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CONTEMPORARY EXEGESIS CURRENTS IN IRAN İRAN'DAKİ ÇAĞDAŞ TEFSİR AKIMLARI

ABSTRACT

The Holy Qur'an, as the most significant textual source of Islam, has continuously attracted the attention of Islamic scholars. Since the early centuries of the history of Islam, Iranian scholars have played a significant role in the development and enrichment of the valuable exegesis literature of the Islamic world. A considerable quantity of exegetical works have been authored by Iranian scholars throughout the history of Islam. In the last century, the Quran has entered the socio-political life of Muslims as the most important intellectual source for reformist-Islamic movements. The occurrence of the Islamic revolution in 1979 paved the way for the contribution of more Iranian scholars to the interpretation of the Qur'an individually and in the form of groups and organizations. This issue led to the proliferation of commentary works. Hence, numerous exegesis currents emerged. The aim of this study is to examine the contemporary exegesis currents, especially in the last four decades after the Islamic Revolution of Iran. The findings indicated that there are numerous exegesis currents. Some of them do not accept political interpretation whereas some others interpret Qur'an politically to cope with the after-revolution political demands and satisfy social needs.

Keywords: Qur'anic exegesis, exegesis currents, political and non-political exegesis.

ÖZET

İslam dininin en önemli metin kaynağı olan Kur'an-ı Kerim, İslam alimlerinin sürekli ilgisini çekmiştir. İranlı alimler, İslam tarihinin ilk asırlarından itibaren, İslam dünyasının tefsir literatürünün gelişmesinde ve zenginleşmesinde önemli bir rol oynamışlardır. İslam tarihi boyunca İranlı alimler tarafından önemli sayıda tefsir eseri yazılmıştır. Kuran, son yüzyılda reformist-İslami hareketlerin en önemli fikri kaynağı olarak Müslümanların sosyo-politik hayatına girmiştir. İran'da 1979'da İslam devriminin gerçekleşmesi, daha fazla İranlı bilim adamının bireysel, grup ve teşkilatlar halinde Kur'an tefsirine katkıda bulunmasının yolunu açmıştır. Bu konu tefsir eserlerinin çoğalmasına neden olmuştur. Dolayısıyla çok sayıda tefsir akımı ortaya çıkmıştır. Bu çalışmanın amacı, özellikle İran İslam Devrimi'nden sonraki son kırk yıldaki çağdaş tefsir akımlarını incelemektir. Bulgular, farklı tefsir akımlarının olduğunu göstermektedir. Bu tefsir akımlarının bazıları siyasi tefsiri kabul etmezken, bazıları da devrim sonrası siyasi taleplerle başa çıkmak ve toplumsal ihtiyaçları karşılamak için Kur'an'ı siyasi olarak tefsir ederler.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kur'an tefsiri, tefsir akımları, siyasi ve siyasi olmayan tefsir.

1. INTRODUCTION

As the main text of Islam, the Holy Quran has always been the focus of Iranian Muslims. The history of Islam has been a reliable witness to the extensive studies of Iranian commentators in interpreting and explaining the teachings and enlightening verses of this divine word. The Islamic revolution of the Iranian people in 1979 and the establishment of the Islamic Republic as a political system of Iran have provided a more favorable environment and suitable opportunities for the contribution of Iranian Islamic scholars to the interpretation of the Qur'an. In fact, in the four decades after the Revolution of Iran, various organizations and groups - in addition to individuals - have been in charge of authoring exegesis works. As a result, Quranic commentary works have had considerable growth and development in terms of quantity and quality in this period compared to the previous centuries. This issue has necessitated the comprehensive study of these works. In fact, throughout the history of Islam, a considerable number of Quranic commentary works have been authored by Iranian scholars and they have been classified according to their methods, approaches, trends, etc. This study aims to scrutinize the contemporary exegesis currents, especially in the last four decades after the Islamic Revolution of Iran. Hence, this study tries to answer the following research question: What are the contemporary exegesis currents in the context of Iran?

