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The Discourse of Renewal in Quranic Studies: Foundations and Guidelines

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Abstract:

This article examines the foundational principles, emerging trends, and distinctive features of the renewal discourse in contemporary Quranic studies. It elucidates key concepts, establishes comprehensive guidelines for renewal, and identifies four prominent interpretive approaches: the scientific, reformist, modernist, and purposive trends. The study underscores both the significance and potential pitfalls of the renewal discourse, emphasizing the critical need for renewers to adhere to sound hermeneutical principles to safeguard against deviant exegetical tendencies. Through a rigorous assessment of contemporary trends and their methodologies, the article offers nuanced insights into the current landscape of Quranic studies, illuminating both its challenges and opportunities for future scholarship.

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Introduction

The discourse on renewal in Islamic sciences has attracted considerable interest from both scholars and researchers. Although the quality and quantity of these publications differ considerably, numerous scholarly works addressing this topic have been published.

Renewal is a foundational concept that is necessary for the progress and development of any field. When judiciously applied, this can be considered an essential aspect of religion. As recorded in the Sunan of Abū Dāwūd (2009), on the authority of Abu Hurairah, who relates that the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, said, "*Indeed, Allah sends for this nation at the beginning of every hundred years someone who renews its religion*."

Renewal is of utmost importance and warrants attention in the domain of Quranic studies, particularly in the context of exegetical research, which is regarded as one of the most esteemed and prestigious Islamic sciences.

This article addresses the following questions: What is the renewal discourse in Quranic studies? What are its core principles, and what remains constant and variable in Quranic studies? What are the current trends in Quranic studies?

The following structure was adopted in this article:

- Section one defines the renewal discourse and its importance in Quranic studies.
- Section two outlines the guidelines and principles of renewal in Quranic studies.
- Section three discusses the most prominent contemporary trends in Quranic studies.

The objectives of this study are as follows:

- Defining the concept of renewal discourse in Quranic studies.
- Establishing clear foundations and guidelines for renewal discourse in Quranic studies.
- Identifying the most significant contemporary trends in Quranic exegesis.
- Assess modern approaches to Quranic studies.

1. Defining the concepts of Discourse, Renewal, and Renewal Discourse in Quranic Studies

1.1. The concept of discourse

Linguistic dictionaries indicate that the root "kh-ṭ-b" has several meanings. "Al-khaṭbukum" refers to a matter or the cause of something. It is said: "What is your khaṭb?" Meaning: What is the matter or issue? it appears in the saying of Allah Almighty: "*He said, 'Then what is your business* (khaṭbukum), *O messengers*?' " [Al-Hijr: 57] (The Holu Quran). The plural of "Al-khaṭb" is "Al-khuṭūb. The verb "yakhṭūb" is used when a man seeks a woman's hand in marriage. Allah Almighty says: "...*regarding the proposal* (khiṭbah) *to women*..." [Al-Baqarah: 235] (The Holu Quran).

Among Arabs, a "khutbah" (sermon) is characterized by an eloquent, rhythmic prose. A person skilled in delivering sermons is called a "khatib" (orator), and the plural form is "khutaba" (orators). "khitab" (Discourse) and "mukhatabah" (conversation) refer to the interchange of spoken words. It is said, "He addressed him (khāṭabahu) with speech, engaging in conversation (mukhāṭabah) and discourse (khiṭaban)" (Ibn Faris, 1399 AH - 1979 CE; Ibn Manzur; Al-Zubaidi, 1394 AH / 1974 CE). This concept is manifest in Almighty's words: *"And do not address Me* (tukhaṭibani) *concerning those who have wronged*" [Hud: 37] (The Holu Quran).

In the Quran, the term "khiṭāb" is associated with eloquence in speech, clarity in words, and wisdom in judgment. The Quran describes the Prophet David, peace be upon him, saying: " *And We strengthened his kingdom and endowed him with wisdom and decisive judgment* (faṣl al-khiṭāb)." [Ṣād: 20] (The Holu Quran).

Al-Ṭahir Ibn ʻĀshūr (1984) states: "The meaning is that David was endowed with originality of thought and eloquence of speech, such that when he spoke, his words were decisive in distinguishing between truth and falsehood, as is characteristic of the speech of prophets and wise men. His book, the Psalms, known as the "Mazameer" among the Jews, is an exemplar of eloquence in their language."

