

## ANNOTATION

**to the thesis of Tasbolat Assyltay for obtaining the academic degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in the specialty “6D020600 – Religious Studies” on the topic “New Epistemological Inquiries of the Contemporary Islamic Thinkers”**

**General description of the research work.** In the dissertation, a critical analysis was conducted on the works of contemporary Islamic thinkers Fazlur Rahman (1919–1988) and Mohammed Abed al-Jabri (1938–2010). Fazlur Rahman's Qur'anic hermeneutics and Mohammed Abed al-Jabri's structural analysis of Arab-Islamic epistemology (reason) were justified as a new epistemological inquiry in Islamic thought. Their views on Islamic sciences formed during the *tadwin* era, as well as on the content of medieval Islamic education and the tradition of the classification of sciences, were examined. Their perspectives on human rights, criminal law, gender equality, and the theory of political governance were also analyzed comparatively.

**Relevance of the research work.** It is well known that renewal (*tajdid*) has been an integral part of Islam since its inception. The idea of socio-economic justice and equality, which began with the Qur'anic revelation (the thesis of Fazlur Rahman), gradually led to social changes in the Arab society of that time. Social problems reflected in the Qur'an, such as the criticism of the exploitation of the poor and slaves, the condemnation of racism, and the elevation of women's status, indicate that the environment in which the first Muslims lived had to be reshaped with new values. Since the 9th-10th centuries (3rd-4th centuries of the Hijra), when Islamic sciences were systematized and its culture and philosophy flourished, the idea of *tajdid* became one of the most important concepts in the Islamic tradition on a methodological basis. In Islamic tradition, the unchanging central principles of religion have always included monotheism and the ritual part (rules of worship), while other areas constitute an aspect that can change depending on time, conditions, and space. If we look at the history of Islam, we will see that in every era there were outstanding scholars who promoted the principle of *tajdid*. These scholars include figures such as Abu Hanifa (699–767), Abu Mansur al-Maturidi (852–944), al-Ash'ari (873–936), Ghazali (1058–1111), al-Razi (1149–1209), and Ibn Rushd (1263–1328).

Under the influence of Western colonialism, the issue of modernism intensified in the Islamic world starting in the 18th century, stimulating new intellectual inquiries. Prominent figures of this period in India, Egypt, and the Ottoman Empire included scholars like Sayyid Ahmad Khan (1817–1898), Jamal al-Din al-Afghani (1839–1897), Muhammad Abduh (1849–1905), Muhammad

Iqbal (1877–1938), and Namık Kemal, among others. Around the same time, among Muslims of the Russian Empire and in Turkestan (Kazakhstan and Central Asia), the ideas of renewal were promoted by Jadidist thinkers, including Abu Nasr al-Kursawi (1776–1812), Shihab al-Din al-Marjani (1818–1889), Husain Faizkhanov (1823–1866), Ismail Gasprinsky (1851–1914), Rizaitdin Fakhretdin (1859–1936), Ziyauddin Kamali (1873–1942), Musa Bigiev (1875–1949), Abai Kunanbaev (1845–1904), Shakarim Kudaiberdiuly (1858–1931), Munawwar Qari (1878–1931), and Abdurauf Fitrat (1886–1938).

After World War II, the process of reinterpreting Islam in new conditions reached a new level. The term neo-modernism, first used by Fazlur Rahman (1919–1988), who is the subject of our study, signifies the beginning of a paradigm shift in the idea of *tajdid* (renewal) from a methodological and epistemological perspective. Researchers such as Damir Mukhetdinov, drawing on Fazlur Rahman, also believe that the term neo-modernism accurately explains the modernist aspirations of the late 20th and early 21st centuries. This movement is distinguished by a deep methodological analysis that integrates classical Islamic heritage with modernist ideas. Prominent representatives of neo-modernism include thinkers such as Fazlur Rahman (1919–1988), Muhammad Arkoun (1928–2010), Nasr Hamid Abu Zayd (1943–2010), Muhammad Abed al-Jabri (1938–2019), Hassan Hanafi (b. 1935), and others. Each of these scholars expanded the intellectual content of Islam and conducted unique and profound methodological research. Fazlur Rahman developed the "double movement" method, which involves reading Islamic texts in their historical context and finding solutions relevant to the present day. Muhammad Arkoun re-examined Islamic thought from a historical and epistemological critical perspective, criticizing the dogmatic nature of religious discourse. Nasr Hamid Abu Zayd conducted a linguistic and hermeneutical analysis of Islamic texts and offered a new interpretation of traditional concepts. Muhammad Shahrouri proposed a rational understanding of the Qur'anic text and sought new solutions to contemporary legal and social issues. As one of the main subjects of our dissertation, al-Jabri's actions to deconstruct Islamic thought through a deep historical analysis of its theological, mystical, and rational heritage signify the realization of an epistemological break that will determine the future trajectory of development. According to the classification of Damir Mukhetdinov, these contemporary Islamic thinkers constitute the first wave of neo-modernism. In his opinion, scholars of the subsequent wave, who worked primarily in academia and were either direct students of these thinkers or inspired by their ideas, can be considered the second generation of neo-modernism.