A comprehensive preliminary study regarding the subject of this study and the review of the existing literature indicated that rarely, if any, can be found study on this topic. The book of Mohammad As'adi and his colleagues, entitled "Pathology of interpretive currents", has introduced and analyzed the currents of interpretation. But it did not include the interpretation of works beyond the 19th century. In addition, it did

not focus on only the Quranic interpretation works of Iran. Ahmad Paktachi has also written a book entitled *Currents of Understanding the Holy Qur'an in Contemporary Iran*, which provides a good classification of commentators but does not include historical currents. Moreover, his research has not covered the interpretations of the last 4 decades after the revolution. Mohammad Ali Ayazi has only mentioned the contemporary commentators in his book to a large extent, but he did not study the currents.

2. METHODOLOGY AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This research study uses a library research method for collecting data. This method “involves identifying and locating sources that provide factual information or personal/expert opinion on a research question” (George, 2008, p. 24). Available library and database sources were explored to gather the necessary data. Document analysis methods were used in order to analyze the data. In order to explain how the exegesis currents are formed and to clarify the nature of these currents and to show their socio-political results theoretical framework is needed. It seems that to explain and understand this issue, those types of theoretical frameworks should be used that confirm and emphasize the influence and interaction between thought and society and social realities. Because the exegesis currents have been formed due to new needs in the Islamic world including contemporary Iran. Therefore, the created texts, i.e. commentary works, are closely related to external reality. In fact, the external realities force the interpreter to reflect on the main text of Islam, i.e. the Quran. What are meant by realities are all the social, economic, political, and cultural contexts that exist before, at the time of, and after the formation of a text. What is meant by realities in contemporary Iran are the issue of tyranny and the dominance of foreign countries, the propagation of superstitions in the name of religion, and the spread of Marxist and liberal ideas due to underdevelopment. Thus, Henry Stuart Hughes' views as well as Stuart Hall's Reception Theory were used as a theoretical framework. According to Hughes' view, no text is formed in a vacuum and is independent of its time and place. Rather, every text always reflects the language and culture of its author and audience. No text is created in a language other than the language of the author and its audience (Hughes, 1994). Commentary works are also texts thus they also comply with this principle. Accordingly, one cannot talk about any text apart from its cultural context and social reality. Stuart Hall argues Meaning is the result of mutual interaction between the reader and the text. He states “The meaning of a text is not inherent within the text itself but is created within the relationship between the text and the reader” (Hall, 1973). Developments in the West, the spread of liberal and Marxist ideas, the occurrence of the Islamic revolution in Iran, and the needs of the Iranian society attracted the attention of Islamic scholars and the interpreters of the holy Qur'an and resulted in numerous exegesis currents. This research study aims to examine these exegesis currents. The findings of this study can be beneficial for researchers and students who are interested and study exegesis currents specifically in the context of Iran. This study also provides a helpful source for research centers whose research focus is on Quranic works and exegesis currents, particularly in the setting of Iran.

3. RETURNING BACK TO THE QUR'AN

The interpretation of the Qur'an in the contemporary century is different from other centuries in the history of Islam. The history of Qur'anic exegesis in the last century is closely related to social movements, especially religious reform movements. In the last century, the Quran has entered the socio-political life of Muslims as the most important source of intellectual nourishment for reformist-Islamic movements. The main feature of the awakening movements was that they saw Islam not as an abandoned creed and sincere belief, but as a complete religious, worldly, moral, political, worship, and social values system. Islamic intellectuals tried to interpret the Qur'an according to social realities and adopted methods that could be adapted to the needs of the time by breaking away from past interpretation tendencies. The difference between the reformist trend and other trends is that they give importance to the social and educational dimensions of the verses. All religious reformers considered the most basic solution to be to return to "the Sunnah of the Prophet" and the path of the "virtuous predecessor of the Prophet". They regarded the Qur'an as the most important pillar of Islam in all faith, worship, individual and social dimensions, and regarded the Sunnah as the interpretation of the Qur'an and its virtuous predecessor as the interpreter of the Sunnah (Khorramshahi, 1985, P. 18). Therefore, paying attention to the existing needs of society and directing the concepts of the Qur'an to these dimensions are common features of most reformist commentaries (Sadr and Farid, 1996, Pp. 7-8). Consequently, these changes resulted in the emergence of various currents in the exegesis of the Qur'an.

