

**Qur'ānic Exegesis and Thematic Coherence: Comparing  
the Approaches of Amr Khālīd and Amīn Iṣlāhī**

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In Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Award of Master Degree**

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**Master's Degrees by Examination and Dissertation**

**Declaration Form.**

1. This work has not previously been accepted in substance for any degree and is not being concurrently submitted in candidature for any degree.

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## **Acknowledgements**

May my family be rewarded for their patience during my study.

## Contents Page

<b>ABSTRACT .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>SYSTEM OF transliteration.....</b>	<b>7</b>
CONSONANTS .....	8
VOWELS AND DIPHTHONGS .....	9
<b>CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION TO STUDY AND METHODOLOGY .....</b>	<b>10</b>
BACKGROUND AND RESEARCH PROBLEM .....	10
RESEARCH QUESTIONS .....	11
METHODOLOGY .....	11
STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS .....	12
<b>CHAPTER 2 - INTRODUCTION TO THE QUR'ĀN, ITS EXEGESIS AND APPROACHES .....</b>	<b>14</b>
THE QUR'ĀN: ITS RELEVANCE AND COMPILATION .....	14
DEFINITION OF QUR'ĀNIC EXEGESIS .....	15
EXEGETICAL TYPOLOGIES.....	15
<i>A Traditional Classification</i> .....	15
<i>A Modern Classification</i> .....	16
<b>CHAPTER 3 - INTRODUCTION TO THEMATIC COMMENTARY (TAFSĪR MAWḌŪ'Ī) .....</b>	<b>19</b>
DEFINITIONS OF THEMATIC COMMENTARY .....	19
HISTORY OF THEMATIC COMMENTARY .....	20
<i>Classical Period</i> .....	20
Time of the Prophet and Companions .....	20
Developments in the Sciences of the Qur'ān ('Ulūm al-Qur'ān) .....	21
Isolated Qur'ānic Themes .....	21
Objectives of the Qur'ān and Islamic Law (Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah).....	22
Interconnections between Verses .....	22
Dominant Themes of Surahs.....	23
Objectives of Surahs .....	24
<i>Modern Period</i> .....	24
Thematic Incoherence of the Qur'ān .....	24
Isolated Themes of the Qur'ān .....	25
Dominant Themes of the Qur'ān .....	25
Dominant Themes of a Surah .....	26
Unity of Surah: Seeking its Overall Objective.....	28
Surah Groups .....	29
Stylistic Approaches to Qur'ānic Coherence .....	30
CONCLUSION .....	31
<b>CHAPTER 4 - LIFE SKETCH OF AMĪN IṢLĀḤĪ AND AMR KHĀLID .....</b>	<b>33</b>
AMR KHĀLID .....	33
<i>Influence</i> .....	33
<i>Birth and major life events</i> .....	34
<i>Major works</i> .....	35
AMĪN IṢLĀḤĪ.....	36
<i>Influence</i> .....	36
<i>Birth and major life events</i> .....	36
<i>Major Works</i> .....	37
<b>CHAPTER 5 – THEMATIC EXEGESIS OF AMR KHĀLID .....</b>	<b>39</b>
SURAH UNITY .....	39
THE SURAH GOAL.....	39
<i>Internality</i> .....	41
The Thematic Verse (Āyah Miḥwariyyah) .....	41
Frequency of Words.....	43
Surah Division .....	43
Verse Selection .....	44
Intertextuality .....	45

Ambiguous Interpretations.....	46
<i>Externality</i> .....	46
Circumstances of the Revelation .....	46
Prophetic Sayings.....	47
Islamic thought and philosophy of Amr Khālid .....	47
Perceived Challenges of Today .....	49
SURAH NAME .....	50
SURAH PAIRS.....	52
SURAH GROUPS .....	53
<i>Relationships within a Surah Group</i> .....	55
Surah Goal.....	55
Common Topics .....	56
Detached Letters.....	56
Oaths.....	57
<i>Relationships between Surah Groups</i> .....	57
<i>Arrangement of Surah Groups</i> .....	58
CONCLUSION OF KHĀLID’S THEMATIC APPROACH .....	59
<b>CHAPTER SIX – COMPARING THE THEMATIC APPROACHES OF AMR KHĀLID AND AMĪN IŞLĀHĪ .....</b>	<b>60</b>
OBJECTIVES OF COHERENCE AND TARGET AUDIENCE .....	60
SURAH UNITY .....	60
SURAH PAIRS.....	63
SURAH GROUPS .....	64
<b>CHAPTER SEVEN – CONCLUSION .....</b>	<b>67</b>
CRITICAL APPRAISAL OF KHĀLID’S METHODOLOGY .....	67
STRENGTHS AND LIMITATIONS OF THEMATIC APPROACHES .....	67
FURTHER STUDY .....	69
<b>APPENDIX A .....</b>	<b>70</b>
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY .....</b>	<b>76</b>
<b>END NOTES .....</b>	<b>81</b>

## Abstract

This dissertation investigates how Amr Khālid, internationally renowned Muslim preacher, achieves thematic coherence in the Qur'ān. It then compares his approach to Amīn Iṣlāḥī (d. 1997), an exegete known for his Qur'ānic commentary, "Pondering Over the Qur'ān" (*Tadabbur-e-Qur'ān*). The research traces developments of thematic exegesis throughout history and explores concepts such as verse linkages, surah unity, surah pairs and surah groups. The findings highlight that both authors validate a level of coherence in the Qur'ān, albeit with minor methodological issues. They arrive at different Qur'ānic readings whilst applying similar thematic concepts, attributed largely to their differing applications of these concepts. Given Khālid's global influence, this study underlines an increased popularisation of thematic commentary in a competing arena of exegetical approaches this century. This research area is enmeshed within a wider set of questions related to the interpretation of scripture and the central role the Qur'ān plays for Muslim reform in the modern world.

## System of Transliteration

All Islamic-Arabic words and terms have been transliterated according to the ALA-LC Romanization Tables defined at the American Library Association/Library of Congress<sup>1</sup>. The consonants, vowels and diphthongs in this System are outlined overleaf. The notes and rules should be referenced directly from the Library of Congress.

Within this essay, the following exceptions to this System may apply:

- 1) Anglicised Islamic-Arabic terminologies and well-known names of people and places i.e. mosque for '*masjid*'
- 2) Quotations from textual sources, which maintain their original transliterations, i.e. dar ul-uloom for '*dar al-'ulūm*'.
- 3) The definitive article is written as al with hyphen, even when used before sun letters and after vowels, e.g. Abu al-Salt for *Abū as-Salt*.

## Consonants

Initial	Medial	Final	Alone	Romanization
ا	ل	ل	ا	'
ب	ب	ب	ب	b
ت	ت	ت	ت	t
ث	ث	ث	ث	th
ج	ج	ج	ج	j
ح	ح	ح	ح	h
خ	خ	خ	خ	kh
د	د	د	د	d
ذ	ذ	ذ	ذ	dh
ر	ر	ر	ر	r
ز	ز	ز	ز	z
س	س	س	س	s
ش	ش	ش	ش	sh
ص	ص	ص	ص	ṣ
ض	ض	ض	ض	ḍ
ط	ط	ط	ط	ṭ
ظ	ظ	ظ	ظ	ẓ
ع	ع	ع	ع	' (ayn)
غ	غ	غ	غ	gh
ف	ف	ف	ف	f
ق	ق	ق	ق	q
ك	ك	ك	ك	k
ل	ل	ل	ل	l
م	م	م	م	m
ن	ن	ن	ن	n
ه	ه	ه , ة	ه , ة	h
و	و	و	و	w
ي	ي	ي	ي	y



## Vowels and Diphthongs

اَ

a

اَ

ā

إِ

ī

أُ

u

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á

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## Chapter 1 - Introduction to Study and Methodology

### Background and Research Problem

The past century has seen intense activity in the study and interpretation of the Qur'ān. By viewing the Qur'ān as a living document Muslims have been obliged to re-evaluate the meanings of their holy text in response to modernity and its multiple facets, such as secularism, science and technology, democracy and individualism<sup>2</sup>. One genre of exegesis that has received specific attention is a thematic commentary of the Qur'ān (*Tafsīr Mawḍū'ī*), which has been primarily concerned with coherence as a feature of the Qur'ān's inimitability (*I'jāz al-Qur'ān*). Thematic commentary has steadily developed throughout the centuries since the prophetic era. Two writers that stand out are Iṣlāḥī and Khālid. The work of Iṣlāḥī is now better known due to research studies conducted in the past thirty years in both English and Arabic by academics such as Mustansir Mir, Neil Robinson, Massimo Campanini and Samir Rashwānī. However none of these authors have considered Khālid's method, application or influence in thematic commentary.

It is true that Khālid is not a specialist in exegesis but this has not stopped his own personal reasoning (*ijtihād*) in this discipline. His work deserves attention due to his influence across Arab-speaking countries and the large audiences he attracts through electronic media platforms. It is the pretention of this essay that Khālid is shaping the discourse in popularising a thematic coherence-based commentary of the Qur'ān. Today thematic commentary remains a significant endeavour. For example, in 2010 a nine volume thematic commentary of each surah of the Qur'ān was completed by a team of thirty one researchers sponsored by Sharjah University (*Jāmi'ah al-Shāriqah*) in the United Arab Emirates. Given the attention of thematic commentary and Khālid's influence his approach merits detailed exploration. However English-speaking academics are at loss as Khālid's book has not been translated into English. Within this pretext the purpose of this study is to address this gap.

Another objective of this study is to assess the flexibility of thematic approaches in its ability to produce diverse and non-traditional interpretations of the Qur'ān. This can

be achieved by comparing Khālid's readings with Iṣlāḥī. The exegesis of Khālid and Iṣlāḥī are suitable for comparison for three reasons: 1) both believe that an aspect of the Qur'ān's miraculous perfection is demonstrated by its coherence<sup>3</sup>; 2) both apply similar thematic concepts of surah unity, surah pairs and surah groups to establish coherence; and 3) both discuss coherence at a similar level of detail for the surahs within the Qur'ān. Although Iṣlāḥī's commentary is over nine times longer in word count compared to Khālid's book, deliberations on coherence in fact occupy a relatively small space at the introduction of each surah. The bulk of Iṣlāḥī's exegesis is concerned with explaining collections of verses and the meanings of words.

Mir introduced a major twentieth century Urdu commentary of the Qur'ān in 1988 to the academic community. In the same way the author of this study aspires to do the same with a twenty-first century Arabic commentary.

## **Research Questions**

The research questions that this thesis intends to answer are:

- What methodology does Khālid employ to determine thematic coherence in the Qur'ān and what methodological issues exist (if any)?
- To what extent does Khālid demonstrate originality in his thematic concepts?
- How does Khālid's method compare with Iṣlāḥī's thematic approach to verse linkages, surah unity, surah pairs and surah groups?
- For selected Meccan and Madinan surahs how do the authors' interpretations compare where similar methods are applied? Identify factors that impact their application of thematic methods.
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of thematic coherence methods in overcoming issues associated with Qur'ānic interpretation in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries?

## **Methodology**

This study will depend on a literary analysis of primary and secondary sources. The concept of thematic coherence set forth by Khālid will be based on his book "Qur'ānic

Contemplations: Reflecting on the Goals of Each Chapter of the Qur'ān" (*Khawāṭir Qur'āniyyah: Naẓarāt fī 'Ahdāf Suwar al-Qur'ān*), written in Arabic. This work has not been studied critically before. This work will be closely compared with surahs of the Qur'ān to assess the extent to which Khālīd selects or ignores certain verses, or shifts away from a literary interpretation to support his thesis. An understanding of Iṣlāḥī's thematic approach will depend largely on Mir's analysis in "Coherence in the Qur'ān" and English translations of Iṣlāḥī's exegesis by Mohammad Kayani and Shehzad Saleem<sup>4</sup>.