The majority of Quranic exegetes hold that "fasl al-khitab" in the Quran denotes the ability to judge between people with justice. Some say it signifies the ability to distinguish in speech and judgment, while others say that "fasl al-khitab" indicates the phrase "amma ba'd" (as for what follows). (Ibn ʻAṭīyah, 2001; Ibn Kathīr, 1999; Ibn al-Jawzī, 2001)

Ibn ʻĀshūr (1984) interprets the reason for calling "amma ba'd" the "fasl al-khitab" stating: "The Arabs called this phrase "fasl al-khitab" because it occurs between the introduction of the intended meaning and the intended meaning itself. The "fasl" (separation) here is used in its literal sense, and it is a description using the verbal noun, while the idafa (genitive construction) is literal."

1.2.The concept of renewal

"al-Tajdid" (renewal) is a verbal noun in Arabic, and its origin is "jaddada." Lexicons have various meanings, and we will discuss those relevant to the subject.

A "thawb al-jadid" (new garment) is a recently cut garment, and "al-jidda" is the opposite of "Al-bilah" (worn-out) (al-Jawharī, 1987; al-Zabīdī, 1974). Thus, "al-tajdid" (renewal) is akin to "al-tahdith" (modernization) in both form and meaning.

1.3.The renewal discourse in religious terminology

The expression "discourse of renewal" or "renewal of discourse" appears in many contemporary writings and is intended to refer to intellectual renewal and re-reading texts in light of contemporary developments and modern analytical tools.

This discourse emerged as an objective product of the intellectual abundance that characterizes postmodern thought. It is a testament to this thought's tendency towards continuous renewal. This new discourse has brought about both qualitative and quantitative shifts in postmodern thought. (al-Fajjārī, 2014)

Contemporary studies on renewal research have provided critical terminological definitions that vary according to their source. After reviewing them, renewal can be classified into two types, one of which is part of the other and is more specific: renewal in religion and renewal in Quranic studies.

Renewal in the first type is defined as reforming the nation's condition by reviving what has been neglected in religion, removing all that is foreign to it, and applying it to all areas of life. (Ḥasānayn, 2007)

The second type, Renewal in Quranic Studies, is: "Renewing the understanding of the Book of Allah Almighty in light of the contemporary reality of Muslims according to the principles of exegesis." (Shaṭnāwī, 2010, p. 12)

The discourse of renewal in Quranic studies refers to those calls, researches, and studies that demand a re-understanding and renewal of contemplation and

reflection on the Holy Quran in light of emerging incidents and contemporary developments.

1.4.The importance of renewal discourse in Quranic studies

The discourse on the renewal of Islamic sciences has received special attention, and its significance increases when it pertains to Quranic studies, as it encompasses all sciences related to the Holy Quran. The most important of these sciences are: [exegesis] (Al-tafsir) and recitation (Al-adaa).

When examining the first type, we find a group of sciences that serve exegesis, clarify the Quranic text, and elucidate it, such as the Arabic language at all levels, the science of abrogating and abrogated verses (Al-nasikh and Al-mansukh), the Meccan and Medinan surahs, occasions of revelation (asbab al-nuzul), and exegetical translations of the Holy Quran.

It is not surprising that exegesis has been associated with what does not belong to it, particularly with extensive commentaries. Thus, renewal offers an opportunity to sort out exegetical material and purify it from any impurities that may serve the Quranic text and the needs of contemporary realities.

Shaṭnāwī (2010, pp. 15,19) states, "…A brief examination of exegetical works in general will reveal to the reader that they contain many elements not central to the essence of exegesis. Although this statement carries a harshness in judgment, it indicates the excessive content that these books have reached, forming a veil over the guidance of the Quran…therefore, it is necessary to examine the texts of the Quran from a fresh perspective. It is essential to engage with the Quran and have its verses articulated by specialists to uncover the secrets and lift the veil from the allusions and hidden hints within God's creation: "*We will show them Our signs in the horizons and within themselves until it becomes clear to them that it is the truth.* [Fussilat:53- The Holu Quran] ".

The second type has also been subject to renewal, albeit to a lesser degree. This type includes the science of tajweed (Quranic recitation), the principles of Tilawa (Quranic reading), the science of Quranic readings, and the science of Uthmanic typography.

2. Guidelines and principles of renewal in Quranic studies

Any modernization process in any field of science requires a set of rules and regulations to ensure that renewal constitutes a meaningful contribution within the intended knowledge domain.

