



Revelation-Order Thematic Interpretation Style: Evolution, Origin, Basics

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<http://dx.doi.org/10.18415/ijmmu.v9i9.4010>

Abstract

Researchers have studied the thematic interpretation from various perspectives, one of which is the revelation-order thematic interpretation style. This interpretive procedure, despite being as old as the era of revelation-based, has attracted the attention of the scientific community in the present era in order to discover the methods of institutionalizing Qur'anic values. This paper is descriptive-analytical to consider the effectiveness of the revelation-order procedure, and addresses its origin in the form of "understanding the evolution curve" and "understanding the age of revelation", as well as "extracting the method" and its principles which consist of "legitimacy and permission", "the possibility of achieving the order of revelation", "the wisdom of the Qur'an in content and method", "coherence of verses and surahs", "no conflict between the revelation-order interpretation and the order of surahs and verses in the official Muṣḥaf" and "the verbal type of the words of the Qur'an". Although there are scattered writings on this topic and its some principles have been used as unwritten ones, but it is worth noting that this procedure has not been studied comprehensively and there is no coherent account of it.

Keywords: *Evolution Process; Origin; Basics; Procedure; Revelation-Order; Thematic Style*

1- Introduction

There are two major styles in the field of Qur'an interpretation; sequential interpretation style and thematic interpretation style. In the style of sequential interpretation, the commentator examines the Qur'an verse by verse from the beginning to the end in order to understand the divine meaning. However, in the style of thematic interpretation, in order to obtain the Qur'an's opinion about a specific subject, the commentator collects all the verses related to that subject and examines it (Sobhani, 2004, vol. 1, p. 23; Makarem Shirazi, 1995, vol. 1, p. 21). Looking at the evolution of the thematic interpretation, it is clear that in the first stages, the topics of this style were completely simple and within the Qur'an, and only by mentioning the direct verses, the Qur'an's point of view was examined in each topic. Unfortunately, this method was also neglected after the era of Ahl al-Bayt (AS) and was used in a completely minimal way until the contemporary era (Akbari, 2013, p. 38). Therefore, despite the formation of the thematic

interpretation in the first centuries, it is not a long time of its design as a style against the sequential interpretation style. As Professor Misbah after dividing the thematic commentary into three categories; Verbal interpretation, Descriptive interpretation and Analytical interpretation, he considers the thematic interpretation of the first and second category to be related to the era of revelation-order and introduces only the thematic interpretation of the third category as a rule of the sequential interpretation, which of course was born in the last century and does not have a long history (Zulfaqari, 2018, p. 8).

Nowadays, due to the improvement of the intellectual level of human societies in the understanding of higher education, as well as the emergence of new problems and doubts, the desire of different groups, especially the young and educated groups, to understand the perspective of the Qur'an in personal and social issues is increasing. So, researchers, seeking to eliminate the shortcomings and complete this interpretive style, have made many efforts, the result of which is the invention of various procedures in the thematic interpretation style. One of the prominent procedures is the revelation-order procedure. The meaning of the procedure is a series of consecutive and related steps in order to achieve a goal (Robbins, 2014, p. 95). In fact, the procedure is a guide to action based on which a specific activity is implemented (Kuntz, 2019, p. 183). The meaning of the procedure here is the set of methods and approaches that researchers use to obtain the Qur'an's opinion on a specific subject in the style of thematic interpretation.

The present article is trying to examine the revelation-order procedure in the style of thematic interpretation and by examining the evolution, origin and foundations of the mentioned procedure, understand the reason for its development as well as the mental presuppositions of the revelation-order researcher and in this way to know its strengths and weaknesses. Hope that a step will be taken to improve this interpretative procedure.

2- The Evolution of Revelation-Order Interpretation

However, interpretation in the order of revelation is as old as the revelation of the Qur'an, and experts believe that this procedure dates back to the era of revelation, and they have also provided documentation of the performance of the Ahl al-Bayt (AS), headed by Muṣṣḥaf of Amir al-Mu'minin (Kulaynī, 1407 A.H., v. 1, p. 231; Majlisī, 1404 AH, vol. 22, p. 26 and 38; *ibid.*, vol. 89, p. 40). But interpretation can be considered as a product of the 14th century, in two forms, sequential and thematic.

This interpretive procedure was first used mostly in Sunni society and in a sequential manner. Among the sequential revelation-order works among the Sunnis, we can mention the complete interpretation of the Qur'an by "'Abd al-Qādir Mullā Ḥuwaysh Al-Qādī" in three volumes in the year (2004 AD). Also, during this period, a complete commentary of the Qur'an in ten volumes by "Muḥammad 'Izza Darwaza" was published in Beirut in a sequential revelation-order form that the author points out the benefits of this interpretative style and the shortcomings of other styles (Darwaza, 2004, v. 1, pp. 142-147).