A detailed survey of the history of thematic commentary will be based on Samir 'Abd al-Raḥmān Rashwānī's book called "The Methodology of Thematic Commentary in the Glorious Qur'ān" (*Manhaj al-Tafsīr Mawdū'ī li al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*), written in Arabic. The merits of this book is that it reviews and critiques studies by previous researchers in this field such as Mustafa Muslim, Abd al-Sattār and 'Abd al-Hayy al-Farmāwī. Where Rashwānī lacks sufficient detail the source exegesis will be consulted directly in its Arabic original, as done for example with *Tafsīr Manār* and *Tafsīr Kabīr* by Ibn Taymiyyah. Additionally works that survey different approaches of Qur'ānic exegesis will be read as a general introduction to this study, including older scholarship where relevant.

The Qur'ānic translation used for this study will be by Muhammad Abdel Haleem<sup>5</sup>. The following abbreviations are used: V = verse; S = Surah; G = Group.

## **Structure of the Thesis**

In order to achieve the research objectives, this thesis will be divided into seven chapters:

The current chapter provides the framework to inform this study by outlining the research problem, research questions and methodology.

Chapter Two provides a general introduction to the field of exegesis (*tafsīr*), including its various definitions and classifications.

Chapter Three addresses the thematic exegesis of the Qur'ān (*Tafsīr Mawḍū'ī*). It traces its historical developments from the prophetic era to the twenty-first century, highlighting the key innovators, thematic procedures and motivations.

Chapter Four provides a life sketch of Khālid and Iṣlāḥī by reviewing their influence, major life events and written works.

Chapter Five is concerned with the thematic methodology of Khālid. It will discuss the guiding principles that underpin his formulation of surah unity, surah pair and surah groups.

Chapter Six compares the thematic approaches of Khālid and Iṣlāḥī. It examines how they apply their methods to the same surahs of the Qur'ān and suggests reasons for diverging interpretations.

Chapter Seven concludes the findings of the research, highlights the main results of the thesis, limitations and scope for further inquiry.

## Chapter 2 - Introduction to the Qur'ān, its Exegesis and Approaches

This section deals with an introduction to the Qur'ān, its definition and exegetical classifications.

### The Qur'ān: its Relevance and Compilation

What the Qur'ān means to Muslims could not be better epitomised by the words of the celebrated fifteenth century scholar Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī, who is known to have said: “Everything is based on the Qur'ān”<sup>6</sup>. Considered as the words of God by over a billion people, the Holy Scripture acts as the supreme authority in Islam. It defines the creed, rituals, ethics and laws. The Qur'ān is used to prove the truthfulness of the prophet through its miraculous qualities and plays a profound influence on all aspects of personal and communal life<sup>7</sup>. It later became the starting point for all intellectual pursuits in the traditional Islamic sciences of jurisprudence, theology, philosophy, Arabic literature, prophetic history, arts and empirical studies of the world<sup>8</sup>. Given the Qur'ān's central role in Islam it was natural that attempts to interpret it would become the chief occupation of Muslims throughout the ages<sup>9</sup>.

The Qur'ān, most popularly defined as “the reading”<sup>10</sup>, is made up of 114<sup>11</sup> chapters, some 6200 verses, 77,400 words and 323,600 letters<sup>12</sup>. The surahs vary considerably in length; the shortest being three verses and the longest two hundred and eighty-six verses. The first twenty-four surahs make up around fifty per cent of the Qur'ān. It is believed to have been revealed gradually to Prophet Muhammad by angel Gabriel over a period of twenty-three years. The arrangement of the Qur'ān in book form (*muṣḥaf*) does not begin chronologically like the Old Testament or genealogically like the New Testament<sup>13</sup>.

According to the consensus of Muslim scholars the Qur'ān was compiled in its totality in scattered fragments owned by different people during Prophet Muhammad's (d. 632) lifetime. It was later compiled into one book by Zayd Ibn Thabit (d. 652) under the instruction of the first caliph, Abu Bakr (d. 634). Another copy, known as the Uthmanic codex, was later written by a committee of four Companions<sup>14</sup> under the instruction of Uthman Ibn Affan (d 656)<sup>15</sup>. Alternative accounts of the Qur'ān's origin are advanced

by revisionist scholars such as John Wansbrough (d. 2002), Patricia Crone, Michael Cook and Daniel Brown. They claim that the Qur'ānic text is the result of pious fraud and based on a collection of pre-existing traditions<sup>16</sup>. Academics like Neal Robinson have critiqued this thesis on the grounds that their sources were not better informed than Muslim ones<sup>17</sup>.

### **Definition of Qur'ānic Exegesis**

The first topic to be written within the classical discipline of the “Sciences of the Qur'ān” (*‘Ulūm al-Qur'ān*) was the interpretation of the Qur'ān<sup>18</sup>. The terms that have been commonly used to describe Qur'ānic exegesis are “*ma'ānī*”, “*ta'wīl*” and “*tafsīr*”<sup>19</sup>. “*Ma'ānī*” literally refers to meanings. “*Ta'wīl*” literally means “to return to the beginning”, which implies going back to the original meaning of a word. “*Tafsīr*” has two literal meanings; 1) “to explain, to expound, to elucidate” and 2), “to expose, to uncover”. Both signify interpreting and uncovering the meanings of something. “*Ma'ānī*” was first adopted in the seventh century, followed by “*ta'wīl*” in the eighth century, and then “*tafsīr*” in the ninth century. The latter two terms were first used interchangeably<sup>20</sup> but later become particularised by the tenth century onwards<sup>21</sup>.

### **Exegetical Typologies**

Approaches of Qur'ānic exegesis have been classified in various ways due to differing reference criteria as the basis for differentiation.

#### **A Traditional Classification**

The traditional Sunni-Muslim typology is divided into two broad categories:

“Interpretation by Narration” (*Tafsīr bi al-Ma'thūr*) and “Interpretation by Personal Opinion” (*Tafsīr bi al-Ra'y*). These are further subdivided in order of priority. *Tafsīr bi al-Ma'thūr* refers to the Qur'ān explaining itself and exegetical narrations of the Prophet, Companions and Successors. The first source is the Qur'ān. This primarily involved examining a verse in light of its sister verses but sources outside of the scripture were also introduced, such as circumstances of revelation (*Asbāb al-Nuzūl*), abrogation (*Naskh*), readings (*Qirā'ah*) and types of words (general, specific, literal,

metaphorical, clear, ambiguous etc.). The second source is the exegetical sayings of the Prophet. Whilst there is a small percentage of explicit exegetical narrations numerous implicit sayings and actions exist that explain the Qur'ān<sup>22</sup>. In general, the Prophet's opinion is considered legally binding when acted in the capacity of prophet but not in the capacity of judge, head of state or his own natural activities<sup>23</sup>. The third source is an exegetical narration of a Companion. The Companions utilised the first two sources in addition to exercising their personal opinion based on external sources, such as the rules of Arabic language, classical Arabic poetry, pre-Islamic Arab customs and Judeo-Christian traditions. The fourth source is the exegetical narration of a Successor. They employed the sources that the Companions used and prioritised their exegetical opinions over their own.

*Tafsīr bi al-Ra'y* refers to the personal opinion of a scholar that lived after the time of the Successors. By definition it is not confined to a specific methodology although some scholars sought to limit its scope<sup>24</sup>. This category is divided into Meritorious (*Maḥmūd*) and Objectionable (*Madhmūm*) exegesis. The former division is defined as being consistent with the "higher sources" of tafsir provided in *Tafsīr bi al-Ma'thūr* whereas the latter contradicts them. Esoteric exegesis (*Tafsīr al-Ishārī*) has been defined under *Tafsīr bi al-Ra'y*. It is considered acceptable as long as it does not contradict the Shariah or the apparent meaning of the verse, nor deemed as the verse's primary meaning<sup>25</sup>.

The intent behind this classification is to define categories on the basis of "true" and "false" methods. Advocators of this classification seek to interpret the Qur'ān in the way it was understood at the moment of revelation. They argue that the Companions and Successors are most suited at arriving at God's intent because Qur'ānic references identify their religious piety<sup>26</sup>. An issue identified with this classification was the assumption that its advocators were absolutely objective when in reality they cannot escape from their personality or environment<sup>27</sup>.

### **A Modern Classification**

Massimo Campanini is one of the few Arabists who have attempted to classify exegetical approaches representative of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. He



groups the approaches as traditional, salafi, scientific, literary-based, historical and contextualised, political and thematic.

Traditional Commentary is understood as being heavily indebted to the principle of authority, reliance on the early commentators and a decontextualisation of history. Campanini includes Tahir Ibn Ashur (d. 1973), Maḥmūd Shaltut (d. 1963) and Muhammad Ghazali (d. 1996) as examples who demonstrate elements of praxis. This means that both the methodology and content of exegesis by these exegetes have come about as a result of events in their countries<sup>28</sup>.

Salafi Commentary is characterised as appealing to rationality and open to a contextualised reading based on the traditional concept of renewal in Islam (*tajdīd*)<sup>29</sup>. In one sense it has responded to demands of a specific period in which colonial rule and science forced scholars to return to the original sources of Qur'ān and Sunnah, and assimilate modern science and learning. Notable works of this category are by Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan (d.1898) and "*Tafsīr al-Manār*" by Muhammad Abduh (d. 1905) and Rashid Rida (d. 1935). Yasir Qadhi is critical of this type of exegesis for attempting to combine Western philosophy with Islamic thought<sup>30</sup>.

Scientific Commentary is described as interpreting the Qur'ān in light of modern scientific discoveries of the physical world and mathematical codes<sup>31</sup> with a view to prove the inimitability of the Qur'ān. Whilst this genre can be traced back to the thirteenth century, works of this nature are widespread today by authors such as Tantawi Jawhari (d.1940), Ghulam Ahmad Pervez (d. 1983), Maurice Bucaille and Zaghlul al-Najjar. This form of exegesis has received a mixed reception from radical deniers to moderate concordists<sup>32</sup>.

Literary-based Commentary is to consider the Qur'ān as a work of art suited to literary analysis that embraces all the tools of rhetoric and eloquence. Originally inspired by Amīn al-Khulī, these ideas are adopted by exegetes such as Muhammad Khalafallah (d. 1998) and Aisha Bint al-Shātī (d. 1998)<sup>33</sup>.

A Historical and Contextualised Commentary is to interpret the Qur'ān in its specific historical geographical location and cultural context. This exegesis focuses on the ethical and moral discourse rather than the letter and Arabic semantics of the seventh century texts<sup>34</sup>. Two notably authors of this approach are Muhammad Arkoun and Nasir Abu Zayd.

A Political-based Commentary is interpreting the Qur'ān in light of a particular model of governance. Two examples, of which the first is less radical, is Abu al-Ala al-Mawdudi's (d.1979) "Understanding of the Qur'ān" (*Tafhīm al-Qur'ān*) and Sayyid Qutb's (d. 1966) "In the Shade of the Qur'ān" (*Fī Ṣīlāl al-Qur'ān*). Both authors based their commentaries with a primary goal to establish God's law on earth and fight tyrannical governments.

