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ABSTRACT

of the dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

**THE CONCEPT OF “TRUE ISLAM” IN
MODERN ISLAMIC STUDIES**

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Applicant: **Durdana Shukur gizi Jafarli**

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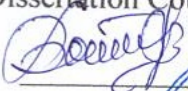
Scientific supervisor: PhD in Philosophy, Associate Professor
Esmeralda Yusif gizi Hassanova

Official opponents: Doctor of Philological Sciences, Professor
Nasrulla Naib oglu Mammadov

PhD in Philosophy in Theology
Jeyhun Valeh oglu Mammadov


PhD in Philosophy, Associate Professor
Ilkin Anvar oglu Alimuradov

BFD 4.03 One-time Dissertation Council of the Supreme Attestation Commission under the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan operating at the Azerbaijan Theological Institute

Chairman of the
Dissertation Council: Doctor of Philosophical science,
Associate Professor

Zakliya Agababa gizi Abilova

Scientific Secretary of the
Dissertation Council: PhD in Theology, Associate Professor

Mammadali Allahverdi oglu Babashli

Chairman of the
scientific seminar: Doctor of Philosophy, Professor

Asadulla Juji oglu Gurbanov



GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE WORK

The relevance of the subject. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, a number of trends and movements emerged in various Muslim countries, arguing that the Qur'an is the sole source of the "true Islam" and did not require Hadith or Sunnah. Representatives of such trends and movements considered themselves as representatives of "true Islam" or "Qur'anic Islam". They believed that the Muslims of the early period of Islam were successful only because they made the Qur'an their guide, and that the decline of the Muslim world began when the Hadith became a source of reference besides the Qur'an.

Rejecting the authority of sources outside of the Qur'an like Hadith and Sunnah, such trends, which sought to form a new concept of Islam based solely on the text of the Qur'an, have emerged under the influence of various factors.

The emergence of the concept of the Qur'an in its current sense is closely associated with the socio-political processes that took place in the Muslim world in the late 19th century. On the one hand, the achievements of the West in the 19th century, both in political and scientific areas, a long period of stagnation in the Muslim world prompted Muslim intellectuals to look for ways out of the situation.

A group of intellectuals suggested to master the scientific and technological achievements of the West, but never give in their moral values and to keep away traditional religious thought and belief from any kind of change, but another group argued that everything that led to the rise of the West existed in "true Islam" - in the purest form of Islam, unadulterated in the course of history, and that this needed to be revived as a strong culture.

Another group of Western-educated intellectuals, on the other hand, have been heavily influenced by European values since the late 19th century. Under this influence, they tried to "synthesize Western values and Islamic thought in order to explain Islamic truths. Thus, they saw the reason for the Muslims' backwardness, their laziness and ignorance in the traditional

understanding of religion. They considered that traditional religion was an obstacle to the progress of Muslims, and that in the current situation, Islamic sciences could not meet the requirements of the time, either in terms of text or method, and that religious thought needed to be given a new direction. In fact, it was an attempt to explain the Islamic sciences on the basis of Western thought and philosophy and to reconcile Islam with the values of modernism.

The fact that no source other than the Qur'an is considered worthy or reliable, and that the search for any source other than the Qur'an on the whole contradicts the Qur'an itself, some verses of the Qur'an and specific authority are relevant only for a time when they were sent, not applicable to modern times, that the stories of the Qur'an are not real events, the claim that the issue of naskh (abrogation) does not occur in the Qur'an, of course, was not unequivocally accepted in the Muslim world. The notion that only the Qur'an was the basis for the religious authority laid down by Sayyid Ahmad Khan (died in 1898) and Cherag Ali (died in 1895) on the Indian subcontinent was improved, and in 1902 it was reorganized under the name "Qur'an" by Abdullah Chakralawi (died in 1914) in Lahore. Proponents of the idea represented by Sayyid Ahmad Khan were previously known as "munkiri Hadith" (Hadith denialists) and "neychiri" (naturalists), and beginning from Chakralawi as "Ahle-Qur'an". The movement, known as the "Qur'aniyyun" or the "Ahle-Qur'an", was not well received by the general public, with the exception of the educated masses. Ahmaddin Amritsari (died in 1936), Muhammad Aslam Jarajpuri (died in 1955) and Qulam Ahmad Parviz (died in 1985) were the leading representatives of the "Qur'aniyyun" movement at that time. Similar views and approaches have been expressed in Egypt by such figures as Muhammad Tofiq Sidqi (d. 1920) and Ahmed Subhi Mansour (died in 1949). In Egypt, Muhammad Tofiq Sidqi was the first to use the phrase "Nahnu Qur'aniyyun" (We - the Qur'anists) about

himself and those who agreed with him¹.

In this research, generalizing both the representatives of the “Ahluz-Zikr val-Qur’an” organized in the Indian subcontinent in the 19th century, and the supporters of the claim that “Islam consists only of the Qur’an” that began with Tofiq Sidqi in Egypt at the same time, we will talk about a group of people in different Muslim countries who come up with the idea of “only the Qur’an” and known as “Qur’anis” by calling them Qur’anists in accordance with our language.