"Ma'ārij al-Tafakkur wa Daqā'iq al-Tadabbur", an intellectual interpretation, according to revelation by "'Abd al-Raḥmān Ḥasan Ḥabannakah Maydānī" is one of the works in this field, which was published in six volumes in 2000. "Fahm Al-Qur'an al-Ḥakīm; Al-Tafsir al-Wāḍiḥ Ḥasab al-Tartīb Al-Nuzūl" by "Muḥammad 'Ābir Jābirī" in 2009 is another interpretation in this style of interpretation in 3 volumes, which according to the author, this interpretation was influenced by Shāṭibī's words in *al-Muwāfiqāt* about the role of the order of surahs' revelation in understanding the verses. (Jābirī, 2009, vol. 1, p. 13)

Among the contemporary Shi'a works in sequential revelation-order interpretation, we can refer to the book "Course of the Evolution of the Qur'an" by "Mahdi Bazargan" in the year (1986). The book "Along with the revelation; Tafsir in order of revelation" by "Abdul Karim Bahjatpour" in the year (2011) is one of the other Shi'a works in this field. His other book titled "Tafsir in order of revelation: Basics,

Principles, Rules, Benefits" which was published in 2013 is an effort by him to systematically present the basics and rules of the revelation procedure. His work is "Knowing the revelation-order of Surahs of the Holy Qur'an" in the year (2014), in which he provides comprehensive information about the 114 Surahs of the Qur'an in revelation order. "A Commentary on the Qur'an in Descending Order" by Seyyed Reza Niyazmand in the year (2013) is one of the other Shi'a works in the descending order of interpretation, in which the author describes the verses of the Qur'an in two volumes, separated as Makkī and Madanī surahs, along with the events of the life of the beloved Prophet of Islam.

But in the thematic revelation-order interpretation, in spite of a lot of searching in Sunni scholarly works and the sites of Nūr articles, science net, www.civilica.com and www.Sildeshare.net and... as well as the Sunni blogs like the opinion blog, no work was found in the style of thematic revelation-order interpretation.

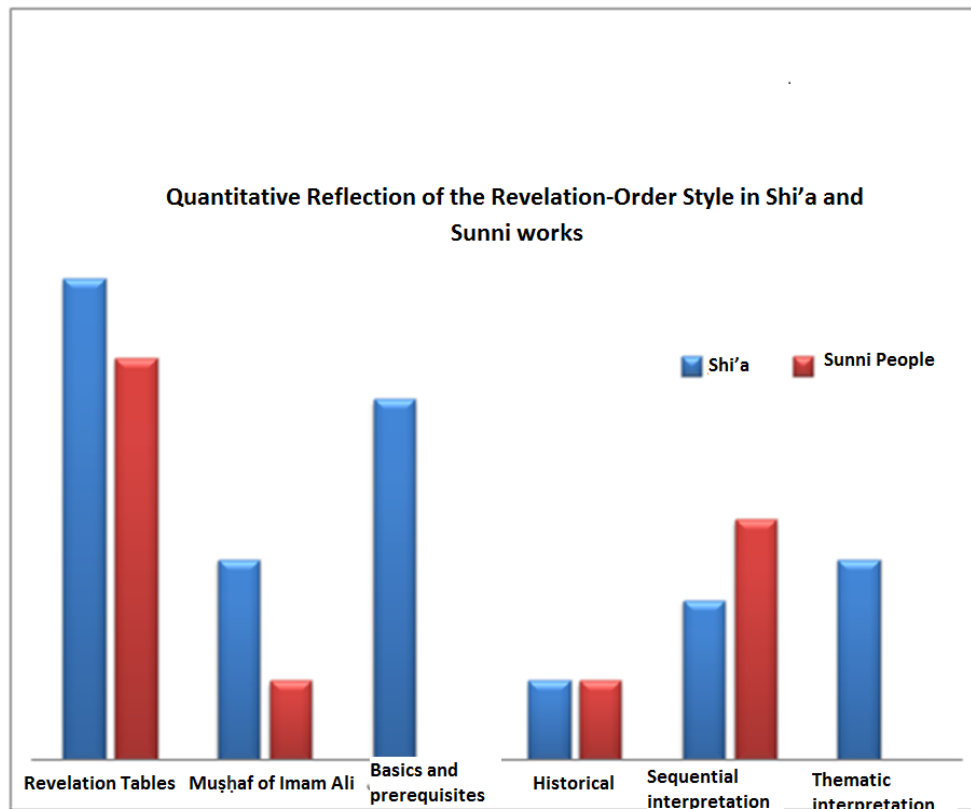
Among the Shi'a works in thematic revelation-order interpretation, we can mention works such as "The method of planning monotheism in the Qur'an" in the year (2010), "The method of discovering the model of cultural engineering of the country" in the year (2014), "The policy model of social cohesion from the perspective of the Holy Qur'an" in 2015, "Course of Culturalization of Islamic Clothing" in 2016 mentioned by "Abdul Karim Bahjatpour" as an expert in this interpretive style. Works such as "Study and Investigation of Caliphate in the Qur'an in a Revelation-order Style" by Abdullah Gholami in the year (2013), "Engineering the Culturalization of Prayer in Revelation-order Interpretation" by "Sae'edeh Aghaei Aghdam" in the year (2013), "Engineering of Chastity and Hijab in Revelation-order interpretation" by "Marhamat Soleimani" in the year (2014), "The Stages of Chastity and Hijab in Revelation-order interpretation" by "Akbar Danandeh" and colleagues in the year (2016), "Process of Prophetic State Building in Makkī Surahs Based on Revelation-order interpretation" by "Gholam Reza Behrouzi" and "Mohammad Reza Ranjbar" in the year (2018) and "The Revelation-order Process of the Names and Attributes of the Qur'an" by Zainab Bahjatpour in the year (2019).

Apart from the interpretive books and works, the non-interpretive reflection of the revelation-order procedure can be seen in the two fields of theoretical and historical discussions in Shi'a and Sunni works. The written works on theoretical topics in the field of the basics of this procedure include topics such as: The order of revelation of surahs, tables of revelation, Makkī and Madanī surahs, foundations, rules, principles and benefits of revelation-order interpretation, the permissibility and possibility of this procedure, the introduction to the Muṣḥaf of Imam Ali (AS) and the documents of the legitimacy of this procedure to the Muṣḥaf of Imam Ali (AS) and the reasons for the opponents and supporters of the revelation-order interpretation. The written works on historical topics also deal more with the history and biography of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) based on the revelation order. Some researchers consider the Qur'an as an original and unaltered text of the most important source, through knowing the course of revelation of the Surah and its verses, one can achieve the most correct and definitive course and history of the era of revelation (Nekounam, 2012, p. 6).