Whilst the above categories can be generally defined as a hermeneutical reading of the Qur'ān as each commentator transposes the meaning of Qur'ānic text into one's own system of values and meanings, specific works exist to reinterpret the Qur'ān according to new readings. Two examples are the hermeneutic of liberation by Farid Esack or women's rights by Amina Wadud<sup>35</sup>.

Campanini defines a category on a thematic interpretation of the Qur'ān. This approach is elucidated using examples from Hasan Hanafi, Fazlur Rahman (d.1988), Haleem, Iṣlāḥī and Muhammad Shahrur<sup>36</sup>. Some of these writers will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter.

Other classifications of exegesis exist, such as being based on the amount of exegetical detail<sup>37</sup> and orientalist formulations<sup>38</sup>.

### Chapter 3 - Introduction to Thematic Commentary (*Tafsīr Mawḍūʿī*)

This chapter examines the definition of *Tafsīr Mawḍūʿī* and traces its historical development.

#### Definitions of Thematic Commentary

Thematic Commentary (*Tafsīr Mawḍūʿī*) is a distinct exegetical approach. Its specific method and intention has evolved since its basic inception in the classical period. By focussing on a limited scope of thematic works and by considering only the method instead of the intention (and vice versa) many researchers have subsequently fallen prey to partial definitions. Their definitions are presented below followed by an attempt to achieve a more encompassing definition.

The following definitions of *Tafsīr Mawḍūʿī* focus on its method:

- To collect verses on one theme from one surah or different surahs and determine a lesson from it (Abū al-Muʿṭal al-Jābarī)<sup>39</sup>.
- To choose one theme in the Qurʾān, collect all verses that follow it, and to connect the parts that are isolated to form a complete picture of the theme. This is because the Qurʾān explains itself using another part (Muhammad Abū al-Nayl)<sup>40</sup>.
- A science that researches the issues of the glorious Qurʾān, unified in meaning or objective, that collects isolated verses, and formulates their meaning, extracts its origins and links part of it with the whole (Zāhir Ibn ʿAwād al-ʿĀlamī)<sup>41</sup>.

The following definitions of *Tafsīr Mawḍūʿī* focus on the intention or purpose of approach:

- Knowledge that takes outward themes as a foundation for uncovering the method and style of the Qurʾān. It takes rules and conditions of exegesis to arrive at the guidance and exalted character of the book (Ziyād Khalīl Muhammad)<sup>42</sup>.

- Research into the issues which the Qur'ān presents in different surahs to bring out specific meanings connected with a specific theme and to establish a goal (Rafa'at Abū al-Muṭlib)<sup>43</sup>.
- Knowledge of the issues based on the Qur'ānic objectives from one surah or more (Mustafa Muslim)<sup>44</sup>.
- To uncover the intention of God through themes to clarify the guidance of the Qur'ān and manifest an aspect of its immutability. It is a comprehensive uncovering of God's intention on a Qur'ānic issue according to human capability ('Abd al-Jalīl 'Abd al-Raḥīm)<sup>45</sup>.

Rashwānī concludes that the last definition offered by 'Abd al-Jalīl 'Abd al-Raḥīm comes close towards encompassing the necessary aspects of thematic commentary as it defines the goal of study (intention of God and immutability), the method (through themes), and states the limitation of study (according to human capability)<sup>46</sup>.

## **History of Thematic Commentary**

This section divides the major historical developments of thematic commentary into the classical and modern periods. It reveals the extent to which modern authors have borrowed thematic concepts from their classical predecessors. The classical period begins from the sixth to the fifteenth century and the modern period starts from the sixteenth century onwards.

### **Classical Period**

#### ***Time of the Prophet and Companions***

Researchers like 'Abd al-Sattār<sup>47</sup> trace the origins of thematic commentary Prophet Muhammad's lifetime as narrations exist of the Prophet explaining one Qur'ānic verse with other verses<sup>48</sup>. There are also narrations from the Companions like Abdullah Ibn Mas'ūd, who interpreted verses by examining what was before and after it<sup>49</sup>. Iṣlāḥī goes a step further by claiming that the Companions had no difficulty in understanding and appreciating its coherence<sup>50</sup> on the basis that they understood the Qur'ānic language and social context in which it was revealed. Rashwānī challenges this view. He believes the Companions collected verses with the objective of resolving apparent

contradictions of verses, not arriving at themes. A similarity exists in the method of explaining the Qur'ān by the Qur'ān.

### ***Developments in the Sciences of the Qur'ān ('Ulūm al-Qur'ān)***

During the formation of the Sciences of the Qur'ān (*'Ulūm al-Qur'ān*) in the eighth century a number of technical features of the Qur'ān were explored such as Qur'ānic parables, circumstance of revelation, abrogation, Meccan and Madinan verses, textual implications of words (*al-Dalālāt*) into clear, unclear, unequivocal, perspicuous etc. These studies naturally involved collecting the applicable verses that fit into these categories and hence some researchers viewed this phase as the origins of thematic commentary. Again Rashwānī disagrees *'Ulūm al-Qur'ān* directly influenced thematic commentary as it deals with aspects external to the text without extracting a theme on the actual subject matter of the Qur'ān<sup>51</sup>. For example, the study of oaths in the Qur'ān is not a theme but a grammatical feature.

Mustafa Muslim highlights that the collection of recurring words in the Qur'ān represents a “colour of thematic commentary”<sup>52</sup>. Works similar to Rāghib al-Isfahānī's (d. 1109) “Words in the Qur'ān” (*al-Mufradāt Fī Gharīb al-Qur'ān*) collect all of the verses that contain a particular word in order to examine the Qur'ānic meanings and context of usage for that word, such as Ummah, Jihad, Riba, Zakah<sup>53</sup> etc. In this most primitive form the word under study could become the foundation of building up a basic theme that traverses the whole Qur'ān.

### ***Isolated Qur'ānic Themes***

This stage appears to have a direct relationship with Thematic Commentary. Here all verses on a particular subject-matter of the Qur'ān are collected instead of explaining a single verse. The nature of a theme is understood as a topic of the Qur'ān, such as collection of verses related to prayer, purification or charity as found in Juristic Exegesis. One early example is Abu Bakr al-Rāzī's (d. 980) “Exegesis of Qur'ānic Rules” (*Tafsīr Ahkām al-Qur'ān*)<sup>54</sup>. Other works that followed this thematic approach are by Mutazali scholars<sup>55</sup> who produced treatises on themes such as the Qur'ānic concept of fire by 'Amr Ibn Baḥr al-Jāhiz (d. 869)<sup>56</sup>.

### ***Objectives of the Qur'ān and Islamic Law (Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah)***

Abu Hamid al-Ghazali (d.1111) initiates a new direction in thematic commentary by writing on the aims of the Qur'ān in his book "Jewels of the Qur'ān" (*Kitāb Jawāhir al-Qur'ān*). Couched in language resembling Sufi writings, al-Ghazali's identifies six aims<sup>57</sup> of the Qur'ān. These are in fact a mixture of objectives, spiritual states and Qur'ānic subject matter. Many works in the Modern period will return to the objectives of the Qur'ān.

This stage is also concerned with the collection of verses that promote the objectives of Islamic Law (*Maqāṣid Sharī'ah*)<sup>58</sup>. Although initially formulated in rudimentary form as early as the eleventh century by Abū 'Abd Allah al-Tirmidhī al-Ḥākim (d. 932), Abū Ishāq al-Shaṭībī (d. 1388) is known to have elaborated its theory most extensively. Instead of focusing on the textual meaning of a Qur'ānic verse al-Shaṭībī searched for the effective cause (*'illah*) of verses from different surahs to arrive at the objectives of the Shariah<sup>59</sup>. The objectives of the Shariah can be seen as holistic themes of the Qur'ān.

### ***Interconnections between Verses***

In this category a number of early Muslim scholars initiated the interconnection of verses with the intent of explaining the immutability of the Qur'ān and wisdom behind its arrangement. Both Abū Sulaymān Ibn Muḥammad al-Khattabī (d. 998) and Abū Bakr Ibn al-Tayyib al-Bāqillānī (d. 1013) explored linking a common meaning between single Qur'ānic words and verses, although not to the extent of passages<sup>60</sup>. Abū Bakr Ibn 'Abd al-Rahman al-Jurjānī's (d. 1078) discussed verse linkages with reference to grammatical structures. He also relied on Arabic poetry and the positioning of words within a sentence with a view to achieve exact and unambiguous expression of ideas that exist in the mind<sup>61</sup>. 'Abd al-Qāsim Ibn 'Umar al-Zamakhsharī uses a combination of the previous styles but with more subtle and complex relationships<sup>62</sup>. Scholars in this category applied these methods to selected verses of the Qur'ān rather than to all of it.

According to Mir<sup>63</sup> the first writer to apply linkages (*manāsabah*) between verses for each surah of the Qur’ān is Abū Bakr al-Rāzī<sup>64</sup>. This method involved linking each verse to the next sequential verse in an unbroken linear chain between all verses in a surah to form an idea. Similar attempts were followed by subsequent scholars such as Nizām al-Dīn Ibn al-Nisāburī (d. 1327), Abū Abdullah Ibn Yūsuf (d. 1344), and Shams al-Din Ibn al-Shirbīnī (d. 1569). Al-Nisāburī advances al-Rāzī’s method by dividing a surah into a number of passages and linking them with reference to the dominant themes in them<sup>65</sup>.

Mustafa Muslim categorises verse interconnections into three groups: 1) between verses of a single surah, 2) between the verses in beginning of surah and the verse at the end of the same surah, and 3) between surahs<sup>66</sup>. The third group is sub-divided into three types: linkages between the beginning of a surah and the end of the previous surah; overall meaning of a surah is linked with the surah before it; and link between the end of the surah and the beginning of the surah before it<sup>67</sup>. Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti discusses some of these relationships in his book “Orderly Pearls in the Interconnection of Surah” (*Tanāsiq al-Durur Fī Tanāsub al-Suwar*)<sup>68</sup>.

### ***Dominant Themes of Surahs***

Following in the direction of al-Nisāburī several scholars would write on the dominant meanings or themes in a surah without linking them together or defining its overall objective<sup>69</sup>. Examples of writers that share this method are Taqī al-Dīn Aḥmad Ibn Taymiyyah (d. 1328), Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah (d. 1350) and Muhammad Ibn Yaqūb al-Farūz al-‘Ābadī (d. 1414).

One example of this is Ibn Taymiyyah’s collection of exegesis, which has been collated into one book called “*Tafsīr Kabīr*”. Instead of explaining one Qur’ānic verse at a time for each surah he would discuss the dominant themes of the surah. The nature of these themes would vary. They could refer to a major lesson, a Qur’ānic feature or explanation of a particular verse. For example, in S.2 “The Cow” (*al-Baqarah*) chapters were titled “The meaning of the Unseen and the Seen” (*M’anā al-Ghayb wa al-Shahadah*), “Analogy of comparison and universality” (*Qiyās al-Tamthīl wa Qiyās al-Shumūl*) and “Explaining the verse ‘Those who believe and those who were Jews’”

(*Tafsīr ‘an ‘Allathīna ‘Amanū wa Hādu’*)<sup>70</sup>. Ibn Qayyim follows in similar fashion. For example, Rashwānī quotes Ibn Qayyim’s discussion of the dominant themes in S.28 “The Spider” (*‘Ankabūt*) in his book “Wonders of Lessons” (*Badā’i’ al-Fawā’id*): “It is the secret of (God’s) creation and command; a surah of trials and tests; an explanation of the states of those are tested; to remain hopeful throughout; being patient and dependent on God during the trial and hope for guidance and victory near the end”<sup>71</sup>.