As for the topicality of the issue, today we are witnessing attempts in various parts of the world to misrepresent the true nature of Islam and the emergence of new trends. None of the emerging movements agrees that it is merely a religious-political movement within Islam, but even claiming that represent “true Islam” and takes a special stance on Islam. Such contradictions are manifested, above all, in the divisive tendencies and differences of opinion in Islamic society, and Islam, which we are accustomed to seeing as a single worldview, is divided internally². It is especially important to recognize, investigate and analyze such movements and trends in order to prevent their destructive activities aimed at weakening the unity of Islam.

One of the reasons for the topicality of the issue for Azerbaijan is the recent strengthening of the role of Islam in the socio-political life of our people. In order to prevent an increase in attempts to export different Islamic models from different Muslim countries to our country it is extremely important to recognize the trends that act as “true Islam”.

The degree of development of the subject. The problem we are investigating has not been studied by Azerbaijani researchers at all, either during the Soviet era or during the years of independence. Beyond the borders of our country numerous books and articles, most of which being raddiyya, have been written on

¹ صدقي، توفيق محمد، الاسلام هو القرآن وحده// المنار، المجلد ٩، ١٩٠٦، ٥١٥-٥٢٤

² Bakhshaliyeva G.B. The main currents of modern Islam, <http://azpress.az/index.php?lang=az§ionid=news&id=1675>

the subject of the Qur'anism.

Among the works regarding the trend of the Qur'anism in India, the first research was the “*Qur'aniyyun va shubuhatahum havlas-Sunna*” (“The Qur'anists and their doubts about the Sunnah”)³. The book, written in Arabic by Khadim Hussein Ilahibakhsh, a teacher at Taif Umm al-Qura University, who is originally from Pakistan and knows Urdu, is a comprehensive and systematic study of the Qur'anic trend. However, the work was written rather in radiyya style (as the response to the Qur'anies). Among the works written in Arabic can be noted research by Mehmud Muhammad Mazroue's “*Shubuhatul Qur'aniyyin havlas sunnatin nabavi*” (Doubts of the Qur'anists about the Sunnah of the Prophet)⁴ and A.M. Yusif “*Qur'aniyyun fil Misr and mawqifil islam minhum*”, (Egyptian Qur'anists and Islam's approach to them)⁵. These works were also written in the style of radiyya as the response. Jamal ibn Muhammad ibn Ahmad Hajar's monograph “*Al-Qur'aniyyun al-Arab va mawqifuhum min at-tafsir*” (Arabic Qur'anists and their approaches to interpretation (tafsir)) deals with the methods and approaches of those in tafsir who deny the Sunnah.⁶

Another monograph is “Indian Subcontinent Schools of Thought and Interpretation” (“*Hind Alıktası Düşünce ve Tefsir Ekolları*”) prepared by Abdulhamid Birishik as a doctoral dissertation at Marmara University⁷. As Birishik himself points out, in his work he made extensive use of the book of Ilahibakhsh in obtaining a great deal of information about the Qur'anic trend and its basic principles. However, Birishik's work is very rich in terms of the commentaries written by the commentators belonging to this trend, which do not exist in the work of Ilahibakhsh, and in terms of researching and documenting these interpretations.

3. الهي بخش، خادم حسين، القرآنيون و شبهاتهم حول السنة، طائف، مكتبة الصديق ١٤٢١ هـ.

4. مزروع، محمود محمد، شبهات القرآنيون حول السنة النبويه، مجمع الملك فهد لطباعة المصحف الشريف، ٢٠١٢.

5. محمد يوسف، عبد الرحمن محمد، القرآنيون في مصر وموقف الإسلام منهم، البيان، قاهره، ٢٠١٢.

6. أحمد هاجر، جمال بن محمد، القرآنيون العرب وموقفهم من التفسير، دار التفسير، جدة، ٢٠١٥.

7. Birışık A. “Indian Subcontinent Schools of Thought and Interpretation”. İstanbul: İnsan Yayınları, 2012, 448 s.

On the whole, Mustafa Ozturk's monograph entitled "Contemporary Islamic Thought and Qur'anism" can be noted as one of the recent works on Islamic thought. In the second chapter, after the first chapter, called "A general view in modern Islamic thought", a modern term Qur'anism is studied and the author focuses on the issue of "Mealism", which is more relevant for Turkey⁸.

Among the works written by Western orientalist in this field, modern Qur'anists has been studied in the article entitled "The Qur'anists" by Aisha Musa, a professor at the University of Florida.⁹ Oxford University researcher Daniel Brown's "Rethinking tradition in modern Islamic thought" mostly examines the authority of the Hadith¹⁰. Also is worth mentioning A.Musa's book "Hadith as scripture: discussions on the authority of prophetic traditions in Islam".¹¹

From the above-said, it can be concluded that the subject of "The concept of true Islam in modern Islamic studies" has not been studied as a separate object of research, and the trend dissertation can be considered the first important step in this area.