Among the non-interpretive works that deal with the subject of revelation is the book "Tafsīr wa Mufasssīrān" by professor "Mohammad Hadi Ma'refat" in the year (2000). "Allameh Tabataba'i" in the commentary of "Al-Mīzān" after examining the narrations of the revelation order, points out to the benefits of science in the order of revelation in the topics related to the prophetic call, the spiritual, political and social course of the time of the Prophet (PBUH) and provides a solution to know the tables of the order of revelation (Tabataba'i, 1420 AH, vol. 13, pp. 133-135). The discussion of the order of revelation of the surahs can be seen in the words of scholars such as Zarkashī in "Al-Burhān Fī Ulūm al-Qur'an" (1410 AH), Suyuṭī in "Al-Itqān" (nd). Suyuṭī, in the book "Tartīb Suwar al-Qur'an", considers the order of surahs in the Muṣḥaf of Amir al-Mu'minin according to the order of revelation, and mentions the first surah as Surah 'Alaq (Suyuṭī, nd: 31). Qayyī'ī also believes that the order of the surahs in the Muṣḥaf of Ali ibn Abi Ṭālib (AS) is based on the order of revelation (Qayyī'ī, 1417 AH, vol. 1, pp. 115 and 159).

It is worth mentioning that revelation-order interpretation is done in two ways, time-oriented and narrative-oriented. Researchers in the time-oriented method seek to discover documents and evidence for the exact time of revelation of the verses. Among the researchers of this method, which is called "Chronology" or "Dating", we can mention "Gustav Weil" with the book "Historical Criticism of the Qur'an" in 1844. After him, "Theodor Nöldeke" brought it to its peak in his doctoral thesis entitled "The History of the Qur'an" in 1856 (McAuliffe, 2006). Orientalists such as "Richard Bell", "Hubert Grimm", "Aloys Sprenger", "Dürrenberg", "Régis Blachère" are among other researchers who addressed this issue. In Iran, "Mahdi Bazargan" has addressed this issue in his commentary "Step by step with revelation" which was published in two volumes in 1995. The book "Introduction to the Dating of the Qur'an" by Ja'far Nekounam (2001) also deals with the determination of the date of the revelation of the Qur'anic verses and surahs by examining various traditions of the reasons for the revelation, the order of revelation and the prophetic life (Nekounam, 2001: 12). In the narrative-oriented method, the document of the researcher's work is the narrations that describe the order of revelation of the surahs, which are found in works such as "Course of the Culturalization of Islamic Clothing" in the year (2017) by Abdul Karim Bahjatpour and "The Revelation-order Process of the Names and Attributes of the Qur'an" in the year (2019) by Zainab Bahjatpour.

The quantitative reflection diagram of the revelation-order procedure, which is another work of the author in collaboration with "Atiyeh Sadat Yazdikhah" in the article "Reflection of the style of revelation-order interpretation in the works of Shi'a and Sunni; Scope and Works" in the year (1400), it displays the scope of Shi'a and Sunni's works in this interpretive procedure.



This graph shows that the style of revelation-order interpretation is specific to the works of Shi'a and in the current era, it has attracted the attention of scholars, which doubles the necessity of dealing with the topic in question.

3- Origin

"Origin" as mentioned in the dictionary refers to a place from which something arises (Mo'in, 2007, under the article of origin). Source, place of rise and place of rising are also called origin. In this article, "Origin" refers to the source and reason of the researcher's approach to a particular procedure and reveals his purpose and motivation for choosing that procedure. In fact, the reason for the researcher's approach to the thematic interpretation style in revelation-order can show its importance and necessity. The reason why the researcher has become inclined towards this method and the desire to fix what defect or hope for what benefit has prompted him to this procedure can be a criterion for its value and mastery.

3-1- Knowing the Transformation Curve

One of the main reasons for the revelation-order researcher to this procedure is to understand the frequency of each topic in different years. In this procedure, the researcher examines the frequency of verses of a topic in different years and draws it in a bar chart to achieve the curve of thematic evolution. With the help of this curve, he can approach the atmosphere of the revelation era and understand the challenges in each year of that era. In other words, the history of Islam can be examined from the perspective of cultural and intellectual developments through thematic interpretation in revelation-order (Khamegar, 2010, p. 243). In this way, Engineer Bazargan achieved the transformation curve in various subjects in the book "Course of the Evolution of the Qur'an". He showed that the most verses describing the attributes of heaven and hell were revealed in the third year of the Bi'thah and the most jurisprudential verses were revealed in the ninth year of the Hijra (Bazargan, 1986, pp. 157-210).