### **Objectives of Surahs**

Ibrāhīm Ibn ‘Umar al-Baqā’ī (d. 1480) demonstrated in an eight volume exegesis “Arrangement of Pearls in the Connection between Surah Verses” (*Tanāsiq al-Durur Fī Tanāsub al-Suwar*) that a surah has one overall objective (*maqṣad*) that revolves from the first verse to the last. His approach is described by Rashwānī as 1) identifying the different themes of the surah, 2) searching for the overall objective of the surah, and 3) linking the themes in light of the overall objective<sup>72</sup>. In essence Baqa’i’s approach is to apply the idea of *Manāsabāt* by al-Rāzī within the guiding principle that each surah has one ultimate objective. For example al-Baqā’ī writes that the objective (*maqṣūd*) of the S.3 “The Family of Imran” (*Ālā ‘Imran*) is monotheism (*Tawḥīd*) and the *maqṣūd* of Surah Maryam is the comprehensiveness of mercy (*Shamūl al-Raḥmah*). Another unique innovation of al-Baqā’ī was to suggest that the name of every surah was harmonious with the surah’s objective<sup>73</sup>. As Rashwānī points out after al-Baqā’ī, no major developments in Thematic Commentary are reported between the fifteenth and nineteenth century<sup>74</sup>.

### **Modern Period**

This period is characterised by a combination of concepts and methods from the classical period and, in some cases, advances of them. Some writers have exaggerated the uniqueness of their ideas due to a lack of research in historical works<sup>75</sup>.

### **Thematic Incoherence of the Qur’ān**

Typically advanced by some academics during earlier scholarship in Qur’ānic Studies, writers such as Thomas Carlyle<sup>76</sup>, Montgomery Watt<sup>77</sup> and Francesco Gabrieli<sup>78</sup> have essentially described the Qur’ān’s style as “confused”, “disjointed” and “muddled”. Based on a twentieth century European conception of literary coherence perhaps this



position is understandable. The Qur'ān indeed possesses unique features within a surah, such as setting principles without sufficiently illustrating them; presentation of certain types of evidence; amount of space devoted to a theme being disproportionately small; abrupt start and end; and multiple apparently unrelated topics. John Merrill<sup>79</sup> argued that the underdeveloped state of Qur'ānic Studies in the twentieth century can be held responsible for the incoherence narrative. Since then research in this discipline has grown and some major developments highlighted below.

### ***Isolated Themes of the Qur'ān***

As witnessed by earlier works in the study of *'Ulūm al-Qur'ān* and Legal Exegesis, the method of collecting Qur'ānic verses particular to technical features or subject matter continued to be adopted in the modern period. A plethora of works by scholars and academics specialise on a particular Qur'ānic theme, such as the Qur'ān's self-image, marriage, politics or the hereafter. This category typically occupies the shelves of most bookshops and libraries in Islamic Studies. Encyclopaedias<sup>80</sup> dedicated to the Qur'ān also fit in this category.

### ***Dominant Themes of the Qur'ān***

Authors in this group resonate with the procedure of Abū Ḥamīd al-Ghazālī in identifying the aims of the Qur'ān. They attempt to derive the central concepts or themes that traverse the whole of the Qur'ān instead of a surah. Some of the themes constructed by the writers converge and others vary considerably and are commonly in response to issues associated with the traditional verse by verse commentaries. Writers also attempt to identify one overall message of the Qur'ān in which all the major themes point to. Examples of scholars in this group are Fazlur Rahman, Ziauddin Sardar, Haleem<sup>81</sup>, Kenneth Cragg<sup>82</sup>, Muhammad Ghazali<sup>83</sup>, Jacques Jomier<sup>84</sup>, Mahmūd Hijāzī<sup>85</sup> and Toshihiko Izutsu<sup>86</sup>. Rahman and Sardar will be studied below.

In the beginning of Rahman's "Major Themes of the Qur'ān" he justifies that synthesising a theme or concept across its many contexts in the Qur'ān and "interiorising [it] into a total mental picture" is logical and yields insight into the cohesive outlook of the Qur'ān, achieving "concrete unity" and "fullness of

meaning”<sup>87</sup>. For Rahman a verse by verse procedure, by its very nature, leads to subjective and partial views. He formulates eight themes as follows: God, Man and Individual, Man in Society, Nature, Prophethood and Revelation, Eschatology, Satan and Evil, and Emergence of a Muslim Community. Rahman considers the first theme, God’s existence, as the “master truth” and the others as the foundation-stone from which other Qur’ānic ideas are derived from or subsumed under it. For every theme Rahman discusses its finer details by resorting to multiple verses from different surahs. Rahman bases the importance of a theme on the frequency it occurs in the Qur’ān. For example, he uses the expression “keeps emphasising” several times. He also addresses inadequate views of some “Western” scholars, for example viewing God as a capricious tyrant. Rahman frequently links themes together and occasionally links one theme to what is perceived as the overall aim of the Qur’ān: “man and his behaviour”<sup>88</sup>.

In his book “Reading the Qur’ān”, Sardar conducts a passage-based approach for interpreting S.1 “The Opening” (*al-Fātiḥah*) and S.2 “The Cow” (*al-Baqarah*) and dedicates a major section on the Qur’ān’s themes. After admitting the vital role that classical commentaries have contributed in Muslim understandings of the Qur’ān, like Rahman, he critiques them on multiple fronts. He agrees that a verse-by-verse commentary is unable to yield sufficient insight into “broader themes, essential concepts and universal meanings” as its procedure lacks awareness of the Qur’ānic worldview<sup>89</sup>; causes the “argumentative” nature of the Qur’ān to get lost<sup>90</sup>; and argues it is unable to cope with the challenges of contemporary times as the Qur’ān must be read with needs of our time. Sardar discusses twelve themes and uses verses from different surahs to support his ideas. His choice of themes appear to underline an agenda of re-reading the Qur’ān in light of today’s context which he alludes to when concluding his themes on “Time and History”<sup>91</sup> and “Abrogation and Change”. His other themes are driven by a hermeneutic of justice, equity and coexistence, seen in themes on “Truth and Plurality”, “Humanity and Diversity” and “Ethics and Morality”.

### ***Dominant Themes of a Surah***

This group is reminiscent of the works of Ibn Taymiyyah. The dominant themes of a surah are now determined in response to the specific contexts of the modern period

such as science, technology, orientalist views and traditional verse-by-verse exegetical approaches. It is likely that the classical writers also constructed themes in light of the major challenges of their times. Allocating a surah to a distinct objective is not attempted. Selected examples within this category are by Rashid Rida, Muhammad Ghazali (d. 1996) and Abu al-Ala Mawdudi<sup>92</sup>.

The exegesis called the “The Lighthouse” (*Tafsīr al-Manār*) by Muhammad Abduh and Rida is seen as having a major influence on modern exegesis<sup>93</sup>. They were able to justify reformist ideas by drawing up the general ideas of a surah. Yasushi Kosugi cited that integrity of a surah as one of the nine foundations on which their methodology relied upon<sup>94</sup>. For example, before commencing the traditional verse by verse exegesis Rida dedicates a seventeen-page section on the dominant themes of S.2 “The Cow” (*al-Baqarah*). This comprised of: inviting others to Islam, description of beliefs, law, rules of the religion and principles of legislation. Each item is elaborated upon in detail<sup>95</sup>. *Tafsīr al-Manār* also highlights linkages between a surah and the surah before it. For example, the link between S.3 “The Family of Imran” (*Ālā ‘Imran*) and S.4 “Women” (*al-Nisā’*) is that the former ends with the command of God consciousness (*Taqwā*) and the former also begins with this command<sup>96</sup>.

In “A Thematic Commentary on the Qur’ān” Muhammad Ghazali presents themes of the Qur’ān in sequential order in which verses appear in the surah. He typically embeds a single verse or group of verses within the discussion of each theme. If verses that occur later in the surah support the theme they are also referenced. Not all verses are discussed; at times small passages are summarised or ignored. For example in S.7 “The Heights” (*‘Arāf*), verses between V.53 and V.92 are summarised as the history and experience of earlier nations<sup>97</sup>. The majority of the verses are explained with reference to events during the prophetic period but are also concluded with the challenges that Ghazali saw in his day. For example, Ghazali relates the topic of Muslim alliances in V.73 of S.8 “Battle Gains” (*al-Anfāl*) with the tragedy of Muslim disunity and Arab nationalism in Muslim-majority countries<sup>98</sup>. No discussion is made on the overall objective of a surah.

### ***Unity of Surah: Seeking its Overall Objective***

Like al-Baqā'ī, the authors in this group divide a surah into sections and link them to identify the surah's main purpose or objective. This study is typically motivated by a desire to demonstrate the Qur'ān's coherency, its imitability and a more faithful interpretation of the Qur'ān. Examples are given for Muhammad Abdullah Daraz (d. 1958), Sayyid Qutb (d. 1966) and thematic research project conducted by Sharjah University. Other writers in this category include Ḥusayn Tabātāba'ī<sup>99</sup> and Maḥmūd Bustānī<sup>100</sup>.

In his book "The Great News" (*al-Naba' al-Aẓīm*), Daraz is eager to demonstrate that the arrangement of a surah's verses are divinely inspired and transcends all miracles<sup>101</sup>. He attempts this for S.2 "The Cow" (*al-Baqarah*) only, the longest surah in the Qur'ān. Predicated with the view that any sophisticated literary expression demands unity of meaning and artistic coherence, he argues that each surah has separate divergent parts that directly link, create a "perfect harmony", fit in its most suitable position comfortable with its adjoining parts, and moves in the same direction to fulfil a particular purpose<sup>102</sup>. He cautions the reader not to be oblivious to the linkages that may first appear "unnatural" but link on the basis of contrast, sub-division, example, deduction, complement, exception etc. He states that if no natural link then the Qur'ān would "move from one to the other very gently...using the sort of syntax that allows compatibility between unfamiliar elements"<sup>103</sup>. In S.2 "The Cow" (*al-Baqarah*), Daraz identifies five principal sections, each with a specific purpose. He discusses at length the sub-division of each section, the natural progression between them and abrupt transitions.

In "The Shade of the Qur'ān" (*Fi Zīlāl al-Qur'ān*), Sayyid Qutb produces a commentary of all the Qur'ānic surahs. When introducing S.2 "The Cow" (*al-Baqarah*) he writes that every surah has a "personality of its own", special rhyme and musical impulse, and revolves around a central theme, or a number of major themes related to one another by a common idea<sup>104</sup>. He also states that the Qur'ān as a whole possesses an overall objective (*hadaḥ*). Like Daraz, the surah is divided into several sections and its themes linked to given an overall meaning. Occasionally the surah section will align with the traditional thirty divisions (*juz'*). Mir notices that Qutb describes the mood and

atmosphere of several surahs in the same way that hardly distinguishes the surah's central theme from the general objective of the Qur'ān<sup>105</sup>.

A major work called "A Thematic Commentary of the Surahs of the Glorious Qur'ān" (*Tafsīr Mawḍū'ī Li Suwar al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*)<sup>106</sup> was completed by a team of 31 researchers in the United Arab Emirates, produced a nine volume thematic commentary covering each surah of the Qur'ān. A number of thematic characteristics are identified: the central theme of the surah, link between the surah's name and its theme and surah interconnections.

### **Surah Groups**

A major innovation in thematic commentary unique to the modern period is the division of surahs into groups and assigning an overall theme to the group. Two authors that utilise this approach are Ḥamīd al-Dīn al-Farāḥī and Sa'īd Hawa'.