Quranic studies are merely a link in the integrative chain through which Islamic knowledge and science are developed. Examining the discourse of renewal in Quranic studies is considered one of the most critical and significant research areas in religious sciences, as the Quranic text serves as the primary source for deriving Islamic legal rulings.

For the renewal to be well-founded and of scientific value in Quranic studies, it must be based upon specific foundations and conditions, perhaps the most important of which are the following:

First, the integrity of intention and freedom from desire are prerequisites for a reformer's discourse in Quranic studies. The purity of the purpose and liberation from personal inclinations are crucial for accepting the reformer's discourse and understanding the Holy Quran. The application of renewal in contemporary Quranic studies is often employed for ignoble purposes, particularly in studies that exhibit an Orientalist or modernist perspective.

As Al-Juday‘ (2001, pp. 294-295) states "The soundness of one's intention is among the most significant means of attaining divine guidance. Understanding the Quran is a divine favor and gift... Beneficial knowledge that genuinely leads to knowing and fearing Allah Almighty can only be attained through sincerity, seeking His assistance, and intending to act upon that knowledge. "

Furthermore, desires and lusts prevent a person from reaching the intended meanings of verses, contemplating them, understanding them correctly, and extracting their meanings. Whoever interprets verses based on their desires has undoubtedly gone astray and has misled others.

Allah Almighty says: "*And do not follow [your own] desire, as it will lead you astray from the way of Allah*." [Ṣād: 26]. Moreover, He says: "*And who is more astray than one who follows his desire without guidance from Allah*?" [Al-Qaṣaṣ: 50]. (The Holu Quran)

It is narrated from Abu Huraira that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: "Whoever acquires knowledge seeking thereby the countenance of Allah, but acquires it only to gain some worldly advantage, will not smell the scent of

Paradise on the Day of Resurrection." (Ibn Mājah, 2009; Abū Dāwūd, 2009; Ibn Ḥanbal, 2001).

Al-Zarkashī (1957, pp. 180-181) - may Allah have mercy on him - elaborated on the veils and hindrances that obstruct the correct understanding of Allah's book, its proper contemplation, the derivation of its rulings, and the realization of its objectives and meanings. He states: "Be aware that a person cannot genuinely comprehend the meanings of revelation, nor can the secrets of knowledge from the unseen realm of divine knowledge become apparent to them, if there is innovation (bid'ah) in their heart, persistence in sin, pride, desire, love for worldly matters, lack of genuine faith, weak conviction, reliance on the opinion of an exegete who possesses only superficial knowledge, or if they resort to their own intellect. All of these are veils and obstacles, some more severe than others. "

Al-Zarkashī (1957, p. 181) then discusses the qualities that aid in comprehending Allah's purpose in the Quran and the attributes that a renewer or interpreter should possess in Quranic studies. He states: "If the servant is attentive to the words of his Lord, lending his ear while his heart is present to the meanings of the attributes of his Divine Speaker, contemplating His power, abandoning the conventional of his knowledge and understanding. disavowing his own power and strength, venerating the Speaker. in need of understanding with a righteous disposition, a sound heart, strength of knowledge, and the ability to listen, to comprehend the discourse, and witnessing the unseen of the response with supplication, humility, despair, submission, and waiting for the enlightenment upon him from the All-Knowing Bestower of Knowledge. And let him seek assistance in this endeavor by ensuring his recitation is focused on the meanings of the speech, and contemplating the attributes of the Divine Author in terms of the promise of reward, the warning of consequences, and the admonition of divine justice."

Al-Ṣabbāgh (1990)specifies religious and moral conditions that must be met by the reformer who studies the Holy Quran, saying: "He should have sound faith, fulfill religious obligations, adhere to the Islamic etiquette and morals that Islam has called for, and be free from the authority of desire, with intense fear of Allah."[2]

Al-Juday‘ (2001, p. 195) remarks:"Among the significant obstacles that hinder the comprehension of the truths of divine revelation and the accurate interpretation of Allah's words is succumbing to personal inclinations, whether in the form of skepticism or worldly desires."

Second, preserving the sanctity of the Quranic text and considering the Quran as a divine revelation is essential. Divine care protects The Quran from distortions, deviations, or errors. Allah, the Exalted, states: "*Indeed, it is We who have sent down the Reminder, and indeed, we will be its guardian*" [Al-Hijr: 9]. (The Holu Quran)

This fundamental tenet is considered one of the most significant risks that some unorthodox approaches to Quranic studies have encountered. Certain modernist interpretations represent a contemporary trend that has diverged from this principle in its exegesis of the Holy Quran.