3-2- Knowing the Age of Revelation

Another reason for the revelation-order interpreter to this procedure is to gain maximum knowledge of the age of revelation and the atmosphere that governs it, as well as to discover the wisdom of the Qur'anic precedence and succession and the appropriateness of its concepts. According to the testimony of the first verse of Surah Ibrahim: "(This is) a Scripture which We have revealed unto thee (Muhammad) that thereby thou mayst bring forth mankind from darkness unto light, by the permission of their Lord, unto the path of the Mighty, the Owner of Praise" he believes that this goal is beyond time (Bahjatpour, 2017, p. 15). Therefore, he is trying to achieve Culturalization methods in his era by modeling the society of the revelation era. In fact, he considers the Qur'an to be one of the most efficient models in the shaping of religious and spiritual transformation, which by carefully considering its components, methods, dimensions, challenges and harms, and by assimilating and localizing its transformational program with the target society, can achieve a model in the institutionalization of Islamic values in the present era. (Bahjatpour, 2013, pp. 188, 198, 255; Bahjatpour, 2018, pp. 23-28; Jawādī Āmulī, 1999, p. 236)

3-3- Method Extraction

The revelation-order researcher considers the Qur'an as an educational book that has institutionalized Islamic values in its contemporary society step by step. The reason for the revelation-order researcher's approach to this procedure is to discover the methods of institutionalizing Islamic values in the age of revelation and matching those methods with his contemporary age. How do people turn from polytheism to monotheism? What is the way to revive moral values? What is the method of committing people to acts of worship such as Hajj, prayer and zakat? And it is possible to answer questions like this by discovering the methods of valuing the society of the revelation era and adapting it to the current society. In other words, the reason for the researcher's approach to the revelation-order method can be considered to be the discovery of the methods of transformation and advancement of

Islamic knowledge in the society based on considering the Prophet (PBUH) and his target society as a role model (Bahjatpour, 2012, p. 76).

4- Basics

"Basics" is the plural of base and in the word it means foundation, and basis (Dehkhoda, 1946, vol. 12, p. 17759). Interpretive basics are those presuppositions, thematic principles, and religious or scientific beliefs that the commentator interprets the Qur'an based on them. Some "Basics" are general interpretations and do not belong to a specific procedure, but some foundations and presuppositions are specific to each procedure and their discovery can be a criterion for its efficiency. The revelation-order procedure of the thematic interpretation style is not an exception to this rule, and like other procedures, it is based on presuppositions and foundations, some of the most important of which are mentioned below.

4-1- Legitimacy and Permissibility

One of the main and most important presuppositions of the revelation-order researcher is the legitimacy and permission to use this interpretive procedure, which is addressed in two forms: the gradualness of education and the application of revelation-order thematic interpretation.

4-1-1- Gradualness is a Requirement of Education

According to some verses (27 and 28/Takwīr; 9/Isrā'), the main goal of the Qur'an is guidance. The guidance which, according to the first verse of Surah Ibrahim, "(This is) a Scripture which We have revealed unto thee (Muhammad) that thereby thou mayst bring forth mankind from darkness unto light, by the permission of their Lord, unto the path of the Mighty, the Owner of Praise" is not only a presentation of a path, but it is done in order to create a transformation of knowledge and to get out of ignorance and darkness towards the direction of light. As some researchers have stated that the overall mission of the Qur'an, in addition to cognitive guidance, is practical education and the creation of deep-rooted and all-round individual and social transformation (Hakim: 1425, p. 49; Misbah-e-Yazdi, 2013, vol. 2, p. 23-44). This goal requires the gradual revelation of the Qur'an; because cognitive transformation and self-education is not an immediate thing, and it should be achieved gradually and with the passage of time. After receiving knowledge, a person must understand it so that he can apply it in practice and thus be mentally and cognitively prepared for the next training. Some commentators believe that if the Qur'an was revealed at one time, it should have been performed at the same time, which was impossible. Just as an illiterate child does not become literate in one day, a corrupt society cannot be reformed in one day; the Qur'an cannot change the society of its era overnight. It is necessary to reveal it gradually so that it is well understood and implemented by people (Makaram Shirazi, 2001, vol. 12, p. 317; Qomi Mashhadi, 1423, vol. 7, p. 530; Ṭabṛasī, 1993, vol. 6, p. 689; Tabataba'i, 1417, vol. 13, p. 220).

According to this basis, the revelation-order researcher believes that the exegete then becomes aware of the divine intention that reflects on the expression style of the Qur'an and extracts the steps needed for this internal transformation (Bahjatpour, 2012, p. 87). Paying attention to the preaching course of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) makes it clear that according to His wisdom, God Almighty assigns him to this task on various occasions and warns against haste in the message that comes from his infinite mercy and passion in guiding people. (Darwaza, 1383 AH, vol. 11, p. 475) Several hadiths confirm this (Bukhārī, 1401 AH, vol. 2, p. 742; Muslim, 1410 AH, vol. 3, p. 126; Ibn Mājah, 1418 AH, vol. 1, p. 352).

4-1-2- Revelation-Order Application

Revelation-order researcher considers the application of this interpretation procedure in the words and deeds of the infallible Imams (AS) as one of the reasons for the legitimacy and permissibility of interpretation in the order of revelation. He believes that the infallible Imams (AS) have encouraged people to the revelation-order interpretation. As an example, Imam Ṣādiq (AS) says; "If the Qur'an was

read as it was revealed, you would find our names (characteristics and attributes) in the Qur'an." ('Ayyāshī, 2001, vol. 1, p. 13) According to some researchers, the term "As it was revealed" refers to reading with reflection and includes the revelation order (Bahjatpour, 2012, p. 30).