4. THE DEFINITION OF EXEGESIS CURRENT

Current refers to a collective, voluntary, or guided action that moves and creates change. In fact, an idea that gains a social aspect changes into a current. Therefore, society is the place of birth, development, growth, and death of currents (Khorramshad & Mohammad Baqir, 2013, pp. 61-99). It has been also said; the current is a social title and must have many people. One person cannot form a current. Although the current can be founded by one person, it should have many followers. The current, on the other hand, must have specific intellectual support and foundations, and one or more people should be recognized as its intellectual representative in society (Khosrow Panah, 2017, p. 20). Therefore, even though the tendency of a commentator and the method used by him/her is completely different from others, it is not considered a commentary current unless it finds followers and the works influenced by the current are produced.

5. Contemporary exegetical currents in Iran

5.1. Conventional Current

Qur'an has been understood and interpreted in conventional ways by Iranian scholars for several centuries. This current has continued in the past four decades after the revolution. The Conventional current is closely linked to religious texts, namely the Qur'an and the Sunnah, and the traditional heritage of the religious scholars. The religious scholars in this current consider understanding religion through genuine religious sources, protecting Islamic knowledge, guiding people, and spreading Islam and Islamic knowledge as their mission. Hence, the religious scholars of this current pay specific attention to the interpretation of the Qur'an. In fact, in the time frame of the years after the revolution, there are numerous commentary books modeling some Shiite past interpretations, such as Qur'an by Fazl bin Hassan Tabarsi (died 1153), *Majma al-Bayan fi Tafsir al-Qur'an* by Mullah Mohsen Faiz Kashani (died 1679) and also *Al-Borhan fi Tafsir al-Qur'an* by Seyyed Hashim Bahrani (died 1697) and following the same style and pattern. *Ravane Javid* by Mirza Mohammad Saqafi Tehrani (died 1984), *Manahej al-Bayan fi Tafsir al-Qur'an* by Mohammad Baqir Maleki Mianji (died 1998), *Anvare Derakhshan* by Seyyed Mohammad Hosseini Hamdani known as Agha Najafi (died 1996), *Tafsire Asan* by Mohammad Javad Najafi Khomeini (died 1998), *Mawahibur Rahman fi Tafsir al-Qur'an* by Seyyed Abdul Ali Mousavi Sabzevari (died 1993), *Tafsir Jâme* by Seyyed Ibrahim Boroujerdi (died 2005) and *Al-Furqan fi Tafsir al-Qur'an* by Ali Rohani Najafabadi (died 1994) are examples for this current. The commentators of this current do not believe in the political interpretation of the Qur'an and continue to interpret the Qur'an based solely on traditional views and in the same way as the previous interpretations (Ayazi, 2006).

5.2. Islamic Rationalist Current

This current has written a considerable number of Qur'anic commentaries and their works cannot be compared with any other current in terms of content, format, and quantities. Various Qur'an-related and exegetical works were written by this current. The Qur'anic commentaries written by Ayatollah Tabatabai and his students such as Murteza Motahhari, Cevadi Amoli, Mesbah Yazdi, and Cafer Sobhani are examples of this Islamic rationalist current. *Tafsir Tasnim*, written by Abdollah Javadi Amoli is one of the most important works of this current, which deals with the interpretation of the Qur'an with a rationalistic approach.

According to Javadi Amoli, the idea of separating religion from politics is one of the doubts of the present age in the field of religious knowledge, which considered the field of religion to be limited to organizing the affairs of the hereafter and the affairs of government and livelihood are excluded from the scope of religious legislation, and it is not a mission for divine prophets to intervene in non-religious, non-moral, and worldly matters (Javadi Amoli, 2009, p. 239).

5.3. The Qur'anist Current (Qur'aniyoon)

In this current, the Qur'an is considered the main source of interpretation, and other sources either play a minor role or have no role. This current believes that the Quran is enough to guide mankind and there is no need for narrations in understanding the Quran and religious knowledge. In the last century in Iran, the Qur'aniyoon current has emerged in two forms: moderate (Quran-focused) and extreme (Quran sufficient) (As'adi et al, 2015, pp. 370-372).