The object and the subject of the research. The concept of "true Islam" in modern Islamic studies is the main object of the dissertation. Comparative analysis of trends and movements with this concept is the subject of the research.

The goals and objectives of the research. The goals and objectives of the research are as follows:

- To investigate the historical roots of the Qur'an-sufficiency since the early Islamic period, to identify its initial manifestations and the factors that created it;
- To study the historical conditions for creation of the

⁸ Öztürk M. Çağdaş İslam düşüncesi ve Kurancılık, Ankara: Ankara Okulu Yayınları, 2013, 320p.

⁹ Musa Y, A. The Qur'anists // Religion Compass, 4/1, 2010, p. 12-21.

¹⁰ Brown W.Daniel, Rethinking tradition in modern Islamic thought. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1996. 185 p.

¹¹ Musa Y. A. Hadith as a scripture: discussions on the authority of prophetic traditions in Islam, New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2008, 208 p.

Qur'an, what social, political and cultural factors formed it;

- To analyze the approach of both European orientalists, and scholars and researchers of Muslim countries to the movements and trends that have emerged under the name of "true Islam";

- To determine the main principles and characteristics of the Qur'anists and to provide a scientific and critical analysis of the differences between them;

- To study the main representatives of the Qur'anist movement in various Muslim countries in modern times and their aspects of activity;

- To study the trends, centers and Internet resources of the Qur'anist movement in the modern world;

- To study the possibility of influencing the socio-political processes in the Islamic world in a greater or lesser extent;

- To determine the influence of the representatives of this movement in our country.

Theoretical and methodological basis of the research: As the research subject is the concept of "true Islam" in modern Islamic studies, the trends and movements with this concept were studied in historical chronology and geographical area, and systematic complex approach and historical-comparative methods were used to solve the problem. The author has studied the subject within the framework of the basic principles of religious studies.

Scientific novelty of the research. The main novelty of the work in general can be explained by the fact that for the first time in Azerbaijani religious studies, based on classical and modern sources the movements and trends that emerged under the name of "true Islam", restricting the source of religious authority to the Qur'an, was comprehensively studied. By signing a scientific innovation in the history of research on the subject, Durdana Jafarli, for the first time, studied the ideological transformation of Qur'anist movements in different time and space intervals, their unifying and separating features.

Specific innovations of the research:

- For the first time, on the basis of the collection, systematization and analysis of numerous materials of various

natures was given analysis of the theoretical concept of “true Islam”;

- The history of the formation of Qur’anic thinking has been studied and classified in stages.

- The initial forms of the Qur’an-sufficiency in the early Islamic period and the factors that create them and the possibility of the influence of some sects in the formation of Qur’anic thinking were analyzed.

- The approach to the Qur’anic movement of European orientalists, as well as Near and Middle Eastern scholars and Islamic scholars, as well as Muslim theologians was elucidated, and a scientific analysis of the reasons for the contradictions among these three approaches was given.

- The theoretical concept was studied, scientific-critical analysis of each of the main provisions was carried out.

- The views of the main representatives of the Qur’anist movement in different Muslim countries have been studied and the tendency of their ideas to spread has been studied.

- The historical conditions and ideological environment in which the Qur’anist tendencies re-emerged in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, were emphasized.

- In this scientific work, which studies the Qur’anist tendencies in historical chronology and geographical area, a comparison is made between the characteristic features of the formation of the Qur’anist ideas in different regions of the Muslim world.

- The tendency of the spread of the Qur’anist movement in the modern world, its centers and Internet resources have been studied.

The source base of the research:

The dissertation was written based on a number of documentary sources, scientific works and monographs. These works can be divided into the following groups:

- scientific literature
- internet resources
- materials of conferences of international importance

Although the comprehensive development of the subject was one of the first experiments, its individual parts have become the object of study by both European orientalists and researchers from Eastern countries. These scientific researches were widely used in the preparation of the research work.

Practical significance of the dissertation:

The findings of the dissertation might be useful to accurately and correctly reveal the true nature of each of the movements and currents that emerged under the name of “true Islam”, to follow the method and history of its spread in Azerbaijan, as well as to what extent they are consistent with our national traditions and moral values, and may be useful in terms of determining the opposite.

The main provisions and results of the dissertation can be applied and used in the following cases:

- preparation of thematic materials;
- scientific and pedagogical field of activity.

The scientific-theoretical provisions of the research can be used as a source in the study of inter-Islamic currents from the viewpoint of religion.

The materials of the dissertation can be helpful in the process of lectures and seminars in higher education institutions where religious studies is taught, as well as in future research on this subject.

Approbation of the dissertation. The dissertation was developed in the department of “History of Religion and Public Opinion” at Z.M.Bunyadov Institute of Oriental Studies of ANAS, discussed at the department meeting and recommended for defense in the Scientific Council of the Institute as a completed work. The main body of the research has been reflected in the author’s articles published in various scientific journals, her reports at international scientific conferences in the country and abroad.