Farāḥī developed the idea of surah groups in rudimentary form before it was elaborated by his student Iṣlāḥī. Farāḥī believed that the arrangement of surahs in their present order was divinely inspired through the prophet and thus was not without a compelling rationale<sup>107</sup>. He devises nine groups as follows: Group 1: Surahs 1-5, Group 2: Surahs 6-9, Group 3: Surahs 10-22, Group 4: Surahs 23-24. Group 5: Surahs 25-33, Group 6: Surahs 34-49, Group 7: 50-66, Group 8: Surahs 67-112, and Group 9: Surahs 113-114. It is not clear on what basis Farāḥī devised this arrangement as his own commentary of the Qur'ān was limited to fourteen surahs in total<sup>108</sup>. The internal arrangement of each surah group into a Mecca and Madinan bloc is attributed to Iṣlāḥī rather than Farāḥī, which will be explored later in this study.

In his book "The Foundation of Exegesis" (*Asās Fi al-Tafsīr*)<sup>109</sup>, Saeed Hawa' (d. 1989) divides the Qur'ān into four groups and argues that each group is linked with S.2 "The Cow" (*al-Baqarah*). His surah groups follow a traditional classification based on the number of verses in a surah<sup>110</sup> as follows: "Long" (*al-Ṭiwāl*) from S.3 to S.9, 2); "Hundreds" (*al-Mu'īn*) from S.10 to S.28; "Oft-Repeated" (*al-Mathānī*) from S.29 to S.50; and "Broken" (*al-Mufaṣṣal*) from S.51 to S.114. Rashwānī critiques the work for not clearly justifying the link between S.2 and each group, and claims S.1 plays a

comparatively stronger role as it encompasses all of the Qu'ranic objectives in terms of creed, legislation and eschatology<sup>111</sup>.

### ***Stylistic Approaches to Qur'ānic Coherence***

Recently several studies have moved away from a thematic approach and looked to analyse the unity of a surah using linguistic and rhetorical approaches. One motivation behind these studies is to address the problems faced by authors who divide surahs into passages according to topics. For example, Salwa el-Awa cites that topical divisions can differ according to the author's understanding of the relations between topics and there are often verses that are difficult to relate to the overall theme of a surah<sup>112</sup>. Two examples under review are Salwa el-Awa and Michel Cuypers. Other contributions in this area are by Neil Robinson<sup>113</sup>, Islam Dayeh<sup>114</sup>, Mathius Zahniser<sup>115</sup>, Hussein Abdul-Raof<sup>116</sup>, Carl Ernst<sup>117</sup> and Amer Gheitury<sup>118</sup>.

In "Textual Relations in the Qur'ān: Relevance, Coherence and Structure", Salwa el-Awa addresses verse linkages according to principles derived from modern pragmatic theory. Her assumption is that these principles, in combination with linguistic and non-linguistic contexts, are likely to yield a more systematic understanding of Qur'ānic Studies<sup>119</sup>. El-Awa illustrates this theory using two medium-length surahs (S.33 and S.75) that contain verses whose relation to the general theme of the surah is problematic. Using Relevance Theoretical analysis, she suggests that the divisional topic of surah should not be taken as the sign of connectivity but rather a contributor. Instead grammatical particles can behave as markers to new sections<sup>120</sup>. El-Awa also suggests other non-pragmatic techniques related to pronoun shifts, rhythm and rhyme changes can indicate a shift of subject matter.

In monograph "Semitic Rhetoric as a Key to the Question of the naẓm of the Qur'ānic Text", Cuypers addresses the issue of Qur'ānic coherence by utilising studies in Semitic rhetoric theorised by Roland Meynet in the context of Biblical rhetoric. Cuypers highlights that Greek rhetoric adopted today within European literature uses a linear and continuous manner of composing speech i.e. follows an introduction, main body and conclusion<sup>121</sup>. The composition of Semitic rhetoric, however, does not follow this linear structure but rather points to various forms of symmetry. This symmetry

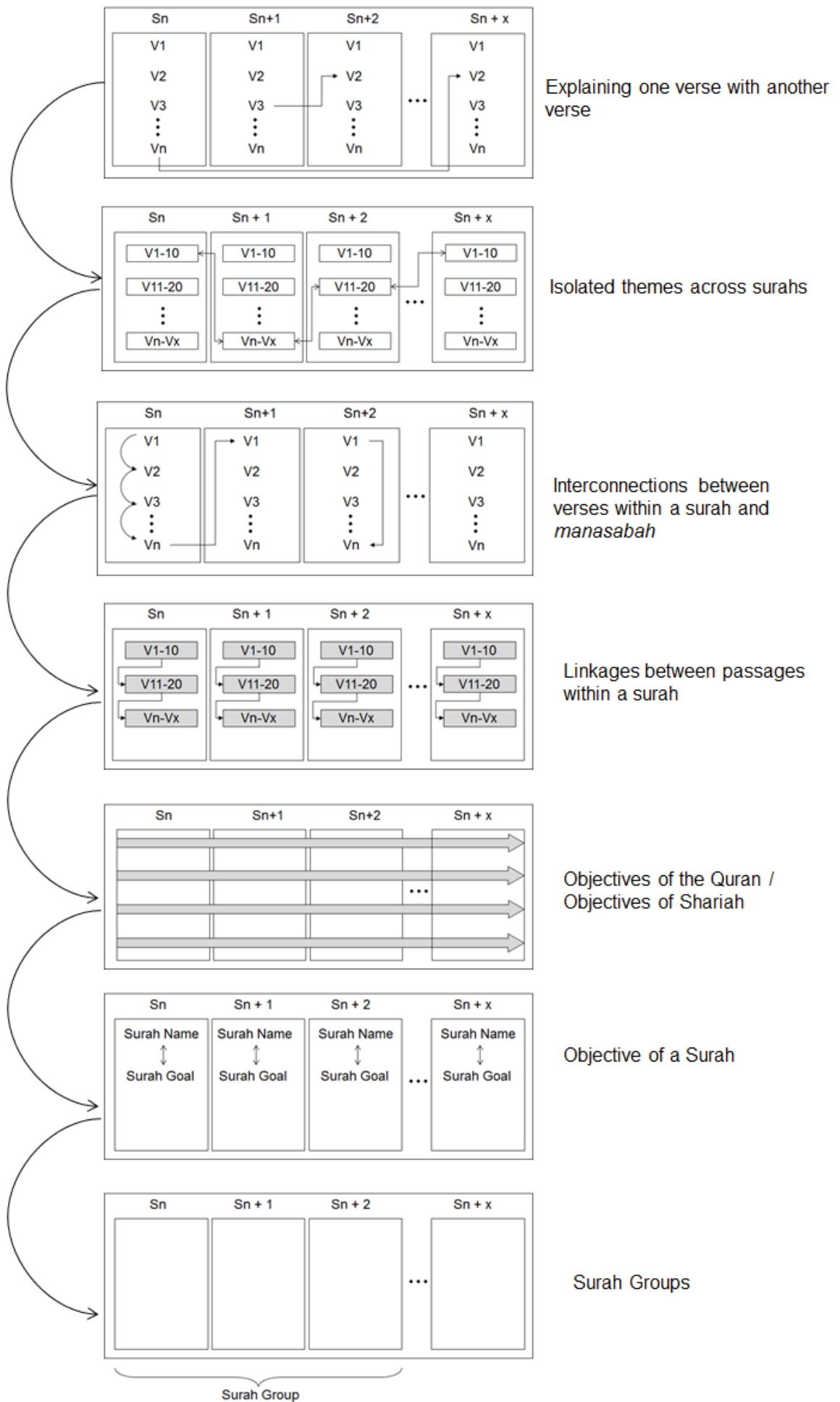
appears in various forms. Three examples are: “parallelism”: units of text reappear in the same order (ABC/’A’B’C); “concentric”: units of text are arranged concentrically around a centre (ABC/x/C’B’A’); and “mirror”: similar to concentric but without the central element (ABC/C’B’A). Cuypers argues that the Qur’ānic text seem disorderly according to the Greek rhetoric tradition, but possesses a “very sophisticated composition” according to complex set of symmetries of Semitic rhetoric<sup>122</sup>. Using examples in S.101 “The Crashing Blow (*al-Qāri’ah*), S.4 “The Feast” (*al-Mā’idah*)<sup>123</sup>, S.12 “Joseph” (*Yūsuf*) and S.1 “The Opening” (*al-Fātiḥah*), Cuypers identifies symmetries and argues that they are composed with literary rules known by the Arab society in the prophetic period.

## Conclusion

As seen from this wide corpus of writers the primary vehicle for demonstrating coherence in the Qur’ān has been a thematic one. It has developed from linkages between words, verses, passages, surahs and surah groups. Recent research has identified limitations in a theme-based approach by exploring stylistic methods, which echo non-theme approaches of grammatical structures by Abū Bakr al-Jūrjānī in the eleventh century. Figure 1 illustrates the major shifts in thematic concepts since the prophetic era.

Coming back to the definition of *Tafsīr Mawḍū’ī*, whilst Rashwānī’s choice of definition succeeds in moving beyond a partial definition, due to its generality, it fails to encompass other intentions and methods that are representative of classical and modern developments. One such rendering that addresses this is to define *Tafsīr Mawḍū’ī* as “An exegetical study that formulates themes from within or outside the text in isolation, at level of surah or the Qur’ān to uncover the intention of God and suggest its coherence and aspects of its immutability”.

## Figure 1 - Major historical shifts in thematic concepts of the Qur’ān





## Chapter 4 - Life sketch of Amīn Iṣlāḥī and Amr Khālīd

This chapter outlines the influence, major life events and written works of Amr Khālīd and Amīn Iṣlāḥī.

### Amr Khālīd

#### Influence

Amr Mohamed Helmi Khālīd is one of the most influential Muslim preachers in the Arabic speaking world. His rankings in the World Most Influential Muslims surveys<sup>124</sup> have been phenomenal the past five years: 14<sup>th</sup> in 2009, 15<sup>th</sup> in 2010, 21<sup>st</sup> in 2011 and 34<sup>th</sup> in 2012, and included in the Time Magazine's "100 Most Influential People" in 2007. His videos on You Tube have received over 26 million hits and he attracts two million fans on his Facebook page<sup>125</sup>. Khālīd's influence has also received academic attention by writers such as Asef Bayat<sup>126</sup> and Samia Serageldin<sup>127</sup>.

Khālīd's appeal has been attributed to his ability to relate to and communicate in the language of his audiences<sup>128</sup>. Unlike traditional imams he dresses in suits, is clean shaven and speaks publically in colloquial Egyptian dialect. His charismatic style and oratory skills enables him to captivate audiences by relating to their experiences, punctuating lessons with jokes and deploying accessible analogies from sport, history and popular culture<sup>129</sup>. Using the core messages of Islam, he seeks to reconcile faith with realities of the twenty-first century. He listens, encourages dialogue and empowers young men and women in a societal context that views itself as "underdeveloped"<sup>130</sup>. He also reaches his audience using their preferred media tools of communication instead of using traditional means like attending the mosque.

Khālīd has not been without its critics. A prominent liberal thinker, Hala Mustafa, argued that Khālīd presents a conservative reading of Islam garbed in an attractive cover<sup>131</sup>. Within some academic circles Khālīd's message is considered to embody an innovative style that lacks theological depth, critical thinking and re-interpretation. Bayat claims he contributes to a narrow-minded approach to religion that is not intellectually-progressive, and encourages obedience to authority. Others are critical of him for turning religious work into a profitable venture<sup>132</sup>.