Ayatollah Mohammed Hossein Tabatabai's tafsir called *Al-Mizan Fi Tafsir al-Qur'an* and Muhammad Sadiki Tehrani's *Al-Furqan fi tafsir al-Qur'an* commentary and Abdollah Cevadi's tafsir called *Tasnim* belong to this current with a moderate approach. Esadullah Harkani's works entitled *Resale dar muteshabihate Kur'an* and *hadise man fassara-l Kur'an* and *Resale dar mafhum and mesdake ülü'l emr*,

Şeri'at Sengelçi's books named *Kelide fahme Quran* and *Berahinu'l Qur'an*, Seyyid Abu'l-Fazl Burka'i's books named *Tabeşi az Kur'an* and *Ahkamu'l-Kur'an*, Seyyid Sadek Takavi's works entitled *Tarjome va tefsire Qur'an* to be *tartibe nüzüle sureha* and *Kashtiye necat*, Mohammed Javad Karavi Isfahani's book entitled as *Adam az nazare Qur'an*, Mustafa Hoseini Tabatabai's book named *Qur'an bedune hadis ham kabele fahm ast* and Yusuf She'ar's works entetiled *Tafsire ayate moshkele*, *Risale mohkamat ve mshteshabihat dar Qur'an*, *Mokaddemate tafsir*, *Tafsire sureye Cuma* and *Monafikun* all can be considered to belong to the extremist current of the Qur'aniyoon (Jafarian, 2008 , pp. 881-893; As'adi and others, 2015, pp. 370-372).

With regard to political interpretations of the Qur'an, it can be said that they are more concerned with religious issues than with political commentary. Therefore, Their works contain little or no political themes. Political discussions can not be found in the Qur'anic debates of the Islamic scholars of this current. In the Shiite community, especially in religious madrasas and among scholars, sensitive discussions on religious areas such as imams, monotheism, polytheism and intercession caused strong reactions to their thoughts and beliefs. For example, considering the matter of infallible Imam as a non-political issue has been a politically sensitive issue. Many issues associated with government are beyond the scope of the discussion of this current and many beliefs, thoughts and behaviors of this current are not acceptable in any way in formal Shia opinion.

5.4. Social Interpretation Current

Social interpretation is one of the most important interpretation currents that emerged in the contemporary period. A lot of the Qur'anic commentary works have been written with this approach. Ayatollah Makarem Shirazi's work entitled "*Tafsire Nemune*" is an example of this current. In his brief introduction to the fourth volume of this commentary, he says: "The purpose of writing this tafsir was to prepare a Persian exegesis for the Holy Quran that would be useful to both experts and ordinary people. ...it is an exegesis that answers contemporary questions and issues and resolves various objections to the principles and sub-principles of Islamic issues" (Makarem Şirazi, 1995). The multi-volume commentary work of *Tafsire Rahnama*, which was written by Akbar Hashemi Rafslanjani and a group of colleagues with a social approach, is another example of this current. He believes that Qur'an is a comprehensive set of political and management rulings in all affairs and says: "Those who talk about the separation of religion from politics, either know very little about the contents of Islam or do not know politics." (Parsa, 2022, p. 43).

5.5. Epistemological-Philosophical Current

Most of Ja'far Sobhani's Qur'anic works such as *Mefahimu'l Qur'an*, the ten-volume *Bohuse Qur'an*, *Et-tawhid* and *al-Shirk fi'l-Qur'an*, as well as important Qur'anic works by Murtaza Motahhari and Mesbah Yazdi, were written with this approach. The collection of *Ma'arefe Qur'an* by Mohammad Taqi Misbah Yazdi, with a philosophical and theological approach, is another example of this current. He believes that the Western world has raised the issue of separating religion from politics in order to dominate the world and remove divine commands and decrees from the scope of the law in its general sense and to do whatever they want (Misbah Yazdi, 1998, p. 19). He also believes in the completeness of the rules and laws of the Qur'an for managing the affairs of the society and says: "The holy sharia of Islam has been sent by God Almighty to all the people of the world throughout the ages and has rules and regulations for all personal and social human affairs." (Misbah Yazdi, 1998, p. 114).