In this regard, the study of the works of scholars who formed a new wave of Islamic modernists, criticized the medieval heritage, and re-examined the tradition of interpretation in accordance with modern conditions is highly relevant. The epistemology of Fazlur Rahman and Muhammad Abed al-Jabri, which forms the core of our dissertation, has the potential to fill gaps caused by

religious conservatism and obscurantism. It is highly important to introduce the legacy of prominent representatives of contemporary Islamic thought into the field of religious and theological education. This would help to free public thinking from the influence of religious extremism and conservatism. The scientific study of the modern philosophical heritage of Islam as an alternative view to outdated religiosity, which understands Islam in a static context, considers the discrimination of women to be normal, and is cold towards new knowledge and technological advances, is an urgent issue. Of course, it would be incorrect to view all medieval heritage as an obstacle to development. Islamic modernism or the idea of *tajdid* in Islam cannot be a supporter of such an approach. Nevertheless, we believe that harmony between tradition and innovation can be achieved by introducing the modernist ideas of contemporary Islamic thinkers into the field of education. It is important not only to introduce progressive studies of Islam into the academic sphere but also to critically examine this phenomenon, bringing new content to education. It is clear that a modern interpretation of Islam is only possible through research free from scholasticism and unsubstantiated apologetics. In this context, the study of the legacy of Fazlur Rahman and al-Jabri is of great importance.

The core concept of our research is epistemology, a branch of philosophy that has long been concerned with the nature of knowledge and cognition. Epistemology is a complex system that seeks to explain the nature, methods, and foundations of knowledge. It is also referred to as the theory of knowledge, as it philosophically examines the origin, essence, and scope of human understanding. Both classical and contemporary epistemologists have explored questions such as: what knowledge consists of (for instance, justified true belief about something); what it is grounded upon (sensory experience or pure reason); and what its status is – an objective fact independent of the knower, or a subjective construct shaped by consciousness. In this sense, the process of perceiving, experiencing, and interpreting religious knowledge and religious experience within a defined methodological framework may also be examined as part of religious epistemology.

According to Islamic theology (*kalām*), there are three principal sources of religious knowledge: *khbar al-sādiq* (truthful report –the Qur'an and the Sunnah), *'aql al-salīm* (pure intellect), and *ḥawās al-khamsa* (the five senses). While revelation (*waḥy*) – the Qur'an constitutes the absolute form of religious experience in Islam, a rich hermeneutical tradition of its interpretation and contextualization has evolved over fourteen centuries.

By examining the vast legal, theological, and mystical–*'irfānī* heritage of Islam, one observes that the methodologies for understanding and interpreting sacred texts (the Qur'an and the Sunnah) played a central role in shaping Islamic epistemology.

The interpretive engagement with the sacred texts, and the derivation of legal–moral and theological–philosophical principles from them, brought about

paradigmatic shifts in the very nature of Islamic knowledge. Hence, the modernist attempts to reconceptualize the nature of knowledge in Islam and to harmonize it with the intellectual demands of modernity remain of crucial significance.

**Literature review.** In our dissertation, we have focused on the methodologies of Fazlur Rahman and Mohammed Abed al-Jabri, identifying them as key figures in a paradigm shift within contemporary Islamic thought. We have also examined scholarly works that analyze their understanding of the Qur'an and Sunnah, as well as their critique of the medieval Islamic classification of sciences and epistemology. The Qur'anic hermeneutics of Fazlur Rahman and al-Jabri's critique of Arab-Islamic reason (epistemology) were analyzed as a new epistemology based on their original works.

