipate the development of new educational techniques and approaches. Moreover, if similar efforts are directed toward the fields of objectives, fundamentals, and principles, we can expect the emergence of new educational sciences.

Therefore, the interdisciplinary thematic exegesis theory proposes a new method to interact Quranic knowledge with new sciences - particularly in human sciences - and makes it methodical. The interdisciplinary study of the Quran and sciences is currently conducted based on the necessities of the era, but it lacks a methodical approach. This theory aligns with earlier



approaches, such as traditional intra-thematic and extra-thematic exegesis of the Quran, as well as comparative methods. It represents an evolution of these methods and a step forward, as it systematically explores the interplay between Quranic knowledge and contemporary sciences, particularly in the humanities. This interaction often paves the way for the emergence of new scientific insights and transforms the face of humanities in line with the teachings of the Quran. Furthermore, it sheds light on the subtle dimensions and benefits of the Quran's scientific verses through this interaction (Riḍā'ī Iṣfahānī 2019, pp. 254-256).

3. Commonalities and Differences with Aligned Theories

1. Intra (Traditional) Thematic Exegesis of the Quran

This method selects the subject exclusively from the Quran, elaborates on it, and then discusses both the agreed and disagreed verses.

- **Commonality:** The interdisciplinary thematic exegesis theory examines the verses for and against the subject and draws conclusions as well.
- **Differences:** A subject out of the Quran is regarded in the interdisciplinary thematic exegesis not the traditional thematic exegesis of the Quran. (Riḍā'ī Iṣfahānī 2019, 256)

2. Extra-Thematic Exegesis of the Quran Theorized by *Martyr Sadr*

As previously stated, *Martyr Sadr* offered subjects outside the Quran, e.g. society, as a question on the Quran and determined Its perspective by evaluating the verses for and against. (see Āqājānī 2023, 78)

- **Commonality:** The subject outside the Quran is analyzed and presented to the Quran as a query in both interdisciplinary and extra-thematic exegesis approaches of the Quran, the verses for and against are reviewed and concluded, and even the Quranic theory is achieved.



- **Differences:** The under discussion-subject in relevant science is examined in the interdisciplinary thematic exegesis, then the commonalities and differences between Quranic knowledge and new science are extracted, extra Quranic contents are collected, then the positive and correct contents of that science are included, the negative and incorrect contents are excluded, and eventually a new theory, plot, and science are produced whereas the extra-thematic exegesis of the Quran never finds this level. In other words, Martyr Sadr clearly stated that the subject is objectively derived from human life and is ultimately connected to the Quran. This means that the exegete raises a question, which is then answered by the Quran. Following this, a theory is developed that illustrates the Quranic perspective. However, interdisciplinary thematic exegesis does not conclude with the Quran; instead, it aims to create a unified theory that integrates Quranic teachings with scientific principles, leading to the emergence of new scientific insights. (Riḍā'ī Iṣfahānī 2019, pp. 257-258)

Need and Position

While certain Quranic concerns and issues might be single-disciplinary topics and so explored scientifically, many new problems and issues found in other spheres of human life are among the multi-disciplinary circle; that is, they consist of multiple angles and various esoteric aspects rooted in different sciences. Thus, multi-disciplinary studies are necessary to fully comprehend and resolve the problems. For instance, 'suicide' is a phenomenon influenced by various causes while social, cultural, and religious elements are beneficial in avoiding it. In this respect, Allah says, "*And do not cast yourselves with your own hands into destruction*" (Quran 2:195).

Thus, we require interdisciplinary study to find precise clarification of these multi-disciplinary issues. Another example refers to 'the functions of religion and Quranic teachings' in which we need expertise in diverse sciences including psychology, sociology, history, civilization, philosophy



of religion, theology, etc. In addition, it is analyzable through experimental and analytical means (Farāmarz Qarā-Malikī 2012, 235).

The interdisciplinary studies on the Quran have gained significant attention from scholars in recent times due to their benefits and effectiveness in various fields. Some examples include:

- I. Interpretation of scientific verses and explanation of scientific subjects of the Quran.
- II. Leading the fundamentals of sciences, especially humanities.
- III. Eliminating the illusion of contradicting between science and religion.
- IV. Quranic scientific theorizations.
- V. Production of new science: Psychology and sociology of religion have been produced nowadays. (Riḍā'ī Iṣfahānī 2019, 6)

Moreover, the interdisciplinary studies and research of the Quran span various fields of science, including the following:

- I. Experimental Sciences: Including the Quran and hygiene, the Quran and cosmology, the Quran and medical sciences, etc.
- II. Human Sciences: Including the Quran and psychology, the Quran and educational sciences, the Quran and sociology, the Quran and economics, the Quran and politics, the Quran and law, the Quran and art, etc.
- III. Intellectual Sciences: Including the Quran and philosophy, the Quran and theology, the Quran and mathematics, etc.
- IV. Intuitive Sciences: Including the Quran and Mysticism, etc. (ibid, 6)

4. Fundamentals, Presuppositions, And Methods

4.1. Fundamentals and Presuppositions

1. There is a compatible relationship between the Quran and science.
2. The Quran responds to all human needs throughout the eras.
3. The method of scientific exegesis of the Quran is allowed and authenticated when its rules are fully observed.



4. The method of thematic exegesis of the Quran is valid in light of the verses' *Siyāq* (context).
5. The Quran contains numerous verses that indicate scientific principles, especially in human sciences, which can help establish foundational concepts and objectives of various sciences.
6. The fundamentals and arguments for deducing all the particularities of science from the exoteric aspect of the Quran are erroneous and insufficient.
7. Imposing scientific perspectives on the Quran is incorrect since it causes "*tafsīr bi ra'y*" (personal opinion-based interpretation) which is forbidden in the realm of the Quran exegesis. (Riḍā'ī Iṣfahānī 2019, 256)

4.2. Method

The objective of the 'Method' is to use a particular means or source in the exegesis of the Quran to clarify the meanings and aims of verses as well as to produce certain results. The interdisciplinary study might be categorized into three types:

1. Comparative examination of the viewpoints of the specialists in sciences and the Quranic exegetes: Consequently, it necessitates finding a variety of perspectives as well as the proximity of thoughts in both spheres.
2. Examination of a single subject from the perspective of the Quran and a special science: For instance, the study respecting the legitimacy of the state from the perspective of the Quran and political science entails expressing for and against opinions. As a result, it would be possible to find a comparative examination of a single subject from two perspectives.
3. Examination of a scientific single subject in the Quran: For instance, studying the existence of living beings in the sky in the light of Quranic verses, which sometimes results in scientific theorizations of the Quran and subject-building for science.



Remarkably, what is meant by interdisciplinary research refers to the second and third above-mentioned methods, even though the first one will be considered as one of the consequences of the discussion (Riḍā'ī Iṣfahānī 2009, 124).

5. Particular Features and Elements of The Theory

5.1. Considering Sciences as *Qarīnih* (Evidence) For Comprehending the Verses

Since the exegetists aim to comprehend and elaborate Allah's objectives through the meanings of the verses, try to benefit from reliable sources including the Holy Quran, tradition, intellect, and certain empirical sciences, as well as some sciences such as Arabic literature, etc. (Riḍā'ī Iṣfahānī 2009, 124).

5.2. The Necessity of Focusing on the Aims of the Religion, The Revelation of the Quran, the Sūras, the Set of Verses, and the Desired Verse

The Quran and religion are primarily concerned with guiding man toward perfection. Teachings of the Quran include a wide range of topics including beliefs, Islamic laws and regulations, moral principles and instructions, political, economic, and scientific teachings, etc. The Holy Quran has indicated issues about nature in over a thousand verses which are typically aligned with theology and resurrection. In addition, the Quran leads educational issues, economics and politics, and so on towards man's proximity to Allah and his eschatological salvation. To effectively interpret the Quran, an exegete should focus on its main objectives, as well as those of each sūra and verse. The interpretation of a verse must align with these objectives. For example, the exegete should organize principles related to political, economic, and educational issues to encourage remembrance of Allah and the concept of resurrection. If this focus is neglected, the resulting scientific exegesis may not hold validity (Riḍā'ī Iṣfahānī 2009, 125).



5.3. The Necessity of Regarding the *Siyāq* (Context) and Historical Atmospheres of *Sūras* and Verses

It is essential to regard the *Siyāq* (context; general atmosphere) of each verse or set of verses in interpreting. In other words, it is necessary to consider the sequential exegesis of the verses when thematically interpreting them. Additionally, it is impossible to interpret a verse of the Quran without taking into account what comes before and after, as well as the chapter's overall aim. Furthermore, the historical atmosphere, as well as the time and place of revelation have to be considered. For example, some exegetes have interpreted the term *Zakāt* within *Makkī Sūras* as *Infāq* (Arabic: إنفاق, lit. charity) whereas it referred to a unique Islamic tax in *Madanī Sūras* (Makārim Shīrāzī 1995, 14:196).