5.6. The Current of the Hojatie Society

This current has a negative view of the political interpretation of the Qur'an and believes that such interpretation of the Qur'an should be "stopped". This current has its own intellectual-belief features. They reject the political-religious order and consider it forbidden to form a government in the absence of the Infallible Imam (Mahdi). They reject the struggle against Baha'ism and are against rebellion and revolution, philosophy and mysticism. The belief in not using reason while interpreting the Qur'an was also one of the important intellectual characteristics that affected their understanding of the Qur'an. For this reason, they believe that the Qur'an is proof, dependable, and applicable only if the narrations and hadiths of infallible Imams confirm it. As a result, the Hojatie Society does not seek "answers" for their cultural, political, and social problems in Qur'an, and believes that the political interpretation of the Qur'an in this regard is forbidden.

5.7. Tafkik School Current

Tafkik school is one of the important currents of theology in the last century and has undergone developments. It is, in fact, one of the subsets of the conventional current. The Tafkik School differs from the two conventional and Islamic rationalist currents, as it believes that human knowledge is completely separated from divine knowledge. Conventional and Islamic rationalist currents believe that the achievements of revelation, intuition, and reason are compatible with each other and that all three can bring more comprehensive knowledge to humans. Whereas the Tafkik current, as it emphasizes pure religious thought, is the opposite of theoretical contraction and expansion of religion (the theory proposed by Abdolkarim Sorush), which emphasizes the full impact of human knowledge on religious knowledge and the impossibility of producing pure religious thought. Tafkik current was initially formed and developed by some prominent conventional religious scholars in the Khorasan region of Iran. Mirza Mahdi Isfahani (1885-1945), the leading disciple of Allameh Naeini, introduced new faith and pure Islamic knowledge in Mashhad in 1921 and succeeded in turning a new page in the conflict between mysticism and philosophy and Islamic teachings and trained leading scholars. After Mirza's death, his students offered his lectures and books and changed their teacher's thoughts to a current. Since this movement places special emphasis on the Qur'an as the original and pure thought of revelation, it is natural to pay attention to its interpretation as well. The most important work of this current is Sheikh Mojtaba Qazvini's book entitled *Beyan el-Furkan*. The work of Sheikh Muhammed Bakir Meleki Mianci, entitled *Menahiju'l beyan fi tafsiri'l Qur'an*, can be considered as one of the other exegetical works attributed to this current.

This current is completely different from the Hojjatie society. Tafkik school, as the name suggests, is a theological "school" that offers a doctrinal and theoretical view in the public domain. Considering the social aspects of this movement, it can be said that the Tafkik school does not separate itself from the religious society in the social sense, however, the Hojjatie society does not have such a feature. Although the Tafkik school was somewhat opposed to philosophy and mysticism, during the political movement of Ayatollah Khomeini, the leaders of this current seriously supported the Iranian Islamic revolution. One of the leading figures of this current, who has written many works in the field of explaining the Islamic revolution and especially its global aspects, is "Mohammad Reza Hakimi". Just as the movement of the Hojjatie society has a rigid view and the political interpretation of the Qur'an is prohibited in their view, on the contrary, Tafkik school followed a more moderate path in this regard. Although some of the presuppositions of the Akhbarism view are evident in the "Tafkik school", the traces of the political interpretation of the Qur'an can be seen when the works of some of the elders of this intellectual movement are examined. In fact, there is a difference between the views of the early and late Tafkik School in terms of reason. The views of the early Tafkik School are similar to those of the Akhbaris, who do not accept any Islamic provisions beyond the Narratives. However, later Tafkik scholars were closer to the views of the Usulis, who accepted reason as one of the sources of fiqh, and they believed that when the verdict of an issue could not be found in the book and the sunnah and the Islamic jurists could not agree on this issue, then the decision of reason should be followed.