### **Birth and major life events**

Khālīd was born in 1967 in the Cairo district of Mohandessin in an upper middle class home. His father was a physician and his maternal grandfather was Ibrahim Abdel-Hadi Pasha, a prime minister under Farouk (d. 1965), King of Egypt and Sudan during 1936-1953. Like many modern Egyptians, Khālīd went to secondary school and graduated from Cairo University's Faculty of Commerce in 1988. In 1990, he began his career as an accountant for an international accounting and consulting company, KPMG Egypt, and later founded his own accountancy company in 1998.

Brought up in an unreligious environment with moral values, Khālīd described that his religiosity towards Islam began in the first year of secondary school. He would pray at the mosque regularly, study the Qur'ān and read many books on Islam<sup>133</sup>. According to his resume<sup>134</sup>, it was not until the age of 34 when he first experienced formal Islamic Studies education by achieving a diploma at the Institute of Islamic Studies, Egypt. Whilst still working for KPMG Khālīd began preaching part-time at his local football club during Ramadan prayers in 1995. His name soon became well known in the local area. His popularity was further promoted after being selected as head preacher at the El-Hossari mosque. By 1998 Khālīd was preaching full-time. It was not until he was offered to host an Islamic television programme in 2001 on a Saudi-funded religious satellite channel, Iqra', where his fame transformed into a global icon. In 2003 he moved to UK after being reportedly pressurised by the Egyptian government to cease his public preaching<sup>135</sup>.

Whilst in the UK<sup>136</sup> Khālīd signed new satellite contracts with Orbit and al-Rai, established his personal website<sup>137</sup>, and distributed his religious programmes on CDs, cassettes and videos. Khālīd established community development programs, such as "Right Start Foundation" in 2003, a UK charitable organisation committed to nurturing constructive and positive existence between different faiths. He also set up "Life Makers Organisation" in 2004, a platform to attract youth volunteers to areas of literacy, health awareness and coexistence. He has been officially invited by the authorities of several governments<sup>138</sup> to speak at annual Islamic conferences in Europe<sup>139</sup>. In 2010 he completed his PhD at the University of Trinity Saint David<sup>140</sup>.

More recently Khālid supported the protestors in Tahrir Square during the Arab Spring and subsequently launched a political party called “Egypt’s Future Party”. In July 2013 he resigned because he felt reform and preaching did not fit with the requirements of political life<sup>141</sup>.

### **Major works**

As noted above Khālid’s Islamic education was not conducted through a traditional religious seminary but self-taught and moved in academia. Nevertheless as a full-time preacher, Khālid has authored over 15 books on Islam, mostly written in Arabic<sup>142</sup>. His book titles are a reflection of Khālid’s overall thought on Islam. This has been articulated in a recent interview. He describes Islam as four interconnected dimensions: faith, ethics and manners, positive community development and coexistence<sup>143</sup>. These ideas resonate with many of his books, such as “Manners of a Muslim” (*Akhlaq al-Muslim*) in 2002, “Purification of the Heart” (*Islāh al-Qulūb*) in 2003, “Indeed I am creating on Earth a Vicegerent” (*Innī Jā’il Fi al-’Ard Khalīfah*) in 2006 and “Invitation of Coexistence” (*Da’wah al-Tā’ush*) in 2008<sup>144</sup>. Khālid criticises the traditional scholars for propagating an “old message” of faith for the sake of faith itself instead of channelling religious energy towards constructive development of society. Many of his ideas are not new. Muslims scholars like Yusuf al-Qaradawi also note constructive development as a core message of Islam<sup>145</sup>.

Khālid writes that the motivation for writing “Qur’ānic Contemplations: Reflecting on the Goals of Each Chapter of the Qur’ān” occupied his mind since 1994. Every year in the month of Ramadan he would become saddened by Muslims reciting the Qur’ān without a clear appreciation of its objectives. He felt many treated the Qur’ān as an encrypted code that was disjointed and incoherent. These reflections eventually spurred Khālid to bridge this gap<sup>146</sup>. He clarifies that his book is not a “typical exegetical work” but a personal reasoning to encourage the youth to increase their understanding of the holy scripture and demonstrate how the surahs and verses are linked<sup>147</sup>.

## Amīn Iṣlāḥī

### Influence

Amīn Aḥsan Iṣlāḥī's influence has been substantial, particularly in areas of political activism and social reform within India and Pakistan, and more globally in the form of his intellectual contributions to Qur'ānic exegesis. He was heavily involved in the early development of *Jamaat-e-Islami*, a political party that still enjoys wide appeal in Pakistan today<sup>148</sup>. Following his resignation from the party he remained engaged with the society through his study circles and periodicals. Iṣlāḥī's most significant appeal lies in his contribution to thematic exegesis with specific innovations in surah pairing and refinement of Farāḥī's concept of surah groups. His eight volume exegesis, *Taddabur-e-Qur'ān*, has received attention from academics and Muslims in general. Following his death, his ideas live in many students who propagate the Farāḥī-Iṣlāḥī school of thought in tackling challenges of societal reform and revival of Islam in Pakistan<sup>149</sup>, with a number of websites dedicated towards this end<sup>150</sup>.

### Birth and major life events

Iṣlāḥī was born in 1904 in a village called Bhamhur, located in district Azamgarh, north of India. The livelihood of his family was based on the cultivation of their own land. His early education was spent at "*Madrasah al-Iṣlah*", a school that offered studies in Arabic literature, the Qur'ān and aspects of European social sciences. The school was established in 1908 on the educational principles of Shibli Nu'mani (d. 1914), a theologian known for balancing the then extremes of Deoband conservatism and Sir Ahmad Sayyid's modernism<sup>151</sup>. Hamid al-Din Farāḥī (d. 1930), a student and relative of Nu'mani, later took charge of the school in 1925. Farāḥī, a teacher of Arabic and Persian at the universities of Aligarh, Allahabad and Dar al-'Ulum, studied with some prominent scholars of the time, such as Sir Ahmad Sayyid and professors, Thomas Arnold and Josef Horovitz<sup>152</sup>.

After graduating from *Madrasah al-Islah* at the age of 18, Iṣlāḥī worked as an assistant editor of two newspapers. During a visit to his school in 1925, Iṣlāḥī met Farāḥī. It appears Farāḥī was in search of students who could continue his approach of the Qur'ān. He offered Iṣlāḥī to study the Qur'ān with him full time. Iṣlāḥī accepted and left

his career in journalism. Under Farāḥī, Iṣlāḥī studied the ideas of Qur'ānic coherence and modern political philosophy. After the death of Farāḥī in 1930, Iṣlāḥī was appointed principal of the school at the age of 26. During the next 11 years he edited and published Farāḥī's unpublished works, most of which were written in Arabic. This was facilitated through the setup of a research circle called "*Da'irah Ḥāmidīyyah*". In 1936 he introduced a periodical for promoting Farāḥī's thoughts which continued for three years<sup>153</sup>.

In 1941, Iṣlāḥī left the school to join Abu al-Ala Mawdudi's new Islamic revival organisation turned political party, *Jamaat-e-Islami*. Since joining as a founding member he played a number of leadership and strategic roles during his 17 year tenure, acting at one point as Vice President<sup>154</sup>. After a number of disagreements with Mawdudi on the direction of the organisation with respect to electioneering, powers of the party leader (*amīr*) and party politics in 1958, Iṣlāḥī resigned from the party. During this period it has been suggested that Iṣlāḥī's approach to bring about genuine societal change shifted from a state-centred approach to an intellectual and reflective transformation of conscience in light of the Qur'ān<sup>155</sup>. This event perhaps draws parallels with Khālīd's experience between the interaction of reform and party politics. Iṣlāḥī's student, Javed Ghamidi, later developed his teacher's arguments in calling for societal-centred social change.

For the next 23 years, Iṣlāḥī devoted himself towards the production of his Qur'ānic exegesis in Urdu, *Tadabbu-e-Qur'ān*. Like Farāḥī, Iṣlāḥī looked to transfer his intellectual tradition to the next generation. In 1961 he setup a small study circle for university students called "*Halaqah Taddabur al-Qur'ān*", where he taught Arabic, Qur'ān and hadith. He opened a similar circle in 1981 called "*Idārah Tadabbur Qur'ān wa Ḥadīth*"<sup>156</sup>, which continued until 1993<sup>157</sup>. In 1997, he died at the age of 93 in Lahore, Pakistan.

### Major Works

Apart from his most important work, *Tadabbur-e-Qur'ān*, Iṣlāḥī authored around 18 books<sup>158</sup> covering various religious, legal, social and political issues whilst a member of *Jamaat-e-Islami*. Iṣlāḥī also translated several works by Farāḥī from Arabic into Urdu

such as “Oaths of the Qur’ān” (*‘Aqsām al-Qur’ān*) and “Farāhī’s Commentary of Selected Surahs” (*Majmū’ah Tafāsir al-Farāhī*).

The central motivation behind *Tadabbur al-Qur’ān* was Iṣlāhī’s drive to remove doubts about the Qur’ān’s incoherence by some Muslims and orientalists. He writes:

*“Here it is appropriate to direct the attention of the readers to a mischief spread by the Orientalists to ruin its divine arrangement and format. They have published copies of the Qur’ān in which the sūrahs are not arranged in the manner God and His Prophet (sws) did. They have rearranged them claiming that this new arrangement is more meaningful and better arranges the Book of God and rids it of the haphazard sequence which they think it had. A similar state of affairs is being witnessed in some Muslim countries...”*<sup>159</sup>.

Although Iṣlāhī claims his mentor “successfully attempted and proved it [coherence]” for certain Meccan surahs<sup>160</sup>, doubts arose about the larger and complex Madinan surahs<sup>161</sup>. In *Tadabbu-e-Qur’ān*, Iṣlāhī believes he has shown coherence for the Madinan surahs too.

## Chapter 5 – Thematic Exegesis of Amr Khālīd

This section is concerned with the thematic approaches of Khālīd. He utilises the concepts of surah unity, linking the surah name to its goal, surah groups, and occasionally discusses surah pairs and verse linkages within or preceding a surah.

### Surah Unity

In the introduction of “Qur’ānic Contemplations” Khālīd writes:

*“Every surah possesses one topic (mawḍūʿī wāḥid) and a defining set of goals (ahdāf)...if you knew the goal (hadaf) of a surah and its topic then you will become to appreciate that the verses of a surah form an amazing connection. This will increase your love for the book of God and belief that it has been sent from the All-Wise and All-Aware...Every surah of the Qur’ān is an expression of a complete unity; it establishes a clear goal and every verse serves this goal in one or many ways...”<sup>162</sup>.*

Khālīd’s concept of surah unity comprises of two units: “topic” and “goal”. He writes that every surah contains “one topic”, which implies that his usage of “topic” does not refer to a specific subject matter of the Qur’ān but rather a collection of subject matter. In fact he replaces the word “topic” with the word “theme” (*miḥwar*) when introducing S.2 “The Cow” (*al-Baqarah*): “...every surah has one theme and one goal” (*Li kulli surah miḥar wa hadaf wāḥid*)<sup>163</sup>. His differentiation between goal and theme alludes to the need to go beyond identifying the Qur’ān with its topics such as God, Prophethood or stories of past nations, but to clearly identify lessons that God intends mankind to learn and apply in their life. Khālīd articulates this idea: “...if you knew the goal or the goals of the surahs then you would have understood the intention of God from these surahs and what He wants from you in this book, even if you do not understand the meaning of every verse”<sup>164</sup>. Although Khālīd makes a distinction between the surah goal and the theme, he is exclusively concerned with the former throughout his exegesis.