The reason behind this refers to the particular atmospheres of the chapters i.e. the *Makki Surahs* are largely about monotheism, resurrection, and prophecy, while *Madani Surahs* concern the rulings of spheres such as political, economic, social, and so on since their atmospheres were after the establishment of the Islamic state and *Ummah* (community) in Medina. Remarkably, the historical and geographical atmospheres as well as the occasion of the revelations do not limit the meaning of verses in a particular case i.e. the exegetist is allowed to nullify the peculiarity (Riḍā'ī Iṣfahānī 2009, 125).

5.4. The Necessity of Using Valid Experimental Sciences

Due to the uncertainty inherent in many empirical sciences, it can be challenging for people to see how well scientific theories correspond to reality. However, these sciences have specific applications in human life. Some empirical sciences, such as the understanding that the Earth is spherical or scientific findings supported by mathematics, might be considered nearly as certain as sensory axioms. It is permissible to interpret the Quran using empirical sciences when they are definite; they are considered as one of the pieces of evidence to interpret and comprehend the verses.



However, it is not allowed to authenticate the experimental sciences and relate them to Allah and the Quran in cases in a conjectural state and limited to scientific hypotheses. In such circumstances, we can at most regard the probability of psychological, sociological, political, or economic hypothesis as the objective of the Quranic verse, particularly when there are several competing hypotheses, one of which is more well-known. For instance, in the Quran, *Sūrat al-Dhāriyāt:47*,⁸ there are two perspectives in cosmology: ‘Expansion’ and ‘Contraction’ of the universe, neither of which has been proven, but since the exoteric aspect of the verse is consistent with the first point of view, we can say that the mentioned verse confirms the theory of ‘Expansion’ (Riḍā’ī Iṣfahānī 2001, 1:142-147).

5.5. The Necessity of Applying the Principle of *al-Jary wa al-Taṭbīq* (Applicability and Comparison) in Interpretation, Especially in Scientific Exegesis of the Quran

If the specific contexts are set aside, many of the Quran’s contents are presented as stories and verses that were revealed for particular occasions. These can be applied to new situations in each century. To grasp the primary objectives and criteria of these verses and to disregard any irrelevant contexts, we need to derive their general principles and adapt them to the contemporary context. Therefore, the stories in the Quran and their associated teachings serve as valuable resources for understanding its messages and applying them to modern times. For example, the story of the Prophet Lot (a) and his people can be interpreted to challenge the legitimacy of homosexuality (Riḍā’ī Iṣfahānī 2006, 45).

⁸ . “We have built the heaven with might, and indeed it is We who are its expanders.”



6. Consequences

6.1. Updated Exegesis of the Holy Quran and Better Comprehension of the Verses

Some verses of the Quran address issues related to medicine and cosmology. Consequently, new scientific developments lead to a better understanding and interpretation of these points. As extensions, we can point to “*al-ṣulb wa al-tarā'ib*” (the loins and the breast-bones) and the levels of human creation stated in the Quran, *Sūras al-Ṭāriq: 7*⁹, *al-Ḥajj: 5*¹⁰, and *al-Mu'minūn: 12-15*¹¹, as well as the cosmological problems stated in *Sūra Yā-Sīn: 38-41*¹² (Riḍā'ī Iṣfahānī 2009, 127).

⁹. “Which issues from between the loins and the breast-bones.”

¹⁰. “O people! If you are in doubt about the resurrection, [consider that] We created you from dust, then from a drop of [seminal] fluid, then from a clinging mass, then from a fleshy tissue, partly formed and partly unformed, so that We may manifest [Our power] to you. We lodge in the wombs whatever [fetus] We wish for a specified term, then We bring you forth as infants, then [We rear you] so that you may come of age. [Then] there are some of you who are taken away, and there are some of you who are relegated to the nethermost age, such that he knows nothing after [having possessed] some knowledge. And you see the earth torpid, yet when We send down water upon it, it stirs and swells, and grows every delightful kind [of plant].”

¹¹. “Certainly, We created man from an extract of clay. (12) Then We made him a drop of [seminal] fluid [lodged] in a secure abode. (13) Then We created the drop of fluid as a clinging mass. Then We created the clinging mass as a fleshy tissue. Then We created the fleshy tissue as bones. Then We clothed the bones with flesh. Then We produced him as [yet] another creature. So blessed is Allah, the best of creators! (14) Then indeed you die after that. (15)”

¹². “The sun runs on to its place of rest: That is the ordaining of the All-mighty, the All-knowing. (38) As for the moon, We have ordained its phases, until it becomes like an old palm leaf. (39) Neither it behooves the sun to overtake the moon, nor may the night outrun the day, and each swim in an orbit. (40) A sign for them is that We carried their progeny in the laden ship, (41)”



6.2. Responding to The New Questions

The Quran is relevant to modern human needs and sciences, providing guidance on contemporary questions and issues in various aspects of life. As new challenges arise in different fields, scientific exegetes strive to find suitable responses within the divine verses by adhering to established principles. Topics such as secularism, pluralism, and democracy are examples of contemporary issues that the Quran can address. The scientific exegete carefully examines both supporting and opposing verses to draw objective conclusions (ibid).