5.8. Religious Scientific-Experimental Current

Using different scientific methods in the interpretation of the Qur'an has created a different current of interpretation. In fact, the commentators of this current intend to interpret the Qur'an by using new sciences such as experimental sciences and sociology or "methodologies of history, linguistics, and literary studies. This movement was formed as a result of scientific views among religious intellectuals. The prevailing idea in this current is to reconcile Western concepts with Islamic concepts, on the assumption that Islam has all the good things and that Western knowledge lacks ideology. Mehdi Bazargan is the foremost figure of the scientific-experimental current in contemporary Iranian theology and especially in the interpretation and study of the Qur'an. Bazargan's first religious work was *Prayer for Youth*. *Az Khoda parasti ta khod parasti*, *Motahherat dar Islam*, *Mazhab dar Orupa*, *Kar dar Islam*, *Rahe tey shode*, *Ekhtiyar*, *pragmatism dar Islam*, and *Amuzeshe Qur'an in three volumes* are some of his other religious works. Bazargan has written more than 100 religious works and 16 Quranic works. *The Order of the Qur'an* by Abdul Ali Bazargan, *The Qur'an and the Sciences of Nature* by Mahdi Golshani and *The Miracles of the Qur'an in the View of Modern Sciences* by Yadullah Niazmand, *The Geometric Structure of the Surahs of the Qur'an* by Mohammad Khamgar and many other works are other examples of this current.

Bazargan also made an effort to show Islam as a political religion. As a layman, Bazargan played a leading role in promoting Islam as a political and active religion during the two decades before the revolution. He even influenced the thoughts of many religious scholars on this subject. He has written various works on

this subject such as Eshgh va Parastesh, Angize and angizande, Musleme ejtema'ei va cahani, Marze miyane mazhab va omure ejtema'ei, Be'sat va ideology. Bazargan 's social and political works were initially offered as lectures among students or on several occasions in religious and political circles, which were later completed and developed and published as an article and book. The result of this effort is more than 70 social works and 160 political works. However, Parsa (2022) argues that although Mahdi Bazargan was the first prime minister of Iran after the Islamic revolution, he did not believe in Islam as a political religion. Bazargan said: "Just as religion did not come to teach us cooking and gardening lessons, it has also left political and social affairs to us" (Bazargan, 1995, pp. 46-61).

In fact, it is possible to divide Bazargan's view on the political commentary of the Qur'an into two different periods of thought. Mehdi Bazargan's view regarding the intervention of religion in political-social affairs has reduced from the maximum intervention in his previous view (before the revolution) to a minimal intervention in his later view (post-Islamic revolution). The aim of religion in his previous intellectual period was one of Bazargan's most important intellectual concerns throughout his intellectual life. In his early writings, he expected a lot from religion and believed in the wide intervention of religion. In his early works, he sought a broad purpose for religion. He considered the creation of social-political order, freedom, democracy, social morality, and the improvement of the human as the goal of the Prophet's mission. His first view played a major role in the political presentation of the religion of Islam. However, in the later view (after the revolution), Mehdi Bazargan clearly deviated from his initial position and removed the government and the administration of society from the scope of the mission and duties of the Prophets and the Qur'an. He clearly emphasizes the separation of religion and politics in this period and tries to explain this separation with Quranic evidence. Bazargan's views before and after the revolution are contradictory. This contradiction stems from his two types of understanding and interpreting the verses of the Qur'an politically. If in his earlier view he insisted strongly on the connection between religion and politics, in his later view he insists that there is no connection between religion and politics. The point here is that all his arguments before and after the revolution are based on verses of the Qur'an. It is seen that the method played a great role in his view in his earlier and later periods. Bazargan's methods of interpretation before the revolution are influenced by some functionalist assumptions, such as "pragmatism", "historicism" and "experimentalism"; therefore, he has a maximalist view of religion and emphasized the political aspects of the Qur'an. However, in the later period of his thought, he gradually shifted to an epistemological and minimal approach to religion and rejected the political aspects of religion (Daneshyar, 2016, p. 381).