Ḥasānayn (2007, p. 45) asserts: " The practical reformers among the scholars confront the manifestations of deviation and present them to the truths of Sharia to determine Islam's stance on them. Then, they elucidate their peril to Muslims and engage in a proselytizing endeavor with proponents and adherents of falsehood until the word of Allah prevails."

Third, comprehending the fundamental aspects of Quranic Arabic, the historical context of its revelation, and examining the diverse Arab dialects is essential. The variations in Quranic recitation styles reflect the phonetic characteristics of both settled and nomadic Arab communities. The Holy Quran, through its widely transmitted (mutawatir) and less common (shadh) readings, precisely encapsulates the rich tapestry of dialectal diversity prevalent during its revelation.

Mujahid (d. 104 AH/722 CE) is reported to have stated, "For one who professes faith in Allah and the Day of Judgment, it is impermissible to expound upon the Quran without a thorough understanding of the Arabic linguistic traditions. " (al-Suyūṭī, 1974, p. 213)

" Given these considerations, a profound literary sensibility is indispensable for those engaging in Quranic exegesis. Such appreciation can only be cultivated through sustained immersion in the works of eloquent scholars and writers. This immersion entails extensive reading, memorization of exemplary passages, familiarization with critical analyses, and comprehensive study of diverse literary forms including poetry, epistolary writings, and oratory. Moreover, active engagement in the writing process itself is crucial for developing this literary acumen." (al-Ṣabbāgh, 1990, p. 193)

Fourth, any novel interpretations must align with the established foundational principles of Quranic exegesis and related sciences. Consequently,

matters that have achieved scholarly consensus (ijma') within the Islamic tradition are not subject to renewal or reinterpretation.

Al-Ṭayyār (2004, p. 231) has provided an in-depth analysis of this principle, delineating four essential conditions. He elucidates: 'The comprehensive enumeration of all possible interpretations was not a prerequisite for the exegetical work of early scholars. Consequently, there exist valid interpretations that were not explicitly mentioned by these early exegetes. Such novel interpretations are deemed acceptable if they fulfill the following criteria:

- The proposed interpretation must possess inherent validity;
- It should not contradict the established exegetical positions of the salaf (early Muslim scholars);
- The Quranic verse in question must be capable of accommodating this interpretation linguistically and contextually;
- The interpretation should not restrict the verse's meaning exclusively to this new possibility while disregarding the established exegeses of the salaf.

Fifth, the exegetical innovator must possess a robust capacity for analysis and comprehension of specialized disciplines pertinent to inferential and deductive processes. A thorough exploration of the Quran necessitates the application of sophisticated scholarly tools and analytical methodologies to facilitate understanding and the derivation of jurisprudential principles. The repertoire of essential knowledge for the exegetical innovator encompasses various Quranic sciences, including:

- Asbab al-Nuzul (occasions of revelation)
- Al-Nasikh wa al-Mansukh (abrogating and abrogated verses)
- Al-Mutlaq wa al-Muqayyad (absolute and conditional rulings)

Mastery of these disciplines is indispensable for the comprehensive interpretation of Quranic verses and the elucidation of their nuanced meanings. It enables the exegete to discern inter-sural and narrative correlations, as well as to understand the cohesive structure of Quranic events and historical accounts.

A critical analysis of contemporary renewal efforts in Quranic studies reveals a concerning trend: some researchers exhibit a notable deficiency in their

engagement with these essential Quranic sciences. In certain instances, there is even an apparent lack of fundamental comprehension of these crucial disciplines.

Ḥasānayn (2007, p. 39) addresses a critical concern: "Individuals engaging in exegetical renewal without adequate scholarly credentials often invoke the well-known adage, "There is no monasticism in Islam." They interpret this as a rejection of any clerical hierarchy in Islam that might restrict religious discourse to a select group of scholars. However, this interpretation overlooks crucial jurisprudential principles that only partially support their position. A fundamental tenet in Islamic scholarship asserts that Allah is not to be worshipped in ignorance, implying that meaningful religious discourse necessitates a specific level of specialized knowledge. This expertise is typically the domain of those who have undergone rigorous training in Islamic sciences within the scholarly community."