We mentioned that al-Jabri's works, which comprise the four-volume "Critique of Arab Reason" (Naqd al-'Aql al-'Arabi), include:

- The Formation of Arab Reason (Takwin al-'Aql al-'Arabi). Beirut: Markaz Dirasat al-Wahdah al-'Arabiyah, 2019.
- The Structure of Arab Reason (Buniyat al-'Aql al-'Arabi). Beirut: Markaz Dirasat al-Wahdah al-'Arabiyah, 2013.
- The Arab Political Reason (al-'Aql al-Siyasi al-'Arabi). Beirut: Markaz Dirasat al-Wahdah al-'Arabiyah, 2015.
- The Arab Ethical Reason (al-'Aql al-Akhlaqi al-'Arabi). Beirut: Markaz Dirasat al-Wahdah al-'Arabiyah, 2016.

These and his other works were studied as primary sources for defining his epistemology.

In addition, we have analyzed five of Fazlur Rahman's main books that demonstrate his Islamic modernism and methodological inquiries:

- Prophecy in Islam, George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1958.
- Islamic Methodology in History, Karachi, 1965.
- Islam, New York, 1967.
- Major Themes of the Qur'an, Bibliotheca Islamica, Chicago, 1979.
- Islam and Modernity: Transformation of an Intellectual Tradition, University of Chicago, 1982.
- Revival and Reform in Islam: A Study of Islamic Fundamentalism, Oxford Oneworld, 2000.

An analysis was also conducted on about seventy of the thinker's other articles and works dedicated to his Qur'anic hermeneutics and the content of methodology in medieval Islam. For our dissertation, we've used the works of many researchers who have examined Fazlur Rahman and Jabiri from various perspectives. Among the most important authors who have helped to deepen the topic are the following researchers:

- Mukhetdinov D.V. "The Islamic Renewal Movement of the Late 20th – Early 21st Century: Ideas and Prospects" (dissertation for the academic degree of Doctor of Theology). Saint Petersburg, 2019.

– Arpagush Hatice K. "According to Fazlur Rahman: God, Man, and Revelation" (Fazlur Rahman'a Göre Allah, İnsan ve Vahiy). Istanbul: Marmara Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Vakfı, 2021.

– Saeed, A. "Fazlur Rahman: A Framework for Interpreting the Ethico-Legal Content of the Qur'an" in the monograph *Modern Muslim Intellectuals and the Qur'an*. Oxford University Press, 2004.

– Kersten Carol. "Cosmopolitans and Heretics: New Muslim Intellectuals and the Study of Islam." Columbia University Press, 2011.

– Eyadat, Z., Corrao, F., & Hashas, M. (Eds.). "Islam, State and Modernity: Mohammed Abed al-Jabri and the Future of the Arab World." New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018.

– Hashas, M. "Mohammed Abed al-Jabri: the Future of the Arab World?" 2014.

– Abu-Rabi', Ibrahim M. "Contemporary Arab thought: studies in post-1967 Arab intellectual history." London: Pluto Press, 2004.

– Elizabeth Suzanne Kassab. *Contemporary Arab Thought: Cultural Critique in Comparative Perspective*. New York: Columbia University Press. Second Edition. – 2010.

– Sing, M. «Arab Self-Criticism After 1967 Revisited: The Normative Turn in Marxist Thought and Its Heuristic Fallacies» // *Arab Studies Journal*. 25(2). – 2017.

The monograph chapter by Abdullah Saeed, titled «Fazlur Rahman: a framework for interpreting the ethico-legal content of the Qur'an», can be considered a comprehensive study analyzing Fazlur Rahman's theory of hermeneutics for interpreting the Qur'an.

In the monograph "Modern Muslim Intellectuals and the Qur'an," edited by Taji Faruqi, the Qur'anic hermeneutics of Fazlur Rahman and other neo-modernists such as Amina Wadud, Muhammad Arkoun, Abu Zayd, and others are analyzed. These thinkers are praised for their skillful combination of elements from classical Islamic exegesis (*tafsir*) with the achievements of European hermeneutics. Fazlur Rahman is presented as a scholar who influenced these thinkers.