Name of the organization where the dissertation work was carried out: The dissertation work was carried out in the department of “History of Religion and Public Opinion” at

Z.M.Bunyadov Institute of Oriental Studies of the Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences.

Structure and total volume of the dissertation: The dissertation was written in accordance with the requirements set by the Supreme Attestation Commission under the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

The structure of the dissertation: The dissertation consists of an introduction, three chapters, a conclusion and a list of references.

THE MAIN BODY OF THE DISSERTATION

In the introductory section of the dissertation, which illuminates the nature of the problem and the degree of study, the goals and objectives of the research are given. This section provides a general classification of the sources used in the dissertation, as well as information about the applied scientific method, scientific novelty, theoretical, practical significance, approbation and structure. Chapter I is entitled “**The Qur’an-sufficiency and its historical aspects**”. In the first semi-chapter, entitled “**Early manifestations of the Qur’an-sufficiency in the early Islamic period and the factors that created it**”, the author dwells up in detail on the historical origin of the Qur’anism idea, its early manifestations in the early Islamic period. Author of the dissertation, who basing on some historical sources states that the first manifestations of the idea of the Qur’an-sufficiency date back to the last years of the life of the Prophet of Islam, examines this trend in chronological order. Author of the dissertation also notes that the instants that indicate the Qur’an-sufficiency and the reduction of the role of the Sunnah have been reflected in written sources since the 2nd century Hejira (the beginning of Moslem era from the 16th of June 622). Durdana Jafarli cites the works of scholars such as Mamer ibn Rashid (died in 153/770) and Idris ibn Shafei (died in 204 \ 820) as the most obvious examples of this argument.

Referring to the geographical origin of the tendency to

disbelieve in the Hadiths, the author notes that some modern researchers have suggested that such tendencies are more prevalent in Iraq and the surrounding areas. The fact that the individuals we have identified, who deny the Hadith are not from Iraq, but from outside Iraq, shows that the Hadith denialists are not just from around Iraq. However, the fact that the territory of Iraq has historically been associated with commentators and that there has been an uninterrupted struggle between commentators and Hadith scholars has led researchers to come to this conclusion.

In the second semi-chapter of the chapter entitled **“Attitudes of the Kharijites and the Mu’tazilites to Hadith”**, the author states that in the history of Islam, the issue of denial of Hadith and opposition to the Sunnah is closely associated with the two groups—the Mu’tazilites and the Kharijites. That is why, in the second semi-chapter the author examines the attitude of the Kharijites and the Mu’tazilites to these issues and tries to clarify how sound these claims. Although the idea of opposing all or most of the Hadiths has been formed since the early days of Islam, it is emphasized that in the historical prism, it is not clear exactly which groups formed the core of such an approach. Thus, although a group of scholars put forward such an opinion that this group belonged to the Mu’tazilites, other researchers did not agree with this and insisted that the Kharijites played a key role.

With the exception of the Ibadiyya *firqa* (sect), not all the Kharijites accepted the community and the Sunnah as a Sharia source. They considered that no shariyya judgement mentioned in the Qur’an could be considered true. Unlike other Muslims, they do not accept the Sunnah and the community as a proof, so some doctrines of the Kharijites differ from those of other Muslims.

According to the author, it is not correct to approach the Mu’tazila as a complete denial of Hadith and Sunnah, despite the fact that the Mu'tazila school generally has different views on the acceptance of Hadith, and even includes such people as Nazzam and Abul Huzayl. On the other hand, because it is based on rationalism as a school of kalam, its adherents were more cautious

about the Hadiths and used fewer Hadiths in their works.

The author then concludes that in the early Islamic period, it was not possible for any Muslim sect to refer to any source other than the Qur'an in determining the religion and religious authority based solely on the Qur'an, and to deny the source value of the Sunnah altogether.

The third semi-chapter of this chapter is entitled as **“Qur'an-sufficiency in Early Written Sources”**.

One of the earliest written sources reflecting the controversy over the restriction of the source of sharia authority to the Qur'an and the Hadith as a source for religious authority is the work of Muhammad ibn Idris Shafei (died in 204/820) entitled *“Kitab Jima al-Ilm”* and *“Risala”*¹². In the relevant chapters of these books, Shafei discusses the role of the Hadith as a source of religious authority and the views of those who oppose it.

In some respects, the discussions over Hadith and Sunnah in modern times are not very different from the discussions on this subject in the early years of Islam. The most obvious example of this is Ibn Qutaybah's (died in 276/889) work, *“Tavilu Muxtalifil Hadis”*¹³. This work, which seems to be a summary of the discussions around Hadith and Sunnah up to that time, deals with the place and position of Hadith and Sunnah in relation to the Qur'an, the basic principles necessary for determining Hadiths, and some Hadiths that contradict the Qur'an, historical events, scientific truths, reason and logic, topics such as fictional legends and so on. Ibn Qutaybah speak of the opposition to the Hadith due to its weak texts. If Shafei responded to the arguments of those who opposed both the Hadith and only a certain group of Hadiths, it is not clear from Ibn Qutaybah's writings what kind of Hadith critics were his opponents. Although the beginning of the book deals with various groups that opposed certain types of Hadith in the time of Ibn Qutaybah, their main arguments are not spoken