Al-Ṣabbāgh (1990) incorporates this principle into the cognitive prerequisites essential for a Quranic exegete. He elucidates (p. 195): "Intellectual prerequisites: A Quranic exegete should possess extraordinary cognitive faculties, demonstrating proficiency in logical reasoning and deductive analysis. They must exhibit adeptness in evaluating conflicting evidence and discerning the fundamental nature of divergent viewpoints. Crucially, they should recognize that many apparent disagreements in exegetical discourse often represent a diversity of perspectives rather than irreconcilable contradictions."

These constitute the principal foundations upon which the discourse of renewal in Quranic studies relies, enhancing academic research, deepening understanding of the Holy Quran, safeguarding against falsehood and distortion, and providing defense against misguidance and skepticism.

3. Modern trends and prominent features of renewal in Quranic studies.

The discourse on renewal in Quranic studies has engendered a diverse array of contemporary hermeneutical approaches, each accompanied by distinct features and methodological characteristics. These emergent trends have given rise to specialized studies, research paradigms, and analytical tools unique to their respective orientations.

Contemporary trends in the discourse of renewal are fundamentally shaped by the interplay between religious and theological presuppositions and the methodologies employed in modern Quranic exegesis. These interpretive

frameworks are intrinsically molded by the exegete's doctrinal affiliations, intellectual proclivities, and academic specializations. (al-Riḍā'ī, 2011)

In this final section, we delineate the most salient contemporary trends in Quranic studies, elucidating the distinctive features of renewal and exemplifying research paradigms associated with each hermeneutical approach.

3.1.The scientific trend

The scientific approach represents one of the most significant manifestations of renewal discourse in Quranic studies. This approach seeks to establish correlations between contemporary scientific theories and Quranic texts, thereby elucidating various aspects of i'jaz (inimitability) within the Quranic narrative.

Contemporary scholarship has proffered analogous definitions for this exegetical methodology. One such definition characterizes it as "the application of scientific terminology in the explication of Quranic verses and the establishment of concordance between Quranic passages and discoveries in empirical, astronomical, and philosophical sciences." (al-Ṣabbāgh, 1990, p. 293)

The proliferation of publications within this paradigm of Quranic hermeneutics has been remarkable, with the corpus expanding to encompass approximately 200 books (al-Riḍā'ī, 2011), addressing both concise and extensive topics within the field.

The renewal inherent in this approach involves the integration of major advancements in cosmological and empirical sciences, including but not limited to astronomy, mathematics, chemistry, and geography. These scientific developments are then juxtaposed with relevant Quranic verses and allusions, facilitating the derivation of multifaceted aspects of i'jaz. This novel trend in Quranic exegesis has engendered considerable debate among both proponents and critics within the scholarly community.

Among the well-known works in this trend are as follows:

- Al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān (Gems in the Interpretation of the Quran) by Ṭanṭāwī Jawharī (d. 1358 AH)
- Al-Qur'ān wa al-'Ilm al-Ḥadīth (The Quran and Modern Science) by Abd al-Razzāq Nawfal (d. 1404 AH)
- Al-Tafsīr al-'Ilmī lil-Qur'ān fī al-Mīzān (The Scientific Interpretation of the Quran in the balance), a doctoral thesis by Aḥmad Umar Abū Ḥajar

3.2. The reformist or educational-social trend

This approach subsequently evolved, and the approach to renewal in Quranic studies became more practical and responsive to the challenges encountered by contemporary society. The scholar engaged in renewal analyzes Quranic passages with specific educational or social themes, interprets them in light of contemporary knowledge, and applies them to the current realities of diverse societies and cultures.

This new approach to Quranic studies emerged towards the close of the nineteenth century. The Islamic world persisted in its quest for sound pathways to reform, as exemplified by Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī (d. 1314 AH), who spearheaded a significant intellectual movement characterized by a discourse imbued with faith and reverence for the Quran. He advocated addressing societal decay and intellectual and cultural stagnation by returning to authentic Islam and prioritizing its foundational texts from the Quran and Sunnah. This trend aimed at societal rejuvenation through the reinterpretation of Quranic verses. Several scholars, including Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī, Muḥammad ‘Abduh (d. 1323 AH), and Sayyid Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā (d. 1354 AH), may Allah have mercy on them all, embraced this mission. (al-Ṣabbāgh, 1990, p. 310)

This discourse on renewal emerged in response to the challenges confronting the Muslim community and its circumstances, with its features stemming from its pain and afflictions. In the later periods, the Islamic world witnessed civilizational and intellectual decline, enabling enemies and adversaries to launch various forms of colonial encroachments in several regions.