As discussed, when it comes to the influence of Fazlur Rahman's intellectual legacy, much is said about his students in Indonesia and Turkey. It is believed that during his years as a professor of "Islamic thought" at the University of Chicago (1969–1988), he attracted not only American students but also many young researchers from these two countries. Inspired by his ideas, these scholars further developed his Qur'anic hermeneutics and wrote important works. Since the 1990s, significant efforts have been made in Turkey to translate and explain Fazlur Rahman's works. Scholars such as Alparslan Açıkgenc, Mehmet Aydın, Bekir Demirkol, Ömer Özsoy, Adil Çiftci, Mustafa Öztürk, and Hatice Arpaguş, among others, have conducted research on Fazlur Rahman and historicism (*tarihselcilik*). Mustafa Öztürk's extensive article "Historicism and Fazlur

Rahman” (Tarihselcilik ve Fazlur Rahman) and a part of his book "On the Qur'an and Historicity" (Kur'an ve Tarihsellik Üzerine) are specifically dedicated to Fazlur Rahman. Ömer Özsoy's work "Studies on the Qur'an and Historicity" (Kur'an ve Tarihsellik Yazıları) extensively examines the influence of the historicist method in Turkey and the broader Islamic world. This work offers a deep analysis of the methodology underlying Fazlur Rahman's modernist views. In his work "Re-understanding Islam with Fazlur Rahman" (Fazlur Rahman ile Islam'ı Yeniden Anlamak), Adil Çiftci views the thinker's books and ideas as a way of coming to terms with modernism and understanding Islam in a new context. The researcher explains Fazlur Rahman's methodology for understanding the Qur'an with the concept of "holistic hermeneutics," arguing that in medieval Islam, methods of understanding the Qur'an in fields such as law, exegesis (*tafsir*), and hadith developed according to an atomistic principle. He concludes that the atomistic method, which Fazlur Rahman himself often criticized, prevented a holistic perception of the Qur'an's social pronouncements and led to the underdevelopment of institutions that should have dynamically advanced society in line with a Qur'anic worldview.

In the work “Defenders of Reason in Islam: Mu'tazilism from Medieval School to Modern Symbol” edited by Richard Martin, Mark Woodward, and Dwi S. Atmaja, scholars like Fazlur Rahman, Muhammad Arkoun, and Hassan Hanafi are tentatively identified as representatives of "neo-Mu'tazilism." The book also analyzes the views of Indonesian neo-modernists, including Rahman's student Nurcholish Madjid (1939–2005) and Harun Nasution (1919–1998). Nurcholish Madjid's work "Controversial Thoughts of Fazlur Rahman: A Critical Study on the Ideas of Islamic Educational Reform" is particularly valuable for its focus on Rahman's ideas regarding the content and modern nature of religious education.

The first significant study on al-Jabri belongs to Armando Salvatore. In his article "The Rational Authentication of Turath in Contemporary Arab Thought: Muhammed al-Jabiri and Hasan Hanafi," the author examines the intellectual contribution of al-Jabri and Hasan Hanafi to the development of Arab-Islamic thought in the 1980s within the context of their understanding of traditional heritage (*turath*). Salvatore describes this development as a process occurring at the intersection of epistemological quests and political-ideological disputes. He analyzes the content of discussions on the capabilities of the Arab mind (epistemology) within a rational framework and the reinterpretation of traditional heritage through the lens of these two thinkers' works. This is evaluated as an indicator of intellectual development on the path to achieving the "Arab Renaissance" (*nahda*), which was widely discussed after the 1967 Six-Day Arab-Israeli War. A separate section is devoted to al-Jabri in the aforementioned work by Ibrahim M. Abu-Rabi, "Contemporary Arab Thought." The article by the Turkish researcher Ahmet Keleş, "Muhammed Abid al-Jabiri and the Role of Hermeticism in the Formation of the Arab Mind," is valuable for its deep analysis of al-Jabri's epistemology. In his article "Maqasid al-Shari'a and Social Change,"