Revelation-order researcher believes that the infallibles (AS) also used the interpretation in descending order. For example; Abū Ḥanīfah, citing a narration from the Prophet (PBUH), asked Mu'min al- Ṭāq about the rejection of Mut'ah and the abrogation of verses 5 and 6 of Surah al-Mu'minūn; "And who guard their modesty. Save from their wives or the (slaves) that their right hands possess, for then they are not blameworthy." He replied: "O Abū Ḥanīfah! Surah Ma'ārij is Makkī and the verse of Mut'ah (Surah Nisā') was revealed in Medina, but the narration that the Holy Prophet (PBUH) said about the cancellation of the decree of temporary marriage is rejected" (Kulaynī, 1407 AH, vol. 5, p. 450). As it was observed, one of the companions has resorted to revelation order to prove the non-cancellation of the decree of temporary marriage. It is worth mentioning that not only the Ahl al-Bayt (AS) have paid attention to the order of revelation in many cases such as abrogation, binding verses or explaining a ruling, but also a commentary on this order was desired by the Imams (AS) (Bahjatpour, 2013, p. 184). Perhaps the highest revelation-order use is evident in the Muṣḥaf of Amir al-Mu'minin Ali (AS).

Imam Ali (AS) has gathered his Qur'anic teachings from the Holy Prophet (PBUH) in this honorable Muṣḥaf, which is a kind of brief interpretation, and in addition to the order of revelation of the Surahs; he mentioned the reasons for the revelation of the verses, (Majlisī, 1404 AH, vol. 89, p. 43), the persons about whom the verses were revealed, the place and time of revelation, and the Nāsikh and Mansūkh. (Ma'refat, 2000, vol. 1, p. 292; Bahjatpour, 2013, p. 29)

4-2- The Possibility of Obtaining in the Order of Revelation

One of the main basics of the researcher in the revelation-order procedure is the possibility of achieving the order of revelation, which is possible in two ways. First; Narrative method in which narrations are used to determine the revelation order of surahs and exceptional verses. The narrative method is either time-oriented regarding the time of revelation, the order of the verses and surahs, or it is narration-oriented, and the quoted narrations are a guide for the researcher in this context. From the narration-oriented group, some experts such as Ayatollah Mohammad Hadi Ma'refat consider the narration quoted from Ata Khorasani from Ibn Abbas as authentic (Ma'refat, 1415 A.H., vol. 1, p. 99-103; Nekounam, 2001, p. 135) and some other scholars such as Professor Abdul Karim Bahjatpour did not limit themselves to the mentioned narrative, and by combining the traditions and quoted tables with their ijtihad, they arrived at a consolidated order and table that has become a reference for many researchers today (Bahjatpour, 2012, p. 252). Orientalists have also proposed steps to classify Surahs. Most of them have accepted and completed the classification of "Gustav Weil" in which the surahs have a four-stage system (McAuliffe, 2006).

The second method of obtaining the order of revelation of the verses is ijtihad, which is based on non-narrative indicators. In this context, Allameh Tabataba'i believes that the only way to recognize the order of Surahs and their being Makkī and Madanī is to reflect on their themes and consider the conditions of revelation. AS the contents of Surah al-Insān, 'Ādīyāt, and Muṭaffifīn show that they are Madanī (Tabataba'i, 1420 AH, p. 111).

4-3- The Wisdom of the Qur'an in the Content and Method of Combining it with the Previous One

Islamic teachings and above all the verses of the Qur'an agree with human nature. As in verse 30 of Surah Rūm, "So set thy purpose (O Muhammad) for religion as a man by nature upright - the nature (framed) of Allah, in which He hath created man. There is no altering (the laws of) Allah's creation. That is the right religion, but most men know not!" This basis requires that "Man" is the audience of the Qur'an, not "Being Arab"! Although the Qur'an addresses the nature of humans in Arabic language; but what he has said will not remain locked in the narrow fence of the contemporary society of revelation

because the content and methods of change and transformation are in accordance with human nature and the principle is their generality, unless there is a reason for the exclusivity of each of them to the society of the age of revelation. (Bahjatpour, 2012, p. 53)

The Qur'an refers to verse 6 of Surah Naml, "Lo! As for thee (Muhammad), thou verily receivest the Qur'an from the presence of One Wise, Aware." It is a combination of God's infinite knowledge and his mastery and firmness in instilling the verses on the Holy Prophet (PBUH), which includes both the teachings of the Qur'an and its concepts, as well as the method of presentation of verses and its teachings.

The first verse of Surah Hūd, "(This is) a Scripture the revelations whereof are perfected and then expounded. (It cometh) from One Wise, Informed" refers to an example of the method of presentation. The word "Then" mentioned in the verse puts the stage of detail after the stage of rulings, and in this way, one of the wisdoms governing the gradual revelation, which is a brief and detailed statement, is revealed. The explanation is that the meaning of "Strengthened" is the general expression without detail that occurs in many early surahs or at the beginning of the surah, and the meaning of "Expounded" is the description of the same content in the last part of the surah or the last surahs. For example; the proofs of God's Lordship are briefly stated in the first revealed Surah, which is Surah Al-ʿAlaq, and is explained in detail in the eighth revealed Surah, which is Surah Al-Aʿlā. In the surahs after that, other aspects such as creation, guidance, settlement and destiny are described with various examples. As in many surahs of the Qur'an, at the beginning a general reference is made to the guidance purpose of the surah, and at the same verses of the surah the purpose is explained in detail. According to what has been said, both the content and the structure of the Qur'an are wise, and part of the intentions of the Almighty can be understood by knowing the order of revelation of the surahs and the methods of knowledge transmission in the society. In fact, it is necessary to operating out the mission of the Qur'an, which is the guidance and exaltation of humans, to be familiar with the methods of institutionalizing the teachings of the Qur'an, which is done through studying the order of revelation of the verses and discovering the ways of religious transformation. For the revelation-order researcher, the society of Mecca and Medina in the era of revelation plays the role of a model society that provides a plan for the transformation of human societies throughout history (Bahjatpour, 2012, p. 76).