One of the most important distinguishing features of this trend is that it neglected the deep issues that early exegetes had delved into, such as grammar, jurisprudence, sectarian issues, logic, and theology. Instead, it focuses on interpreting the Quranic verses through the lens of education, guidance, liberation from traditional constraints, and strategies to counteract colonialism. This trend has led to various interpretations and models, including:

- Tafsīr al-Manār (the lighthouse exegesis), in which two prominent figures of the reformist and social movement in the renewal discourse participated: Muhammad' Abduh and his student Muhammad Rashīd Riḍā.
- Tafsīr al-Marāghī (maraghi exegesis) by Sheikh Aḥmad Muṣṭafā al-Marāghī (d. 1371 AH).

- Fī Ẓilāl al-Qur'ān (Within Quranic Shadows) by Sayyid Quṭb (d. 1386 AH).

3.3.The modernist trend

This approach gained prominence in the West, particularly in Europe, during the 20th century, attracting interest from Arab scholars in Western universities. These scholars were influenced by Western intellectual traditions and impressed by the technological and social advancements in Western societies.

The modernist trend is widely regarded as one of the most influential outcomes of renewal discourse in Quranic studies, irrespective of its specific content.

It has sparked extensive debate and discussion, evolving from a mere modernizing vision of the Quran into a project embraced by numerous Western and, occasionally, Arab institutions and universities.

An examination of works by modernist scholars reveals the key features and innovative aspects of this approach, which is founded on principles that often diverge from the established foundations and rules of renewal previously discussed.

There are numerous principles of the contemporary interpretive approach in Quranic studies, the most significant of which is desacralizing the Quranic text. In their writings, the Holy Quran is treated like ancient literary texts, such as poetry, prose, and wisdom, or it is contextualized within its historical setting and linguistic and social environment, a process referred to in the principles of contemporary critical theory as the "historicization of the Quran".

Modernism, in its renewal discourse, employs a deconstructive approach that reinforces the aforementioned principle. "Deconstruction serves as a crucial mechanism for unveiling and scrutinizing the textual layers that have been obscured by diverse theoretical frameworks and ideological constructs. This process aims to strip away the presumed self-evidence and perceived sanctity of the text. " (al-Shaddī, 2010, p. 183)

Scholars of contemporary Quranic studies are not obligated to adhere strictly to traditional exegetical principles; instead, they should prioritize two key aspects when engaging with the Holy Quran: Firstly, a comprehensive understanding of modern linguistic theories and semiotic approaches, coupled with proficiency in contemporary frameworks of critical thinking and epistemological analysis.

Secondly, the scholar's capacity to differentiate between various modes of textual engagement (al-Shaddī, 2010), including:

- Distinguishing between argumentative reasoning and intuitive perception
- Differentiating interpretation from explanation
- Recognizing the nuances between analytical examination and the deconstruction of religious discourse.

Among the most famous works in this trend are the following:

- Al-Quran min al-Tafsir al-Mawruth ila Tahlil al-Khitab al-Dini (The Quran: From Inherited Exegesis to the Analysis of Religious Discourse) by Mohammed Arkoun.
- Al-Mumarasat al-Naqdiyya al-Mu'asira wa al-Quran: Dirasa dimna al-Mawsu'a al-Quraniyya [Contemporary Critical Practices and the Quran: A Study Within the Quranic Encyclopedia] by Muḥammad Arkūn.
- Al-Ittijah al-'Aqli fi al-Tafsir: Dirasa fi Qadiyat al-Majaz fi al-Quran 'inda al-Mu'tazila [The Rationalist Trend in Exegesis: A Study of the Issue of Metaphor in the Quran among the Mu'tazilites] by Naṣr Ḥāmid Abū Zayd.
- Al-Kitab wa al-Quran, Qira'a Mu'asira [The Book and the Quran: A Contemporary Reading] by Muḥammad Shaḥrūr.
- Al-Wahy wa al-Quran wa al-Nubuwwa [Revelation, the Quran, and Prophethood] by Hishām Djaʻīṭ.