Ali Bakal elaborates on al-Jabri's search for a new theoretical basis to achieve harmony between the foundations of religion and modern social realities. According to the author, modern Islamic law should expand the medieval theoretical framework that justified the functional areas of sharia, such as "*daruriyat*" (necessities), and develop the concept of "protection of religion, life, intellect, lineage, and property" to include the needs of a modern society, such as freedom of speech, the election of a ruler, and fundamental civil rights. This also includes providing secondary education, making healthcare accessible to all, and ensuring socio-economic equality and justice. The analysis of al-Jabri's works from different perspectives, conducted by researchers such as İbrahim Keskin, Mustafa Yılmaz, Şahin Güven, Vecdi Akyüz, and Mehmet Ulukutuk, is also very important. In Russia, E. A. Frolova studied al-Jabri's views as a manifestation of contemporary Islamic philosophy. She published the first extensive study on al-Jabri in her work "Arab Philosophy: Past and Present." Damir Mukhetdinov, in his article "On the Future of Muslim Thought: Reflecting on the Works of K. Ernst and M. al-Jabri," evaluates the modern humanistic height of the Orientalist view of the Muslim East and analyzes the paradigm shifts in the understanding of Islam in the works of K. Ernst. He also sees in al-Jabri's personality an intellectual seeking an autochthonous project of Arab-Muslim philosophical thought.

Among local researchers who study the philosophical and intellectual heritage of contemporary Islamic thought from different angles, the works of scholars like Madina Bektenova and Natalya Seitakhmetova are of great value as a methodological guide. In addition, the articles by E. Esdaulet and M. Smagulov on the contemporary Islamic thinkers Mohammed Abed al-Jabri and Muhammad Arkoun are valuable as some of the few studies written on the modernization of Arab-Islamic epistemology.

**Object and subject of the research work.** The study of the works and methodologies of Fazlur Rahman and Muhammad Abed al-Jabri reveals the essence of the epistemological paradigm in contemporary Islamic thought.

**Purpose and objectives of the research work.** In our dissertation, we aim to reveal the essence of paradigmatic and epistemological shifts in contemporary Islamic thought by studying the works and methodologies of Fazlur Rahman and Muhammad Abid al-Jabri. Our goal is to analyze the methodological foundations for interpreting Islam in accordance with social changes and new conditions, using the works of these thinkers. To achieve this goal, we have put forward the following tasks:

– To study the concept of knowledge during the formation of Islamic sciences and religious education (around the 12th century). This involves examining the content of educational institutions, religious curricula, the distinction between rational (*aqli*) and religious (*naqli*) disciplines, and the tradition of classifying sciences. This will help explain the regional and temporal characteristics and the nature of the epistemological paradigm in medieval Islam.

- To analyze the history of the formation of contemporary Islamic thought to reveal its historical, social, and philosophical significance. In this context, we will consider the prerequisites and stages of this phenomenon's development, as well as the views of Fazlur Rahman and al-Jabri.
- To reveal the essence of Fazlur Rahman's Qur'anic hermeneutics, along with his understanding of revelation and prophethood. This involves justifying hermeneutics based on contextual interpretation as a factor determining the formation of a new epistemology.
- To analyze Fazlur Rahman's critique of medieval Islamic educational institutions and the tradition of classifying sciences. This involves examining his attempts to reconstruct Islamic sciences within an epistemological framework.
- To analyze the content of al-Jabri's project, "Critique of Arab Reason" (Naqd al-'aql al-'arabi), and to critically examine his scholarly conclusions concerning the classification of epistemology in medieval Islam.
- To analyze al-Jabri's theoretical justification for re-evaluating the functional task of Islamic law.
- To reveal the practical content of Fazlur Rahman's "double movement" theory and al-Jabri's new epistemology. This will involve a comparative study of the two thinkers' views on topics such as gender equality, criminal law, and political governance, and a comparison of their ideas with classical fiqh literature.

**Scientific methods and approaches to research.** We have chosen historicism as one of the important methodological foundations of the research. This method consists of analyzing and interpreting religious texts within their historical and cultural context. Based on the methodology of historical and philosophical reconstruction, we have examined the ideas of both thinkers within the framework of historical development. We have also used comparative and critical analysis. Another methodological feature of our research is its interdisciplinary nature, which, on the one hand, is due to the multifaceted nature of our research subject. Epistemology has been a problem addressed by philosophy for centuries; Fazlur Rahman's hermeneutical method is also considered a method at the intersection of the philosophy of language and historical science, while al-Jabri's project for the deconstruction of Arab-Islamic reason is consonant with post-structuralism. If we add that both thinkers are Islamic scholars, the problem becomes even more complex. Emphasizing the importance of sociology for the modification of Islamic sharia, both of them propose the reconstruction of Islamic sciences. All of this is undoubtedly a factor that enriches the interdisciplinary nature of our research.