¹² الشافعي، محمد بن إدريس، احمد محمد شاكر، الرسالة، القاهرة، 1940

¹³ ابن قتيبة، عبدالله بن مسلم، تأويل مختلف الحديث، بيروت، دارالكتب العلمية، بدون تاريخ الإصدار

about.¹⁴

In al-Khatib al-Baghdadi's "*Taqyid al-Ilm*" (*Securing Knowledge*), written roughly two centuries after Ibn Qutaybah's "*Tawil mukhtalif al-Hadith*" and two and a half centuries after Shafei's "*Kitab Jima al-Ilm*", we see once again that the issue of opposing the Hadith has been raised as a parallel and possible rival source to the Qur'an.¹⁵

The fourth sub-chapter of the chapter is called "**The research of Hadith in Western Islamic Studies**". When we consider the existing research on Hadith in general, we see that research in this area focuses more on the authenticity than on the authority of the Hadith. The aim of the study of the Hadith by both Muslim and non-Muslim scholars was not to question the authority, but to solve the problem of the authenticity of the Hadith.

Western orientalist, such as Joseph Shakht and G.H.A.Jainball, also shared the view that many of the Prophet's Hadiths were invented in the 2nd and 3rd centuries after the Hegira, based on text and historical conditions, and were traced back to the Prophet and his adherents¹⁶. Another group of Western Islamic scholars, including Fuat Sezgin, Nabia Abbot and Mustafa Azami, questioned this critical approach, calling it unfounded and arguing that the Hadith was the product of the earliest Muslim society, written during the lifetime of the Prophet and his adherents.¹⁷

Daniel Brown raises the issue of the authority of the Hadith

¹⁴ ابن قتيبة، عبدالله بن مسلم، تأويل مختلف الحديث، بيروت، دار الكتب العلمية، بدون تاريخ الإصدار

¹⁵ البغدادي أبي بكر أحمد بن علي بن ثابت الخطيب، تقييد العلم، تحقيق يوسف العث، دار إحياء السنة النبوية، دمشق، ١٩٧٤

¹⁶ Coulson N.J. "European criticism of hadith literature" in *Arabic Literature to the End of the Umayyad Period* ed. A.F.L. Beeston, T.M. Johnstone, R.B.Serjeant, G.R.Smith, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983, 317 p. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CHOL9780521240154.015> p317

¹⁷ Sezgin Fuat, *Geschichte des Arabischen Schrifttums*. Band I (Leiden: E.J.Brill, 1967) p. 936 p.; Abbott Nabia, *Studies in Arabic literary and papyri II: Qur'anic commentary and tradition*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1967, p.49

in “Rethinking tradition in modern Islamic thought”.¹⁸

One of the works in which the issue of modern Qur’anism is considered in the context of historical controversy over Hadith is A.Musa’s book, “Hadith as scripture: discussions on the authority of prophetic traditions in Islam”.¹⁹ In the work, the author compares the opponents of early Hadith with their contemporaries, who shared their views. He focuses rather on the works of Shafei, Ibn Qutaybah and al-Khatib al-Baghdadi than on early sources.

In “**The Historical Conditions of the Qur’an**”- the first semi-chapter of Chapter II entitled “**The Qur’anic trend as a manifestation of true Islam**”, the author tries to find out the historical, political, and ideological reasons for the spread of the Qur’anic movement in various Muslim countries. For this purpose, Durdana Jafarli, based on the existing scientific literature, analyzes them separately, grouping the supporters of the idea of the Qur’an-sufficiency by ideological and political parameters. The author does not consider it appropriate to study the Qur’anist trend in isolation from the period in which the leaders of his ideas lived and the prevailing socio-political processes at that time, and he does not consider it accidental that most researchers note the formation and development of this movement directly related to that historical period. On the whole, scholars from the European and Muslim countries generally agree on the motives for the emergence of the Qur’anist trend, but on a number of fundamental issues they are diametrically opposed. In the dissertation the author summarizes and divides the views related to this movement into three groups.

The second semi-chapter of Chapter II is entitled “**The Qur’anists - a reform movement that by going to extremes has run astray**”. It is especially noted in this semi-chapter, in which

¹⁸ Brown W.Daniel, Rethinking tradition in modern Islamic thought. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1996. 185p.