3.4.The purposive trend

In analyzing research concerning the discourse of renewal in Quranic studies, we encounter an additional renewal approach: the purposive approach, which warrants further exploration despite the abundance and diversity of renewal discourse. The purposive approach in Quranic studies involves: "the researcher highlighting the general, specific, and partial purposes of the Holy Quran in his research or study. This can only be achieved by deriving insights from Quranic verses and examining scholarly interpretations that reveal these purposes, show the connections between them, reinvigorate their relevance, and demonstrate their applicability to human reality in every time and place". (ʻAbd al-ʻĀṭī, 2015, p. 83)

The purpose-oriented interpretation of the Holy Quran is a necessity necessitated by the challenges and requirements of contemporary reality. It is an understanding that revitalizes Islamic jurisprudence (Sharia) and preserves the relevance of the Holy Quran's message. The most crucial feature of renewal in the purposive approach is that it transcends the literal interpretation of the Quranic word to uncover its underlying objectives and intent. This is a significant aspect of contemporary discourse on renewal in Quranic studies.

Therefore, this approach to engaging with the verses of the Holy Quran requires further attention and emphasis due to its importance in understanding the Quran and applying its guidance to both individual lives and societal contexts (Waṣfī, 2013). Modern Quranic scholarship has increasingly embraced a purposive approach. A seminal work exemplifying this renewed approach is "Al-Tahrir wa Al-Tanwir" (The Liberation and Enlightenment) by Muhammad Al-Tahir Ibn ʻĀshūr from Tunisia, in which he extensively employed purposive interpretation for many verses of the Holy Quran.

The purposive approach may intersect with the modernist approach in the renewal discourse in modern studies because some scholars have overemphasized purposive interpretation to undermine the literal meaning and intended message of the Quranic text. This is a sensitive and potentially problematic aspect; the contemporary interpretive approach goes beyond the words and content of the text and the interpretations of classical scholars to focus on purpose, even when such interpretations are improbable, convoluted, or contradict established principles of textual renewal, asserting the text's historical specificity at the expense of its universal applicability

ʻAbd al-ʻĀṭī (2015, p. 89) stated: " The modern era has witnessed something worse, where a trend emerged whose proponents prioritize purposes steeped in following whims, adopting an approach that serves their personal interests, and do not accept any statement from the Quranic text that contradicts what they aim to achieve. If its apparent meaning resists their desired interpretation, they – under the pretext of purposes – distort its meaning and implications to align with their whims."

These represent the most significant modern trends in the renewal discourse of Quranic studies, as evidenced through an inductive examination of innovative research.

4. Conclusion:

Having examined the concept of renewal discourse in Quranic studies, elucidating its foundational principles and guidelines, and analyzing contemporary trends with the most prominent features of renewal, several salient points emerge:

First, the scope of renewal discourse in Quranic studies extends to modern methodologies and perspectives dealing with the Holy Quran and related subjects, irrespective of their origins.

Second, the discourse on renewal in Quranic studies is characterized by both significance and potential challenges. It is significant because exegetical materials require attention and review to address contemporary realities and emerging issues. Regarding the challenges, renewal in Quranic studies is unlike other fields of knowledge because it requires the renewer to have a thorough grasp of the principles and methodologies of renewal.

Third, renewal in Quranic studies is guided by principles and methodologies that determine the rigorous approach to innovative scholarship and how to engage with the Holy Quran. The renewer must possess sound intentions, be free from personal biases, uphold the sanctity of the Quran, have a deep knowledge of the Arabic language and sciences related to the Quran, and demonstrate analytical skills and the ability to draw sound conclusions.

Fourth, the discourse on renewal in Quranic studies has given rise to several contemporary trends, ranging from lengthy to concise approaches, and encompassing both supportive and critical perspectives.

Fifth, disregarding principles of renewal, either wholly or partially, has given rise to divergent interpretations in Quranic exegesis and Quranic studies.

Sixth, our inductive analysis of modern approaches in Quranic studies reveals the following points:

- The reformist and social trend emerges as the dominant characteristic in contemporary Arabic Quranic exegeses.
- The renewal discourse in Western Quranic studies is primarily embodied in the modernist approach.
- The purposive approach in Quranic studies remains underexplored, despite its significant potential to enrich Quranic research and its critical importance in contemporary interpretive frameworks.

As we conclude this paper, we humbly beseech Allah, the Exalted, for guidance and righteousness, assistance and support. We pray that He makes us among those who truly understand and act upon the teachings of the Quran. All praise is due to Allah, Lord of the Worlds. May Allah's peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family, his companions, and all who follow his path until the Day of Judgment.

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