**Novelty of research work.**

- For the first time in national scholarship, a comprehensive concept of Fazlur Rahman's Qur'anic hermeneutics, his religious and ethical views, and his idea for the reconstruction of Islamic sciences will be presented. The analysis will cover his methodology for interpreting revelation as the absolute source of Islamic knowledge, his method of contextual hermeneutics for defining the goals of

Qur'anic injunctions, and his reinterpretation of normative verses in a contemporary context. His vision for the understanding and application of the Sunnah and his project for the systematic reconstruction of Islamic sciences will also be examined.

– A comparative and critical analysis of al-Jabri's project for the deconstruction of Arab-Islamic reason (epistemology) will be presented for the first time. The analysis will focus on his proposed forms of Islamic cognition within the bayani, irfani, and burhani paradigms. His idea of expanding the functional role of Islamic law (*fiqh*) will also be analyzed in comparison with classical works.

– An analysis will be conducted on the differences between the epistemological paradigms of the medieval period – when Islamic sciences and religious education institutions were formed – and the hermeneutical and epistemological paradigms in contemporary Islamic thought. This analysis will be carried out within the context of historical conditions, methodological differences, and social changes.

– For the first time, a comparison will be made between the methodology (*usul*) underpinning the epistemological forms in medieval Islam and the hermeneutics of contemporary Islamic thinkers. This will argue that the "hermeneutical toolkit" is a defining factor of epistemology. An analysis will be conducted on how the methods of interpreting Islamic texts by Fazlur Rahman and al-Jabri influenced their projects for the reconstruction of Islamic sciences and epistemological forms.

– The findings of both thinkers will be analyzed, which assert that Islam is not merely "a collection of rules of worship and mystical experiences" but a system of religious and ethical values grounded in the ideas of socio-economic justice and equality. Their attempts to create a civilizational and universal interpretation of Islam will be discussed.

– The research contains significant new findings regarding both the periodization and typological characterization of contemporary Islamic thought. We will critique the academic discourse that typically limits Islamic philosophy to the classical period and, for the first time, propose examining the phenomenon of Islamic modernism, which emerged in the last quarter of the 18th century, in two stages. Different options for periodization will be analyzed, and the most significant classification that aligns with historical reality will be chosen. This can serve as a crucial methodological foundation for teaching the history of Islamic philosophy (the intellectual inquiry generated by Islamic modernism is often referred to as contemporary Islamic thought).

### **Main conclusions proposed for defense:**

1. The Tadwin era (the period when the Qur'an and Hadith were first collected and written down) is defined as a time when the main branches of Islamic science and the systematic forms of knowledge (epistemology) were established. The Islamic disciplines that emerged during the subsequent development of medieval educational institutions defined the epistemology of

Sunni Islam for centuries. The research will attempt to explain the nature of the understanding of knowledge during these periods by considering religious-political and socio-cultural factors. A theoretical basis for understanding the epistemological paradigm in medieval Islam within the context of historical, political, and religious-philosophical conditions will also be proposed.

2. Fazlur Rahman's Qur'anic hermeneutics is presented as an intellectual act that forms a new epistemology in contemporary Islamic thought. The phenomenon of Islamic modernism, which began in the late 18th to early 19th centuries, reached a completely new methodological level in the second half of the 20th century. While classical modernists (Sayyid Ahmad Khan, Muhammad Iqbal, Muhammad Abduh, etc.) were mainly concerned with reforming education (opening new-style schools, publishing newspapers and magazines) and political issues (the idea of Islamic unity), the hermeneutical shift initiated by Fazlur Rahman is proposed as a methodological basis that defined a new horizon for epistemology in modern Islam.

3. The epistemological classification of Muhammad Abid al-Jabri is presented as a result of the hermeneutical methodology proposed by Fazlur Rahman. These two thinkers, who used the same hermeneutical toolkit (contextual interpretation, analysis of the goals of injunctions (*maqasid*), and social institutions in the society where revelation was revealed), are presented as the creators of a new body of knowledge and a new form of cognition.