¹⁹ Musa Y. A. Hadith as a scripture: discussions on the authority of prophetic traditions in Islam, New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2008, 208 p.

the Qur'anists are considered as a trend that has in fact emerged with the intention of reforming the religion, but has gone to extremes under the influence of various factors, such as the ideological and political degradation and economic decline that prevailed in the Islamic world in the 19th century accelerated the tendency of Muslim countries to reconsider their existing systems of values. The author emphasizes that a group of Muslim scholars support this idea and see the Qur'anists as a group that goes too far in its claims and deviates from its true purpose. It is noted in the research that members of the Qur'anic movement were inspired by the Ihya movement and emerged under the influence of this movement. This section deals with the accusations against Jamaladdin Afghani and Muhammad Abduh of denying the Qur'anism or the Sunnah, and at the root of this perception stands their critical approach to some Hadiths, especially Hadiths known as *Israelyat*, finding way not trustworthy Hadiths to Hadith collections such as Sahih Bukhari and Sahih Muslim. The author concludes that it is wrong to present Jamaladdin Afghani and his disciple Muhammad Abduh, one of the founders of the 19th century Ihya movement, as a Hadith denialist or Qur'anist, and that their goal is not to deny the Sunnah, but to reform the Muslim heritage of Hadith. Unlike them, D.Jafarli states that the movement, which began with Tofiq Sidqi in Egypt and Chakralawi in India, has called for the Sunnah to be completely abandoned as a source of reference and is trying to form a different, new concept of Islam.

The third semi-chapter of Chapter II is entitled “**Qur'anists - the religious reform movement of the Islamic world**”. Unlike scholars in many Muslim countries, European orientalist present the Qur'anist trend as the logical conclusion of processes within the Muslim world and as a reformist current in Islam, rather than the activities of European colonialists and missionary organizations. According to them, the adherents of this idea have in fact existed in Muslim societies throughout history, only marginalized from time to time under the influence of various socio-political factors, and sometimes re-actualized. In this

section the views on assessment of the Qur'anists as true reformers of Islam are analyzed.

In the third sub-chapter, entitled **“The Qur'anists as a product of Western colonialism”**, the idea that the Qur'anists are the product of a Western colonial policy is illuminated. Mainly researchers and scholars of Muslim countries consider this one to be a group created and directed by non-Muslims, using religion to strengthen the position of colonial powers and missionary organizations in Muslim countries. The author makes a comparative analysis of such approaches and concludes that European political circles and Christian missionary organizations played a major role in the rapid development of these trends in Muslim countries.

Chapter III is entitled **“The basic principles of the Qur'anist current and its modern representatives”**. In the first semi-chapter of this chapter, entitled **“Basic principles of the Qur'anism”**, the author divides the thoughts and arguments of the Qur'anist current into two groups, conceptual and practical, different from traditional Islamic schools. She states that as the most important differences in the conceptual field are the denial of the idea that the hadith is the second source of religious authority along with the Qur'an, the need for no Sunnah or other sources in the interpretation of the Qur'an, and the fact that all religious issues are reflected in the Qur'an. In the practical context, she states the different conclusions of the Qur'an without hadiths, using other verses of the Qur'an, and non-traditional religious authority.

According to the proponents of the Qur'an, the main issues necessary for a Muslim are contained in the Qur'an to the smallest detail, and the Qur'an is sufficient to obtain religious rulings, so there is no need for any other source.

This point rather clearer manifests itself in the works of Abdullah Chakralawi: *“Kitabi-mecid* lists everything that religion needs and in every detail. In this case, what is the need for covert revelation and Sunnah?” Chakralawi, who developed his idea, further writes: “The Book of Allah is perfect and detailed, and there is no

need for the Prophet's interpretation and his tafsir or practical teachings in accordance with the Qur'an".²⁰

Hafiz Aslam, another prominent representative of the 20th century Qur'anists, argues that only those mentioned in the Qur'an are necessary in religion. "The necessary deed of religion is to follow the Qur'an, which is explained in detail, and it does not go beyond that", Aslam writes²¹. Similar points can be found in the works of Tofiq Sidqi and Mahmoud Abu Reyya.

The second semi-chapter of Chapter III is entitled "**The Qur'anism and its main representatives in the Arab world**". The development trends of the Qur'anist trend in the Arab world have been closely linked with the processes taking place within Islam in general, as well as with the dynamics of political development in the Arab world during this turbulent period. Under this heading, the most well-known representatives of the Qur'anist trend in the Arab world, such as Rashad Khalifa, Ahmad Subhi Mansour, Abu Reyya, Muhammad Shahrur, Mustafa Kamal Mahdavi, Ibn Garnas, and their propositions are studied separately.

In the third sub-chapter entitled "**Modern Qur'anist movements in India and Pakistan**", the author basing on Khadimhussein Ilahibakhsh notes that there are four major Qur'anist organizations in India and Pakistan today. Although they disagree on a number of issues, the main points that unite them are that in matters of the world and the life hereafter, it is enough to be contented with the Qur'an alone and that the Sunnah of the Prophet is not valid.

One important fact about the activities of various sects related to the Qur'anists in Pakistan is that, according to various sources, their followers do not exceed 3% of the country's population. In the early years of Pakistan's independence, many members of the Qadiani and Qur'aniyyun sects held important positions in the country. As a result, there was a significant

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activation of the activities of the Qur'anists in those days. However, in the following years, religious scholars from Damascus (*Šām*), Egypt and other Muslim countries opposed the views of the organization's founder, Parviz, and gave a fatwa (judgement) declaring him an infidel.