4-4- Coherence of Verses and Surahs

Revelation-order researcher believes that in addition to the proportion between surahs, there is also proportion between the verses of a surah. "The order of the verses of each surah are decided by God", "The wisdom of the order of the revelation of the verses in the surah", "The eloquence and conveyance of the meaning and the harmony of the meanings of the Qur'an with the needs of the present" are some of the reasons for accepting this proportion. In addition, the cultivation of human beings, which is the main and grand goal of the Qur'an, requires that the Qur'an, like a speech with diverse but targeted content, seeks to have an educational effect on its audience will benefit from words in various positions to create transformation in the individual and the community. As some commentators consider the purpose of a surah as the main axis of connection between the contents of the surah (Tabataba'i, 1417 AH, vol. 1, p. 16) and believe that by accepting a single purpose for a surah, all parts of a surah even if it was revealed in different stages have coherence and harmony.

4-5- Non-contradiction of Revelation-Order Interpretation with the Promise of the Divine Order of Verses and Surahs in the Official Muṣḥaf

Regarding the divine order of the verses of the Qur'an, the direct presence of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) in the process of recording and editing the collection of verses of each surah is so famous that some have claimed consensus (Suyūfī, nd, vol. 1, p. 161; Zarqānī, 1409 AH, vol. 1, p. 346). In such a way that an authentic interpretation in revelation order is an interpretation in which the arrangement of the verses does not change and this is the basis of the work of the commentator, although he pays attention to the possible displacement of the verses. (Bahjatpour, 2012, p. 136) However, there is a difference of

opinion among scholars regarding the divine order of the Qur'an. Some scholars believe that the arrangement of the Qur'anic surahs as it exists today in the Maṣāḥif is divine, others believe that the order of the surahs was made according to the taste of the companions and the length of the surahs, while others believe that the verses were recorded until the lifetime of the Prophet (PBUH) and they were compiled and processed after him. According to the agreement of the Shi'a and Sunni, one of the companions who did this is Imam Ali (AS), who is reported to have given two Muṣḥafs to the people. A Muṣḥaf three days after the death of the Prophet (PBUH), which was written based on the writings existed in the house of the Prophet (PBUH). And another Muṣḥaf six months after the death of the Prophet, which contains appropriate descriptions and explanations, and is with the Ahl al-Bayt (AS). There is no reason that any of the Muṣḥafs are according to the current Muṣḥaf.¹ Rather, there is a composite consensus that the Muṣḥaf of Imam Ali (AS) is based on an order other than the current order, and this consensus is the reason that the order of the surahs in the current Muṣḥaf is not divine. Finally, the actions of the companions in the view of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) show that he did not insist on following a specific order in compiling the surahs of the Qur'an.

The researcher in the revelation-order procedure believes that even in the case of accepting that the order of surahs is divine, the interpretation in the order of revelation does not contradict it, and the appearance of the Qur'an can be according to the official Muṣḥaf. And the discovery of the steps of the transformation of the Islamic society based on the order of revelation, in addition to the preaching of the Prophet It was definitely according to the order of revelation of the verses and surahs, and according to the verses 16-19 of Surah Qīyāmat, "Lo! Upon Us (resteth) the putting together thereof and the reading thereof. And when We read it, follow thou the reading", the Prophet (PBUH) had a mission to convey the verses and surahs to the people at every stage that he received them.

4-6- The Spoken form of the Word of Qur'an

The words of the Qur'an are spoken, not written. The spoken word has its own characteristics, such as the fact that in the spoken word, the mentality of the audience such as doubts, beliefs, the level of enthusiasm or politeness, the degree of understanding, etc. is considered. Another characteristic of spoken word is the reliance on historical evidence and authority while speaking and the lack of need to mention them, as well as paying attention to the events during the speech. Degradation of speech to the level of understanding of the most common audience and at the same time considering the audience with high understanding is another characteristic of spoken word. It is necessary for a wise speaker to take into account the different capacities of the audience and his words should be multi-layered, and for this he is bound to use similes, irony, metaphors, etc. On the other hand, the language of the Qur'an is conventional in the sense that it was not a scientific or secret language, and it was comprehensible to contemporary Arabs during the Prophet's era, so as not to claim that the verses are dumb. At the same time, the Qur'an, like other sciences, has its own terms to convey its deep and noble contents, so that with the help of those terms, it conveys concepts that do not fit in the form of normal expressions. Professor Ma'refat believes that the Qur'an has its own special language, like every term owner, and uses words and interpretations that are not used in other words and traditions and are unique to the Qur'an itself (Ma'refat, 2000, vol. 1, p. 99).