5.9. Revolutionary Marxist Current

This current emerged as a result of the influence of Marxist ideas in the ideological intellectual current. The thought that dominates this movement is the result of Marxist thought, the use of new literature and a new understanding of Islam. Influenced by materialism and Marxist militant experiences, this current analyzes religious issues and tries to present a radical ideology based on Islamic teachings. The Organization of Mujahideen Khalgh and the Furkan Group are the main organizations of this current. Jam'iyate Azadiye Mardome Iran, Armane Mostazafin group, Ensejam group, Nehzate Khodaparastane Socialist, Faryade Halk group, Mojahedine Rastin group are other organizations of this current. Jonbeshe Mosalmanane Mobarez, led by Habibullah Peyman, which was founded as a continuation of Khodaparastane Socialist, an Islamic left movement, is another representative of this current (Jafarian, 2008). The tafsir of Anfal, Towbeh and Muhammed (pbuh) surahs, Rahe anbiya rahe bashar, Simaye yek mosalman, Kitabe eghtesad be zabane sade, Kitabe Shenakht, Kitabe takamul, Moghaddame'ei bar motaleate Marksisti, and the booklet of Mubareze çist are the Qur'anic works of Mojahedine Khalgh Organization. Tafsirhaye inghelabiye Furkan, Usule tafakkore Qur'ani, Tarjomeye kamele Qur'an, Farazi az Nahjol- Balaghe, Forughe Nahjol- Belaga, Sharhe duaye Arafe, Salnameye Furghan ve Towhid va ab'ade gunagune an are the the Qur'anic works of Furghan Group (Jafarian, 2008).

Inspired by some of the thoughts of Marxists, they emphasized the revolutionary and social aspects of religion and offered a special interpretation of concepts such as jihad, martyrdom, resistance, and revolution. For them, Marxism is the science of revolution and struggle, and religion cannot be the source of progress without mixing with the teachings of Marxism such as the determinism of history and class struggle. In this approach, concepts that are incompatible with revolutionary principles are rejected or remain silent. This approach was followed in the form of organizations such as Mujahidin-e Halk and Furkan in theoretical and practical dimensions. This current emerged as a result of Marxist ideas infiltrating the idealist intellectual current. The intellectual system and religious thought of these movements, with their three main features (the promotion of Islam as an ideology of revolution and

transformation and a revolutionary religion, the reconciliation of socialism with Islam and the belief in Marxism as a science of struggle) and three secondary features (serious rejection of traditional thought, expelling the clergy, and personal interpretations of the Qur'an) are determined.

5.10. Philosophical-Liberal-Hermeneutic Current

This current emerged as a result of the influence of Western philosophical-liberal ideas among the secular intellectual current. This current uses Western philosophical schools, especially hermeneutics, in the study of the Qur'an and interpretation of the verses, and has entered the field of theoretical and social issues with a philosophical and epistemological approach and the ideas of liberal democracy. The interpretive theories of Heidegger and his student Gadamer, who is known for philosophical hermeneutics, have been the focus of some Quran scholars in the last four decades after the revolution in Iran. This theory of interpretation gives great importance to the element of the audience and the interpreter, and it is based on the fact that the historical conditions and mental presuppositions and interests of the interpreter have an inevitable effect on the interpretation of the holy book. The main figures of this current are Mohammad Mojtaba Shabestari and Abdolkarim Soroush. Shabestari and Soroush do not believe in the comprehensiveness of the teachings of the Quran. Shabestari believes the texts cited in the jurisprudence "Book and Sunnah" were not intended to answer the questions of our age and are only reserved for the age of revelation. It should not be believed that our religious texts have answered everything that is relevant in the political and social life of mankind in the current era and that the answer can be found in religious texts (Mojtaba Shabestari, 1996, pp. 228-230). He also believes that many of the measures of the Prophet that are related to policies and general governance, such as the pledge of allegiance and the Shura, are contextual (time and place dependent) affairs and the Prophet was not trying to establish a special institution and was simply acting according to the fair custom of his time (Mojtaba Shabestari, 2002, pp. 172-183).

According to Soroush's belief, the service of religion is to make the whole existence pleasant, to motivate people to achieve religious experience, and give meaning to people's lives. Political, social, and economic affairs are not religious in nature, and religion should not be expected to express social rules and how control inflation. In his book titled "Theoretical Contraction and Expansion of Religion", he introduced relativity in understanding the Qur'an and religious knowledge and criticized the idea of certainty. In his article "Zati ve araziye din" he divided the Qur'anic teachings into shell and core. In his article "Expansion of prophetic experience" he considered the essence of religion and revelation as a religious experience. In his article titled "Muhammad raviye Royahaye rasulane", Soroush calls the Qur'an "Muhammad's dream book" and claims that Muhammad (pbuh) is not the addressee of voices, more precisely, according to him, Muhammad (pbuh) is the person who narrates and observes the experiences of the scenes he sees in his dreams. He says:

“The idea that an angel poured verses into Muhammad's (pbuh) heart and he recited them should be replaced by the idea that Muhammad (pbuh) is the person reporting events, like a portraitist and an animated reporter present on stage. Instead of the expression Allah is the speaker and Muhammad (pbuh) is the listener in the Qur'an, now the expression is that in the Qur'an, Muhammad (pbuh) is the observer and Muhammad (pbuh) is the narrator. There is no address, addressee, news, informant, speaker or Speech, but there is monitoring and narration of sleep and dreams.” (Soroush, 2013, p. 1).