4. The reasons why *falsafa* (Islamic philosophy) became a *disciplina non-grata* in medieval Islam will be examined, and a critical analysis of the approaches of Fazlur Rahman and al-Jabri, which rely on philosophy and rational judgment (*burhani*), will be offered. The current state of *falsafa* and rational thinking in Islam will be analyzed and presented through the scholarly views of these two thinkers.

5. A critical analysis will be conducted of the conclusions of both thinkers regarding the rule of «public good» (*maslaha*) in the theory of *fiqh* and the re-evaluation of the functional role of Islamic sharia. Their views on practically significant problems – human rights, criminal law, gender equality, and the theory of political governance, among others – will be analyzed and presented within the framework of their methodology and epistemology.

6. Fazlur Rahman's project for the reconstruction of modern Islamic sciences and Muhammad Abid al-Jabri's project for the deconstruction of Arab-Islamic reason are presented as an attempt to place Islamic sciences and epistemology on a rational foundation. In the understanding of both thinkers, the Qur'an and rational knowledge do not contradict each other, whereas the educational and epistemological system in medieval Islam formed a tradition that left *aqli/burhani* epistemology on the periphery. In our research, the new epistemological project of these two thinkers will be summarized as a rational critique of religious knowledge and institutions in orthodox (Sunni and Shia) Islam.

**Theoretical and practical significance of the study.** The scientific content and conclusions of the dissertation are valuable because they can be used in fundamental and applied research related to Islamic modernism, contemporary Islamic thought, and Islamic philosophy. Furthermore, the research findings are useful for practical application in the educational process in higher education institutions, as well as for finding important scientific solutions in preventing religious extremism and terrorism, and in enlightening society about the negative influence of religious obscurantism.

**Publication and testing of scientific papers.**

The dissertation was completed at the Department of Religious Studies of the Egyptian University of Islamic Culture Nur-Mubarak. It was preliminarily reviewed and recommended for defense at the meeting of the Department of Religious Studies held on October 15, 2025 (No. 3).

The authors' main dissertation findings have been published in 4 articles in Kazakhstani and international journals, one collective monograph, and a collection of materials from one scientific and practical conference:

1. "Interdisciplinary Approach to Overcoming the Persistence of Patriarchal Islamic Interpretations: Gender Equality, the Development of Empathy and Children's Rights, and Insights from the Reformist Eurasian Scholars of Early Twentieth Century," Zhussipbek, G., Tasbolat, A., & Nagayeva, Z., *Open Theology* 2024; 10: 20220243.
2. "Contemporary Islamic Thought: A Brief History and Main Paradigms" (Қазіргі ислам ой-танымы: қысқаша тарихы мен басты парадигмалары), *Adam Alemi*, 85, no. 3 (2020), pp. 90-98.
3. "Muhammad Iqbal and the Reconstruction of Epistemology in Islam" (Мұхаммед Иқбал және исламдағы эпистемологияны қайта құру), Tasbolat A., Kaldybekov N.S., Zhuzey M., *Adam Alemi*. – 2022. – N (93). pp. 177-185.
4. "Political Islam or Conservatism: A Typology of the Deobandi Movement," Abdilkhakim B.Sh., Karataş A.İ., Tasbolat A.G. // *Bulletin of the L.N. Gumilyov ENU. Historical sciences. Philosophy. Religion Series*. 2023. – Vol. 144. – no. 3. – pp. 178-189. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.32523/2616-7255-2023-144-3-178-189>
5. "Muhammad Abid al-Jabri: Deconstruction of the Traditional Narrative on Political Power in Contemporary Islamic Thought" // Collection of materials from the Republican scientific conference "Religious Aspects of Tradition and Innovation in a Global and Kazakhstani Context." – Almaty: Institute of Philosophy, Political Science and Religious Studies of the Science Committee of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2022. pp. 322-329.
6. "The Historical and Epistemological-Paradigmatic Significance of Islamic Modernism" // Collective monograph "Religious Aspects of Tradition and

Innovation in Kazakhstan.” – Almaty: Institute of Philosophy, Political Science and Religious Studies of the Science Committee of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2023. pp. 207-240.

7.

**Structure of the dissertation.** The structure of the dissertation aligns with the logic of scientific research and the goals and objectives of the work. The study consists of an introduction, four chapters, a conclusion, and a list of references. The total volume of the dissertation is 156 pages.