The Revelation-order researcher believes that understanding the Qur'an is possible through familiarity with the language of the Qur'an, and this is done by reflecting on the revelation order; because

¹ In Uṣūl Kāfi, in addition to a long narration by Salīm ibn Qays, Kulaynī quoted Amir al-Mu'minin Ali (AS) from the Prophet: "Every day I had a turn to enter the Messenger of God (PBUH) and every night I had a turn to be alone with him and we used to talk about any subject that the Prophet wanted to... Whenever I asked him, he would answer me, and when I would remain silent and my questions were over, he would start talking to me, and no Qur'anic verse was revealed to the Messenger of God (PBUH) except that he recited it to me. And he would dictate and I would write in my own handwriting, and he would teach me Ta'wīl, Tafsīr, Nāsikh, Mansūkh, Muḥkam, Mutashābih..." The appearance of this narration is that Imam Ali (AS) gradually wrote his own Muṣḥaf in the order of revelation of verses and surahs during the blessed life of the Prophet (PBUH).

it is possible that a specific Qur'anic word or term does not have a single meaning from the beginning of its revelation to the end, and it was first used in a meaning that is different from its final meaning. As an example of piety, which is considered at the beginning of the revelation of the Qur'an, it is limited to individual self-restraint and observing a series of intellectual rules and laws, and does not include prayer saying or almsgiving, because at that time, the aforementioned matters had not yet been noticed. This is despite the fact that in some cases the commentators got confused and instead of distinguishing the examples and intentions of piety, they turned to the truth and trope in the meaning. Similar mistakes can be seen in Ibn Kathīr's commentary (Vol. 8, p. 263), Marāghī's commentary (Vol. 29, p. 112) and Kanz al-Daqa'iq's commentary by Qomi Mashhadi (Vol. 8, p. 80). Therefore, checking the revelation-order process is not only effective for a better understanding of the language of the Qur'an, but it is also necessary to know the correct meaning of the words and the serious meaning of God the Wise (Bahjatpour, 2012, p. 81).

5- Analysis

"Lack of consensus on the influence of the order of revelation in understanding the meaning of God", "Lack of comprehensiveness", "Uncertainty about the order of surahs", "Lack of comprehensiveness", "Change of the Qur'an", "Difficulty in finding the main axis of each surah" are among the things that are mentioned in this section.

5-1- Lack of Consensus on the Effect of the Revelation-Order in Understanding the Divine Purpose

Some critics of the revelation-order procedure believe that the arrangement of surahs has no effect on the noble purposes of the Qur'an, and its absence does not affect the generality of its contents, because the universal and eternal requirement of the divine word is that the characteristics of time, place, conditions and causes of revelation do not affect it. In addition, the non-opposition of Imam Ali (AS) and Infallible Imams (AS) with the existing Qur'an and their reference to it and urging the Shi'a to follow the reading of the people shows the validity of the existing Muṣḥaf and there is no need to revelation-order interpretation. (Faiz Kashani, 1406 AH, p. 273) If the Qur'an, in the order of the time of its revelation, according to what the claimants of revelation-order claim, had a fundamental influence on the understanding of God's purpose and was intended by the Prophet, then the silence of the Ahl al-Bayt (AS), as the guide of religion is not permissible.

In response to the above drawback, it is helpful to pay attention to the fact that the reference of Imams (AS) to the existing Muṣḥaf was made for a higher purpose, which is to preserve Islamic unity, and referring to the existing Muṣḥaf does not mean prohibiting the revelation-order interpretation. From the beginning of Islam until now, Muslim commentators and researchers have stated various narrations from the Ahl al-Bayt (AS) regarding the order of revelation, the means of revelation, being Makkī and Madanī, being Nāsikh and Mansūkh, which shows the influence of the surahs' place in interpretation. In other words, although the infallible Imams (AS) did not reject the existing Muṣḥaf, but they paid attention to questions in revelation order. This is something that is confirmed by the narrations of "If the Qur'an was revealed" whose description has been said.

5-2 Uncertainty to the Order of Surahs

One of the main drawbacks of this procedure is the unreliability of the way to obtain the order of surahs. If this way is through narration, then the narrations included in the revelation-order of surahs are single news and have documentary problems, and there are many discrepancies in this category of narrations and they are not reassuring. If this way is through ijtihad, personal ijtihad is not safe from error and is not reliable.

It seems that the percentage of error can be minimized by using some narrations that have more authentic documents and solving their disputes through matching narrations. As some experts have

achieved an order by combining traditions and tables entered with *ijtihad*, which many researchers today benefit from (Bahjatpour, 2012, p. 252). Although the mentioned order or similar tables may not be completely perfect and need to be reviewed and double work, but abandoning a procedure that brings many benefits due to the possibility of a minor error is far from foresight.

5-3 Lack of Comprehensiveness

Some critics of this interpretative procedure believe that the revelation of the verses was only for some events, and with the revelation, people became sensitive to some issues in the society and the ground has been prepared for the detailed discussion of the same issues. In this way, the claim that the method of institutionalization of all Islamic teachings can be achieved by interpreting them in an order of revelation is not achievable.

The solution to the above problem lies in the mission of this divine book. Since the mission of the Qur'an is to guide people, and since it was revealed by the Wise Creator, the issues raised in the Qur'an are sufficient to guide people. In addition, by modeling the methods of institutionalizing some religious teachings, they can be extended to other teachings.

5.4 Changing the Qur'an

Some critics of the revelation-order procedure have considered the legitimacy of the revelation-order interpretation to mean the permissibility of changing the existing Qur'an because the revelation-order interpretation is different from writing the Qur'an. Those who believe that the order of verses and surahs in the existing Muṣḥaf are divine believe that the current arrangement is intended by the holy legislator and the current order was created due to a wisdom, therefore, it is necessary to pay attention to the order of the existing Muṣḥaf to understand the divine word as well as possible. The arrangement that was created during the revelation was due to special occasions that each occasion required the revelation of a series of verses and then it was not effective, but rather it led to the change of the Qur'an.

Some experts in this field have stated that the permissibility of the thematic interpretation does not mean the permissibility of editing the thematic Qur'an and contradicting the official Qur'an of Muslims, and the revelation-order procedure does not mean the change of the existing Qur'an (Bahjatpour, 2013, p. 36). In any case, this point cannot be denied that the way God, as the creator of human nature, has taken to institutionalize Qur'anic teachings is the most complete and effective method, and it can be understood through a revelation-order interpretation.