6. CONCLUSION

In the last century, the returning back to the Qur'an in Islamic countries, including Iran, has opened a new page in the study and interpretation of the Qur'an. Although the traditional method of interpreting the Qur'an continued strongly in this period, the emergence of the awakening movement and religious reform in the Islamic world led to the strengthening of the role of rational reasoning, the use of human intellectual and scientific achievements, as well as the opening of the door to examine the verses of the Qur'an beyond the hadith narrations and the opinions of past scholars. These facts resulted in the use of rational principles and methods in the interpretation of the Qur'an and eventually in the development of various currents in Qur'anic commentaries. Consequently, numerous exegesis currents emerged. This study investigated these currents in the contemporary period especially the last four decades after the revolution in the context of Iran. Findings indicated that these currents can be mainly classified into two types:

1. The currents that do not accept political interpretation, hence did not apply it to Qur'an: a. Conventional current: The commentators in this current reject interpreting the Qur'an politically, hence, they interpret the Qur'an in the conventional ways and follow the methods of the previous

interpretations. b. The current of the Hojatie Society: The scholars of this current are against the political interpretation of the Qur'an and believe that such interpretation of the Qur'an should be stopped. In their view forming a government in the absence of the infallible Imam (Mahdi) is prohibited. c. Religious scientific-experimental current: The scholars in this current try to interpret the Qur'an by employing scientific methods. The prominent figure of this current is Mehdi Bazargan. He supports the intervention of the Qur'an in the social and political affairs of society in his early works before the revolution of Iran. However, his view after the revolution changed. Therefore, he believed that political affairs and forming a government are out of the Qur'an and the prophet's mission and duties. d. Philosophical-liberal-hermeneutic current: Mohammad Mojtahed Shabestari and Abdolkarim Soroush are well-known figures of this current. They do not believe in the comprehensiveness of the teachings of the Quran. Shabestari argues that our religious texts do not include everything that is necessary for the political and social life of humans in the current time. Soroush contends that Political issues are not religious in nature.

2. The currents that accepted the political interpretation and applied it to Qur'an: a. Islamic rationalist current: Considerable quantity of the Qur'anic commentaries have been written in this current. As a representative of this current, Javadi Amoli argues separating religion from politics is one of the doubts of the present age. He rejects the idea that the scope of religion should be restricted to the affairs of the hereafter and that worldly matters and political affairs are out of prophets' missions. b. The Qur'anist current (Qur'aniyoon): The Qur'anist current is more concerned with religious issues than with political affairs. Therefore, political themes can be rarely, if any, found in their commentary works. c. Social interpretation current: Ayatollah Makarem Shirazi and Akbar Hashemi Rafslanjani have written commentary books from the social perspective. They believe that Qur'an contains a comprehensive set of political rulings in all affairs. Hashemi Rafslanjani states "Those who talk about the separation of religion from politics, either know very little about the contents of Islam or do not know politics." (Parsa, 2022, P. 43). d. Epistemological-philosophical current: Qur'anic works written by Ja'far Sobhani, Murtaza Motahhari, and Misbah Yazdi are categorized in epistemological-philosophical current. They believe that Qur'an contains all issues including political affairs necessary for human life. Misbah Yazdi argues that the Western world has raised the issue of separating religion from politics in order to dominate the world. e. Tafkik School current: Unlike the Hojatie society which maintains a rigid view and prohibits the political interpretation of the Qur'an, Tafkik School followed a more moderate path in this regard. f. Revolutionary Marxist current: Influenced by some Marxist thoughts, this current accentuates the revolutionary and social dimensions of religion and offers a special interpretation of concepts such as jihad, martyrdom, resistance, and revolution

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