### The Surah Goal

Khālīd discusses 87 surahs in the Qur’ān, ignoring 27 surahs in his last Surah Group<sup>165</sup>. For each of these surahs a goal is mentioned (see Appendix A). Every verse is now

understood within the context of the surah goal. In this way a wide range of apparently unrelated topics within a surah become harmonised and relevant in serving the surah's goal. For example, in S.4 "Women" (*al-Nisā'*), the verses on fighting in God's path are now understood as taking up arms to specifically protect the rights of the oppressed as the surah goal is be just and merciful to family and society, especially women<sup>166</sup>.

A feature of a surah goal is that it contextualises repetitive topics. For example the mistakes of the descendant of Israel are mentioned at length in S.2, S.3, S.4 and S.7. In S.1, they are an example of those who failed in the responsibility on earth. In S.2 they are considered as external factors that impact steadfastness on God's methodology. In S.3 they are considered as an example who are unjust to themselves and other people. In S.7 their mistakes are an example of a people who are passive and not decisive on the Truth. In each case the mistakes of the nation of Israel take on a different meaning in light of the surah goal. Similarly, repetitive topics on past prophets are also contextualised in this way<sup>167</sup>.

Khālid does not apply one method in determining the surah's goal but rather a number of them depending on the characteristics of the surah. For example, in justifying a surah's goal if the surah cannot be divided into distinct thematic divisions then the quantity of key words are highlighted. Or if a thematic verse is not identified then verses from other surahs are employed. The techniques can be split into two broad categories: internality, derived from within the Qur'ānic text, and externality, derived from outside the text. These groups are outlined below and each technique examined.

#### Internality

- Thematic Verse (*Āyah Miḥwariyyah*)
- Frequency of key words
- Surah Division
- Verse selection
- Intertextuality – using verses from other surahs
- Ambiguous interpretation



## Externality

- Context of the Qur'ānic Revelation
- Sayings of the prophet
- Islamic thought and philosophy of Amr Khālīd
- Perceived Challenges of Today

## Internality

### ***The Thematic Verse (Āyah Miḥwariyyah)***

Khālīd's primary technique for determining the surah goal is to identify what he coins as the "Thematic Verse" (*Āyah Miḥwariyyah*). He does not explicitly define or explain what he means by this expression but it becomes evident after identifying it in many surahs. It is a verse that embodies the surah's goal. It mainly consists of one verse but may occasionally have two verses (S2, S6, S11, S17 and S27) or three verses (S4, S16 and S36). An example is provided below for S.8 "Battle Gains" (*al-Anfal*), a Madinan surah comprising of 75 verses.

Khālīd begins by relating that the surah was revealed closely after the Battle of Badr, Khālīd generalises the victory of this battle to the victory of anything when applying it to the surah goal. The surah goal is to know that victory requires both spiritual and material effort<sup>168</sup>. One without the other will lead to failure. The surah is split into two sections: V.1-V.59 and V.60-V.75. In the first section Khālīd highlights examples of God's intervention in the battle of Badr to indicate spiritual reliance on Him: V.7: arrangement of the battle; V.11: God sent down rain to cleanse them; V.12: sending of angels; V.17: God killed them not you; and V.44: God made the opponents look few. In the next section the verses on material effort are illustrated: V.60: prepare as much as you can; V.62: obey God and avoid disputation; V.66 be patient. The *Āyah Miḥwariyyah* is detected in V.45: "Believers, when you meet a force in battle, stand firm and keep God firmly in mind, so that you may prosper". Khālīd explains the surah goal is encapsulated in this verse as "stand firm" designates material effort, "keep God firmly in mind" signifies spiritual effort, and "you may prosper" refers to victory<sup>169</sup>. One could hardly disagree with this conclusion.

The *Āyah Miḥwariyyah* is not mentioned by Khālīd for every surah. In fact it is stated for 24 surahs in total, which are a combination of Meccan and Madinan surahs. This does not imply that the *Āyah Miḥwariyyah* cannot be applied to the remaining surahs. On close examination a thematic verse could be detected in many surahs where Khālīd is silent. For smaller surahs containing a few themes this is obvious. For example, in S.66 “The Hypocrites” (*al-Munāfiqīn*), the surah goal is be aware of the dangers of hypocrisy. The *Āyah Miḥwariyyah* could easily be V.1: “...and He [God] bear witness that the hypocrites are liars...”. The same can be said of S.62 “The Day of Congregation” (*al-Jumu‘ah*). The surah goal is be aware of the role of Friday congregational prayer in one’s loyalty to Islam. The *Āyah Miḥwariyyah* could be V.9: “Believers! When the call to prayer is made on the day of congregation, hurry towards the reminder of God and leave off your trading - that is better for you, if only you knew...”. For larger surahs, the *Āyah Miḥwariyyah* could also be identified. For example, in S.9 “Repentance” (*al-Tawbah*), the surah goal is to know that door of repentance remains open for all types of people<sup>170</sup>. The *Āyah Miḥwariyyah* can be signified in the rhetoric questions of V.104: “Do they not know that it is God Himself who accepts repentance from His servants and receives what is given freely for His sake? He is always ready to accept repentance, most merciful.”

On a few occasions the *Āyah Miḥwariyyah* could not be discovered from the surah goal. For example, in S.26 “The Poets” (*al-Shū‘arā’*) the surah goal is to deliver the message of Islam to people in the most suitable and influencing means possible<sup>171</sup>. Khālīd justifies the surah goal based on the emphasis of conversation between different past prophets and their people. No explicit verse could be found that supports the surah goal. Once a general feature is identified between the verses of a surah a link becomes apparent. But conversations between different prophets and their people also appear in other surahs like S.7 “The Heights” (*al-A‘rāf*) V.59-V.93.

Based on the above examples it appears that Khālīd ignored the Thematic Verse for the majority of surahs to perhaps prompt his readers to investigate themselves. In the few instances when the *Āyah Miḥwariyyah* cannot be genuinely uncovered Khālīd employs other techniques to justify the surah’s goal.

### **Frequency of Words**

Khālīd surveys the frequency of a particular word or expression in comparison to other surahs to identify the surah goal. For example in S.30 “The Byzantines” (*al-Rūm*), the surah goal is to question one’s disbelief as the signs of God are clear<sup>172</sup>. The phrase “One of His signs...” occurs eight times unlike in other surah to indicate that God’s signs are evident: V.20, V.21, V.22, V.23, V.24 (twice), V.25 and V.46. Also in S.43 “Ornaments of Gold” (*al-Zakhruf*), the surah goal is to beware of the world’s embellishments and materialism<sup>173</sup>. Khālīd argues that the words “gold” (*dhahab*) and “silver” (*fiḍḍah*) are repeated more frequently in this surah than any other to indicate that the surah goal is linked with temporary riches (V.33, V.35, V.53 and V.71). A final example is S.5 “The Feast” (*al-Mā’idah*). The surah goal is directed at the believers to fulfil the ethical and legislative injunctions of the previous surahs: S.1- S.4. Although half of the surah deals with the “People of the Book” (*Ahl al-Kitāb*), Khālīd argues that by virtue of the expression “You who believe...” occurring 16 times in the surah out of 88 times of the whole Qur’ān, the surah thus addresses the believers<sup>174</sup>. This reasoning, coupled with the injunction in V.1 to fulfil one’s oaths, substantiates Khālīd’s view of the surah goal.

### **Surah Division**

Khālīd does not divide the majority of surahs into neat divisions. In fact this has been performed for four surahs in total: S.2 “The Cow” (*al-Baqarah*), S.3 “Family of Imran” (*Āla ‘Imrān*), S.8 “Battle Gains” (*al-Anfāl*) and S.15 “al-Hijr” (*al-Hijr*). For these surahs the divisions are broad; S.3, S.8 and S.15 have two sections whereas S.2 has six. The sections are identified according to high level themes that serve the surah goal. For example in S.15, the surah goal is to know that God preserves His religion and not to be blinded by the strength of others<sup>175</sup>. Khālīd assigns V.1-V.86 as one section to denote the protection of God and the second section, V.87 – V.99, advises how to practically deal with this reality. In the first section a number of verses are used to indicate God’s protection in general terms: V.9 – God protects the Qur’ān; V.16 – God protects the heavens; V.19 – God protects the earth by placing mountains in it, V.21 – protection of sustenance; and V.42 – protection of the believers from the trap of Satan. The second section deals with transferring the belief of God’s protection into

practical steps as this concept could be misconstrued to a lack of action: V.87 – recite the seven repeated verses (understood by Khālid as S.1) to strengthen oneself spiritually; V.88 – not to be deceived by the material powers of others like the tribe of Hijr; V.94 – invite others to Islam even if they mock you; and V.97 – glorify God’s praise as God acknowledges that constant mockery leads to exhaustion and hesitation.

Khālid is more concerned with selecting verses throughout the surah in no particular order to support the surah goal. Even if Khālid could divide the surah into logical sections, he chooses not to. For example, S.18 “The Cave” (*al-Kahf*) can be divided into five clearly delineated stories: V.9-V.31 – people of the cave; V.32-V.49 – two men with gardens; V.50-V.59 – Satan refusing to bow before Adam; V.60-V.82 – Moses and the companion (Khidr); and V.83-V.110 – story of Dhul Qarnayn. Khālid identifies seven ways of surviving tribulation that spans across the five stories: V.28 – take the righteous as one’s companion; V.45 – not to be attached to the world; V.69 – not to be arrogant of one’s own knowledge; V.98 – using one’s power for God’s sake only; V.109 – understanding the goals of the Qur’ān; and based on the stories in general - positive activism and trust in God’s wisdom on matters that are perceived negative in reality<sup>176</sup>.

### ***Verse Selection***

For most surahs Khālid selects only those verses that serve its suggested goal and ignores the others. This becomes increasing evident in Khālid’s brief commentary of the smaller surahs from S.59 “The Gathering” (*al-Hashr*) to S.106 “Quraysh”. Similar to *Āyah Miḥwariyyah*, perhaps this approach is to encourage readers to investigate the verses themselves in addition to minimising the production of an overly lengthy book. S.13 “Thunder” (*al-Ra’d*) is one such example where the verses Khālid remains silent on are also aligned with the surah’s goal. The goal of S.13 is to know that the Truth is strong and Falsehood is weak even though the opposite may be true from an outward perspective<sup>177</sup>. Khālid ignores V.28 that states that in the remembrance of God hearts find satisfaction. This idea could fit with the surah goal because when one is not spiritually fulfilled with the Truth they are weak inside and live empty lives in pursuit of the material. The description of paradise in V.35 is also not considered. One could argue that the reward of paradise for those on the Truth is a strength because no matter how powerful one falsehood can be, it will end upon one’s death. The Truth

prevails in the hereafter. Another silent verse is V.40, in which the Qur'ān states that the Prophet's duty is to convey the message and not to compel others to believe. This again is indicative of the Truth being strong as God guides the heart not the Prophet.

However there are examples when Khālid ignores significant portions of a surah that display little connection with the surah goal. For example in S.21 "The Prophets", Khālid claims that the surah goal is to recognise the previous prophets as role models in worship, behaviour and invitation to God<sup>178</sup>. Out 112 verses, eight are selected to justify the goal. Other topics narrated at length in this surah have minimal or no association with the surah goal, such as references to natural phenomenon; events of the Last Day; reasons for rejecting Prophet Muhammad; and the correct position of angels with respect to God.