6.3. Scientific Theorizations of the Quran; Orientating the Fundamentals of Human Sciences and Subject Building for Sciences

While several scientific hints in the Quran have been presented as predictions, they have not yet been validated or rejected by experimental sciences. Nevertheless, there is a positive outlook for these hints, as they may eventually be recognized as valid scientific facts or theories derived from the Quran. For instance, when it comes to *Sūrat al-Dhāriyāt:47*¹³, the theory of the expansion of the universe is raised, and in *Sūrat al-Shawrā:29*¹⁴, the issue of living beings in the heavens is noted. Many verses of the Quran contain fundamentals, principles, and rules of politics and economics, management, etc. These can be used to develop systems and guide the human sciences. For example, based on *Sūrat al-Baqara:275*¹⁵, the theory of the usury-free economy can be proposed.

¹³. “We have built the heaven with might, and indeed it is We who are its expanders.”

¹⁴. “Among His signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth and whatever creatures He has scattered in them, and He is able to gather them whenever He wishes.”

¹⁵. “While Allah has allowed trade and forbidden usury.”



Furthermore, some essential conditions of a manager might be inferred from, *Sūras al-Baqara:275*¹⁶, and *Yusuf:55*¹⁷ (ibid).

6.4. Producing New Science and Methodizing the Interactions of the Quran and New Sciences

The interdisciplinary thematic exegesis theory introduces a new method for integrating Quranic knowledge with contemporary sciences. In this respect, the theorist says:

The interdisciplinary thematic exegesis theory proposes a new method to interact Quranic knowledge with new sciences -particularly in human sciences- and makes it methodical. Currently, the interdisciplinary studies of the Quran and sciences are carried out based on the era necessities, but not methodical. Of course, this theory is in the same line as the previous methods i.e. the intra (traditional) and extra-thematic exegesis of the Quran as well as the comparative methods. Indeed, it is the evolved method and a level forward because, on the one hand, it methodized the interactions of Quranic knowledge and new sciences, especially humanities, and often leads to the production of new science and changing the face of humanities following the Quran, and on the other hand, the hidden angles and benefits of the Quran's scientific verses will be clarified through the mentioned interaction. (Riḍā'ī Iṣfahānī 2019, pp. 254-256)

Conclusion

The results of the present research are as follows:

¹⁶. "Indeed, Allah has chosen him over you, and enhanced him vastly in knowledge and physique, and Allah gives His kingdom to whomever He wishes, and Allah is all-bounteous, all-knowing."

¹⁷. "He said, 'Put me in charge of the country's granaries. I am indeed fastidious [and]well-informed.'"



1. The theory has been provided to produce new science and methodize the interactions of the Quran and new sciences.

2. The adaptive relationship between the Quran and science, the Quran's accountability to human needs throughout history, the validity and permissibility of methods applied in scientific and thematic exegesis of the Quran, and the inaccuracy of imposing scientific theories on the Quran all serve as the foundations for this theory.

3. Dr. Riḍā'ī Iṣfahānī employs various methods, particularly the examination of single subjects from the perspectives of the Quran and a specific science, as well as the scientific examination of individual topics within the Quran.

4. Considering sciences as *Qarīnih* (evidence) for comprehending the verses, the necessity of focusing on the aims of the religion, the descent of the Quran, the chapters, the set of verses, and the desired verse, the necessity of regarding the *Siyāq* (contexts) and historical atmospheres of sūras and verses, the necessity of using valid experimental sciences, and the necessity of applying the principle of *al-Jary wa al-Taṭbīq* (applicability and comparison) in process of interpretation, especially in the scientific exegesis of the Quran are considered as particular characteristics and elements of the theory.

5. The theory outlined above has several positive outcomes, including an updated interpretation of the Holy Quran and a better understanding of its verses. It addresses new questions, promotes scientific theories related to the Quran, shapes the foundations of human sciences, and aids in the development of new scientific disciplines. Additionally, it provides a framework for integrating the teachings of the Quran with contemporary scientific inquiries.



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