The topic of “**Modern Qur'anism in Turkey**” is studied in the fourth semi-chapter of Chapter III. While examining the ideas and positions of prominent figures of the Qur'anist trend in Turkey, the author notes that many of them have the features of reconciling Islam with secularism, interpret Qur'anic verses from a non-traditional viewpoint, and a gradual opposition to the self-seclusion from the West.

As for the issues of religion and secularism in Turkey, the issue of religious reform, which is the source of the Qur'anist ideas in that country, could not go beyond the level of general polemics in certain circles. According to the conclusion reached in that section, in modern times, the Qur'anism idea has a thematic topic that does not belong to the masses, but rather to certain intellectual circles, and their influence on religious, social and political life is not felt.

The fifth semi-chapter of Chapter III is entitled “**Qur'anism and Internet resources, socio-political organizations of Qur'anists in other Muslim countries**”. It is noted that in contrast to the 19th century, the Qur'anism ideas began to be spread more rapidly in modern times, especially through the Internet, and spread to other countries, such as Malaysia, the United States and Nigeria, in addition to the Arab countries, Pakistan, India and Turkey.

In the post-Soviet space, the Qur'anism ideas are widespread in Kazakhstan. The use of these ideas as a preventive measure against non-traditional religious movements in Kazakhstan is cited as a political basis for the spread of the Qur'anism in the country. It is noted that Kazakh Qur'anists do not accept the so-called clergyhood in the religion, and since the Qur'an does not explicitly prohibit the use of alcohol and drugs they consider it admissible.

If in the early 20th century, the adherents of the Qur'anism used the popular media, books and magazines to spread their ideas, today in the world, Qur'anists prefer to spread their ideas and thoughts through the Internet.

When considering the contextual analysis of Internet resources related to the Qur'anism, the author emphasizes that the number of Qur'anism supporters among Internet users has increased, and there are regular discussions on these topics in the virtual space, mainly among non-specialists.

In the sixth semi-chapter, entitled **“Modern Shiite Qur'anists”**, is stated that the tendency to reconsider the religious situation among Shiite Muslims dates back to the second half of the 13th century. The driving force behind these movements, both of religious and non-religious origin, has been the rapid development of Western countries and their growing expansionism in the Muslim world. One of such trends was the Shiite Qur'anist movement, which chanted slogans such as the establishment of unity in the Muslim world, the return to the Qur'an, and the restoration of the golden age that prevailed in the first 40 years of Islam.

Research shows that in recent decades, new ideas have been put forward among Shiite theologians, as well as in scientific circles, regarding the status of the Hadith and the revision of the Hadith heritage, and scientific works have been written in this area. However, such movements differ from the Sunni tendencies of the Qur'anism in both their dynamics and their field of origin. The main goal of the scholars and experts who made such demands was to review the sources of Hadith, to apply a new methodology in addition to the traditional methods used to distinguish authentic Hadiths.

The last semi-chapter of Chapter III of the dissertation is called **“Divergence of opinions among the basic principles of the Qur'anists”**. It is shown here that there are deep differences on a number of issues among the various formations of the Qur'anist current, both among other Muslims and among themselves.

In this section, Durdana Jafarli focuses on the ideas of the modern Qur'anists and their successors in the 19th century, and the similarities and differences between the ideas they put forward. The author emphasizes that the classical and modern Qur'anist trends, which are nominally derived from the same ideological source, are diametrically opposed in many religious and social issues as a result of two centuries of historical transformation.

In the concluding part of the dissertation the research is summed up and the following conclusions are drawn:

- 1- From the materials of the dissertation, which examines the historical path of the movement called “true Islam” and modern processes, it can be concluded that this movement did not achieve its main goals in general.
- 2- The activities of the Qur'anists, which emerged as part of the reformist movements aimed at rescuing the Muslim world from stagnation and decline, deepened the divergence of opinions and divisions in the Islamic world.
- 3- The presenting of Jamaladdin Afghani and his disciple Muhammad Abduh, one of the founders of the 19th century Ihya movement, as a hadith denialist or Qur'anist is not the right approach. Their aim was not to deny the Sunnah, but to reform the Hadith heritage of Muslims. In contrast, representatives of the movement, which began with Tofiq Sidqi in Egypt and with Chekralawi in India, have called for the Sunnah to be completely abandoned as a source of reference and tried to form a different, new understanding of Islam.
- 4- From the earliest times of its emergence, that is, since the end of the 19th century, the Qur'anism ideas have not been unequivocally accepted in Muslim society. This was due, on the one hand, to their targeting of many centuries old Muslim scientific and cultural heritage, Hadith and Sunnah, and, on the other hand, to the Qur'anists' attempts to