5-5- The Difficulty of Finding the Main Axis of Each Surah

One of the basics of the revelation-order interpretation is the coherence and harmony of the verses and surahs with each other. According to some researchers, it is not an easy task to find the main axis of each surah, especially in the long surahs. General titles such as monotheism and resurrection, which are observed in most surahs, are not guiding (Ghazanfari, 2021, p. 431). For example; Sa'eed Hawi considers the main axis of Surah Nisā' and Surah Hūd to be verse 21 of Surah Baqarah. With the difference that Surah Nisā' focuses on "Piety" and Surah Hūd focuses on "Worshiping the Lord" (Hawi, 1412 AH, vol. 5, p. 2525). In addition, the dispersion of the topics discussed in the long surahs prevents determining a single topic for the surah (Shukānī, 1414 AH, vol. 1, p. 85).

Also, finding different main axes for the same Surah shows the influence of taste and admiration in this matter and its invalidity. As Sayyid Quṭb considers the main axis of Surah Hūd as comforting to the Prophet (Sayyid Quṭb, 1412 AH, vol. 1, p. 390); Baqā'ī considers it rules and details (Baqā'ī, 1427 AH, vol. 3, p. 498); Tabataba'i considers it monotheism (Tabataba'i, 1417 AH, vol. 10, p. 136); Bazargan considers it the fate of the guilty nations (Bazargan, 1996, vol. 1, p. 235) and Sa'eed Hawi considers it worshiping (Hawi, 1412 AH, vol. 5, p. 2570). It is not possible to find relationships between the verses

except with difficulty, and rhetoricians do not understand it. For example; by his own admission, Baqā'ī spent months to find the relevance of verse 121 of Surah Al-Imrān (Baqā'ī, 1427 AH, vol. 1, p. 8). Also, the commentators have struggled to find the compatibility of verse 3 of Surah Al-Mā'idah (verse of Ikmāl) with the verses before and after it and even with the previous phrase in the same verse (Ghazanfari, 2021, p. 432).

Considering the wise and divine revelation-order of the verses, as well as its eloquence, the compatibility between the verses and the surahs is expected. In addition, the education of humans as the main goal of the Qur'an requires that the Qur'an aims to have an educational effect on its audience in a purposeful manner despite its diverse content. In addition, some commentators have considered unity of theme for each surah and considered the purpose of each surah as its main axis, which creates a connection and solidarity between the contents of the surah even when they were revealed in different stages (Tabataba'i, 1417 AH, vol. 1, p. 16).

Conclusion

One of the proposed procedures in the thematic interpretation style that has flourished in the current era and has attracted the attention of researchers is the revelation-order procedure of the thematic interpretation style. The origin or the reason for the Qur'anic researcher's approach to this procedure can perhaps be found in the knowledge of the evolution curve, which shows the frequency of each topic in the Prophet's (PBUH) preaching career, and as a result, it is the understanding of the cultural developments of that era. Another reason for the Qur'anic researcher's interest in this procedure is the recognition of the revelation age. Revelation-order researcher has tried to abstract the temporal and spatial characteristics by setting the society of the revelation age as the role model and by localization he is trying to take a step in institutionalizing the Qur'anic teachings in his era. Discovering the steps of institutionalizing Qur'anic values is another reason why Qur'anic researcher turns to this procedure. He believes that the Qur'an is an educational book that has institutionalized Islamic values in its contemporary society step by step. By discovering these steps, it is possible to provide the causes for the transformation of the current society and the institutionalization of Islamic values, and act on it based on the presuppositions and thematic principles that form the foundation of this interpretive procedure. The first and most important presupposition of the revelation-order researcher is the "Legitimacy and permissibility" of this procedure, which is based on the "Gradualness of education" and "Revelation-order application" in the words and actions of the innocent Imam (AS). "Possibility of achieving in the order of revelation" is the second basis for the revelation-order researcher. After he considered this procedure legitimate and permissible, he also considers it achievable. One of the other basics for the revelation-order researcher is "The wisdom of the Qur'an in its content and method". He considers inattention to the method of presenting divine knowledge as the reason for being deprived of it. "Cohesion of verses and surahs" is the other main foundation of revelation-order researcher. He believes that this coherence can be achieved through the order of revelation. "The non-conflict of Revelation-order interpretation with the promise of the divine order of verses and surahs in the official Muṣḥaf" is one of the other mental presuppositions of the Revelation-order researcher. This presupposition is actually a rejection of the notion of the contradiction between Revelation-order interpretation and the divine order of verses and surahs. From the perspective of Revelation-order researcher, there is no contradiction between these two. "The spoken word of the Qur'an" is the last basis that is examined in this brief. On this basis, the revelation-order researcher believes that the spoken word of the Qur'an requires paying attention to the order of revelation of the verses. In terms of the overall evaluation of the proposed principles, it seems that the revelation-order interpretation not only does not harm the existing content of the Qur'an, but also provides more information to the researcher and gives him a higher understanding. Considering the wisdom of God's actions, the fact that God has prepared a course to declare religious teachings to the people is worthy of consideration and can be a guide for putting God's teachings into practice. Just as the confirmation of the existing Muṣḥaf is accepted by the Ahl al-Bayt (AS) due to the sameness of its content, adherence to the

order of revelation is also permissible due to their accountability according to it. Simply getting additional information that leads to a higher understanding of Qur'anic teachings should not lead to its rejection, which otherwise has no fruit other than being deprived of a part of the teachings.

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