- reconcile Western and Islamic values, influenced by Western scientific and industrial development.
- 5- In this scientific work, which studies the tendencies of the Qur'anism in terms of historical chronology and geographical area, it can be seen that they gained relative popularity in modern India and Pakistan in certain periods of the 19th and 20th centuries. In Arab-speaking countries, especially Egypt, in the early 20th century, the Qur'anists became involved in political and social processes as part of religious reform movements. In other Muslim countries, including Turkey, the relative activism of the Qur'anists goes back to the second half of the 20th century.
 - 6- From the end of the 19th century up to the first half of the 20th century, fundamental ideological and political differences emerged between the calls to Qur'an and the subsequent Qur'anism currents. The only thing they both have in common is the call to Qur'an. Although the movements of call to the Qur'an call for the purification of Islam from Hadiths and heresies credibility of which is doubtful, they have not taken a position that differs sharply from the traditional Islamic worldview. As noted above, the Qur'anism scholars not only called for the Qur'an to be the basis, but also tried to reconcile Islam with the values of modernism under the influence of Western political, social and philosophical trends, with their approaches completely or partially rejecting the sources of Sharia laws, especially the Sunnah and the community, aimed at forming a new concept of religion differing from Islam. From this viewpoint, they criticized the science of kalam and *fiqh*, especially the method of *fiqh*, as well as the tradition of the followers on how to understand Islam, and instead of they argued that the Qur'an should be read and interpreted freely and modernly.
 - 7- In modern times, the Qur'anists proposed some basic attributes of the religion, including the fact that women can pray without a headscarf, and it is not necessary for women

to cover themselves at all, that women lead men in prayers, that everyone prays in their own language, and so on. They have caused a great deal of controversy by putting forward such points. Some branches of the Qur'anism have even claimed that Muslims should pray facing *Al-Quds* instead of Mecca. All this led to the idea of their opponents that the Qur'anism was a Western project, that it was being used as a tool by the leaders of many despotic Muslim countries, and that they were apostates from the religion.

- 8- The use of modern Qur'anism ideas by some secular Muslim countries in their internal political struggles against their political opponents is also one of the main factors damaging the reputation of the Qur'an in Muslim countries. In many Arab countries, the use of the ideas put forward in the Qur'an by the regimes of these countries, and the position of the Qur'anists in the camp against the traditional religious opposition, have led to such considerations.
- 9- Today, unlike in previous centuries, although the Qur'anists have the same opportunities as traditional Islamic schools to disseminate their ideas, both electronically and in print, this cannot be applied to their popularity. It is impossible to say that the Qur'anism has gained a wide social base in Muslim societies and has created any difficulties for the traditional religious mentality.
- 10- It should be noted that although the representatives of the Qur'anism trends reject the Sunnah as the second source of religious authority and a source in the interpretation of the verses of the Qur'an, they cannot offer an alternative way. In other words, in contrast to the traditional religious institutions that explain the authority in the Qur'an based on the Hadiths quoted by the Prophet, the various Qur'anist currents use the Qur'an alone, without the use of the Sunnah, they have not even been able to reach a consensus on the most important issues, such as the number and form of the *rukets* of prayer, the days and times of fasting. Although the Qur'anists emerged with the idea of "the Qur'an alone", due

to natural factors such as living in different geographical areas, historical periods, and having different cultures, different members of this current have very different views on the same verse of the Qur'an, the cleft among themselves, as well as between the Qur'anists and traditional religious strata has been deepened.

The main content of the dissertation has been reflected in the following articles and reports of the authorat scientific conferences:

1. The concept of "Qur'anic Islam" and its place in Islamic thought / ANAS. acad. Z.M.Bunyadov Institute of Oriental Studies, Scientific Research, (X), Baku, 2014, pp.367-375.
2. Comparative analysis of the interpretations of the "Qur'anists" current, Collection of religious and state public opinion, Baku, 11 (40), 2015, pp.97-105.
3. International conference on "Islamic enlightenment and modern times" on the concept of "Qur'anic Islam" in modern Muslim countries (in the context of religious enlightenment), Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences and Office of Caucasian Muslims, Baku, 2015, pp.139-151.
4. The Influence of the Mother on the Child from the Perspective of the Qur'an, Sinop University International Youth and Ethics Symposium proceedings book, Republic of Turkey, Sinop University, İkiizler Printing House, 2016, p. 254-266.
5. The historical conditions for the emergence of the Qur'anist movement in Egypt in the 19th-20th centuries, Language and Culture, Issue No. 20, Vol.I (186) ISSN 2522-493X, Kiev 2017, pp. 91-99.
6. Qur'anism and its spread in modern Muslim countries, International scientific conference on "Pressing problems of modern oriental studies" dedicated to the memory of Z.M.Bunyadov (collection of theses), Baku, 2017, p.26.

7. The rise of the Qur'anist movement in Egypt (19th to 20th centuries): A historical approach, Gileja: Scientific Bulletin, Issue No.126 (11) ISSN 2076-1554, Kiev 2017, pp.181-185.
8. Qutbiddin Razi's approach to wisdom and its functions, Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt University Proceedings of the 14th and 15th century international symposium on philosophy, theology and mysticism in Islamic thought, 13-17 July 2020, Republic of Turkey, Yıldırım Beyazıt University Press, p.101.

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Address: Baku, AZ 1141., Ahmad Jamil Str. 41A, Azerbaijan Theological Institute.

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