Also in S.34 "Sheba" (*Saba'*), Khālid selects 11 out of 54 verses to show that the surah goal is to surrender to God as it leads to civilizational continuity<sup>179</sup>. This is based on God's favouring the nations of prophets David and Solomon for their obedience to Him in V.10-V.12 and the failure of the people of Sheba for being ungrateful to God in V.15-V.17. However the surah hosts other topics that have little affinity with civilisation, such as God's attributes; the role of Prophet Muhammad to debate and bring good news; scenes of the oppressor and oppressed blaming one another in the Hereafter; and arguments and rebuttals for rejecting Prophet Muhammad. These examples indicate that Khālid has a tendency to identify the unique aspects of a surah as many topics in the surah have already been narrated in previous surahs<sup>180</sup>. They also show that whilst there are some verses to warrant Khālid's goal, other goals could be equally derived from the surah. For instance in this surah there is a recurring theme that knowledge is a requisite for recognising the truth of the prophet's claim (V.6) whereas the reasons the unfaithful present for rejecting the revelation are based on conjecture (V.53).

### ***Intertextuality***

Occasionally Khālid will use verses from other surahs to support the surah's goal, particularly when no specific verse is found within the surah to serve this function. For example in S.40 "The Forgiver" (*Ghāfir*), the surah goal is to entrust one's affairs in God

when inviting others to Islam<sup>181</sup>. Bar the narration of Moses, the *Āyah Miḥwariyyah* mentioned in V.51 has no direct link with invitation (*da'wah*) nor topics related to God's attributes, signs in the universe, dealing with the unfaithful and eschatology. Given this state of affairs Khālid is thus compelled to demonstrate the obligatory nature of invitation using V.110 from S.3 "Family of Imran" (*Āla 'Imrān*).

### ***Ambiguous Interpretations***

Occasionally Khālid will depart from the manifest (*zāhir*) meaning of a verse to support the surah's goal. For example in S.3 "Family of Imran" (*Āla 'Imrān*), the surah goal is to remain steadfast on the methodology of God (*manhaj Allah*) by illustrating the internal and external factors that can cause deviation from it<sup>182</sup>. Khālid suggests V.200 encapsulates the surah goal: "You who believe, be steadfast (*iṣbirū*); more steadfast (*ṣābirū*) than others; be ready...(*rābitū*)". This translation by Haleem differs to Khālid interpretation of this verse. Khālid suggests "*iṣbirū*" and "*ṣābirū*" refers to the internal factors and "*rābitū*" signifies the external factors. Another example is S.14 "Abraham" (*Ibrāhīm*). The surah goal is to appreciate the blessing of belief (*imān*) and the resentment of disbelief<sup>183</sup>. Khālid states that the *Āyah Miḥwariyyah* is V.24: "[Prophet], do you not see how God makes comparisons? A good word is like a good tree whose root is firm and whose branches are high in the sky". Khālid equates the tree to "No god but Allah" and the fruits of the tree representing the believers to argue that the greatest blessing is correct belief in God. Instead of using this metaphor perhaps a more obvious verse that embodies the surah goal is V.28: "[Prophet], do you not see those who, in exchange for God's favour (*ni'mah Allah*), offer only ingratitude (*kufr*)". Once the words "*ni'mah*" and "*kufr*" are translated as "blessing" and "disbelief" respectively then the link between V.28 and the surah goal becomes apparent. Other examples of ambiguous interpretations can be found in S.48 "Triumph" (*Fath*)<sup>184</sup>.

### **Externality**

#### ***Circumstances of the Revelation***

To aid the discovery of the surah goal Khālid accounts the historical circumstances in which the surah was revealed. For example, Khālid highlights that S.22 "The Stories"

(*Qaṣaṣ*) was revealed when the Prophet was in state of grievance for leaving Mecca and wished one day to return. God is promising the Prophet that he will return to Mecca one day. This context is directly linked to the surah goal, which Khālid describes as trusting in the promise of God and to be certain of His promise however difficult the conditions may be<sup>185</sup>. Another example is the context in which S.36 “Ya Sin” (*Yā Sīn*) was revealed. Khālid cites that the surah was disclosed just before the Muslims had migrated to Medina at a time when feelings of hopelessness and despair plagued their minds due to the lack of response in calling to Islam. The surah goal follows similar lines as it advises to continue on the path of invitation whether you see the results or not<sup>186</sup>.

### ***Prophetic Sayings***

Khālid uses the sayings of the prophet as a secondary measure to support the surah goal typically after the internal techniques have been exhausted. For example in S.17 “The Night Journey” (*Isrāʾ*), the surah goal is to value the Qurʾān and not to neglect God’s message like previous nations<sup>187</sup>. Khālid introduces the following narration to reinforce the surah’s goal: “I have left two things which if you hold on to, you will never go astray: the book of God and my way (Sunnah)”.

### ***Islamic thought and philosophy of Amr Khālid***

As noted earlier the principal dimensions of Khālid’s thought are positioned in four areas: faith, ethics, positive development in society, and coexistence. Wrapped across these is the duty of invitation (*Daʿwah*) echoed practically in Khālid’s life as a preacher. It can be observed with reference to Table 1 how Khālid aligns 23 surah goals to these dimensions. One exception is coexistence, which is given little attention. One of the reputed verses<sup>188</sup> Khālid recites in his PhD dissertation to promote coexistence is understood within the surah goal of etiquette of relationships with humanity in S.49 “The Private Rooms” (*al-Ḥujarāt*)<sup>189</sup>. The theme of coexistence appears to have developed after Khālid’s “Qurʾānic Contemplations” was written, particularly in 2008 when he wrote “Invitation of Coexistence” (*Daʿwah al- Ṭāʾush*)<sup>190</sup>. There is a suggestion that the surah goals which do not directly fit under these four dimensions are related to what Khālid perceives as today’s challenges. This is examined next.

**Table 1 – Aligning Surah goals to four dimensions of Khālid’s thought**

Faith	Ethics	Development	Invitation to Islam
S.6 “Livestock” ( <i>al-An’ām</i> ) – Oneness of God	S.4 “Women” ( <i>al-Nisā’</i> ) – Being just and merciful to family and society	S.2 “The Cow” ( <i>al-Baqarah</i> ) – Responsibility on Earth	S.36 “Ya Sin” ( <i>Yā Sīn</i> ) – Inviting others to God regardless of the results
S.10 “Jonah” ( <i>Yūnus</i> ) – Belief in the decree of God	S.23 “The Believers” ( <i>al-Mu’minīn</i> ) – Most important attributes of the believers (humility/fulfilling oaths)	S.7 “The Heights” ( <i>al-‘Arāf</i> ) – Where are you in the struggle between Truth and Falsehood?	S.40 “The Forgiver” ( <i>Ghāfir</i> ) – Importance of <i>Da’wah</i> and entrusting its affair with God
S.14 “Abraham” ( <i>Ibrāhīm</i> ) – Blessing of Faith	S.24 “Light” ( <i>al-Nūr</i> ) – Etiquettes between individual and society	S.27 “The Ants” ( <i>al-Naml</i> ) – Civilisational success	S.26 “The Poets” ( <i>al-Shū’arā’</i> ) – Delivering the message of Islam in most suitable and influencing way
S.30 “Byzantines” ( <i>al-Rūm</i> ) – Signs of God	S.32 “Bowing down in worship” ( <i>al-Sajdah</i> ) – Humility to God	S.34 “Sheba” ( <i>Saba’</i> ) – Civilisational continuity	S.21 “The Prophets” ( <i>al-Anbiyā’</i> ) – Taking the previous prophets as roles models
S.39 “The Throngs” ( <i>al-Zumar</i> ) – Sincerity to God	S.45 “Kneeling” ( <i>al-Jāthiyah</i> ) – Caution against pride	S.35 “The Creator” ( <i>Fātir</i> ) – Path to power	Surah Group 8: S.67 “Control” ( <i>al-Mulk</i> ) to S.77 “Sent Forth” ( <i>Mursalāt</i> ) <sup>191</sup> – Obligation to call others to God
S.47 “Muhammad” ( <i>Muḥammad</i> ) – Obedience to the prophet	S.49 “The Private Rooms” ( <i>al-Ḥujarāt</i> ) – Etiquette with prophet and society		
S.51 “Scattering” ( <i>al-Dhāriyāt</i> ) – Sustenance in God’s hand			



### ***Perceived Challenges of Today***

Many of the surah goals that Khālid formulates coincide with the general challenges facing the youth of twenty-first century Egypt and Muslim-majority countries in the Middle East. Clearly Khālid sees the Qur’ān as providing a solution to these challenges, exemplified in the surah goal of S.17 “The Night Journey” (*Isrā’*) as valuing the Qur’ān<sup>192</sup>. In early 2000, when Khālid wrote “Qur’ānic Contemplations”, Egypt continued to face a number of issues stemming back to the 1980s when Hosni Mubarak took power. Examples include political corruption, use of emergency law, restrictive media and compliance issues with the judiciary<sup>193</sup>. Issues across the Middle East had also escalated, such as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the Iraq war and limited political participation in military-backed governments of Syria, Libya and Tunisia. In an interview<sup>194</sup> Khālid explained that due to a combination of high energy coupled with feelings of being ignored, disrespected and lacking hope, Muslim youth could easily be drawn into extremism. These issues appear to be addressed by a number of surah goals. Table 2 shows how certain surahs goals relate to the notions of hope, perseverance, end of tyranny, loyalty to Islam and countering materialism. The concept of loyalty of Islam is to have faith that Islam offers solutions and not to be blinded by the power of alternative global super powers. It could be argued that these issues equally apply to the time of the prophet and thus can be seen as circumstances of the revelation itself.

**Table 2 – Aligning Surah goals to challenges of Arab and Muslim youth**

<b>Hope/Perseverance</b>	<b>End of Tyranny</b>	<b>Loyalty to Islam</b>	<b>Countering Materialism</b>
S.3 “Family of Imran” ( <i>Āla ‘Imran</i> ) – Persevere on the path of God	S.13 “Thunder” ( <i>Ra’d</i> ) – Truth is strong and Falsehood is weak	S.58 “The Dispute” ( <i>al-Mujadālah</i> ) – Be loyal to the methodology of Islam	S.20 “Ta Ha” ( <i>Tā Hā</i> ) – Islam leads to happiness
S.28 “The Story” ( <i>al-Qaṣaṣ</i> ) – Trust in God’s promise	S.15 “Al-Hijr” ( <i>al-Hijr</i> ) – God preserves His religion	S.60 “Women Tested” ( <i>al-Mumtaḥanah</i> ) – Test of one’s loyalty to Islam	S.43 “Ornaments of Gold” ( <i>al-Zukhruf</i> ) – Beware of the world’s embellishments and materialism
S.11 “Hud” ( <i>Hūd</i> ) – Maintain a balanced	S.18 “The Cave” ( <i>al-Kahf</i> ) –		S.44 “Smoke” ( <i>al-Dukhān</i> ) – Do not

approach during trials	Preservation from tribulation		be dazzled by power and position
S.12 “Joseph” ( <i>Yūsuf</i> ) – Trust in God’s plan and do not despair	S.29 “The Spider” ( <i>al-Ankabūt</i> ) – Be conscious of God’s trials		S.57 “Iron” ( <i>al-Ḥādid</i> ) – Be balanced between materialism and spirituality

## Surah Name

Each surah has a name. These names revolve around prophet names, physical phenomenon, descriptions of the hereafter, aspects of faith, animals, detached letters (*Ḥurūf al-Muqattaʿah*), God’s attributes and others. On most occasions the surah name can be found in the surah itself. Khālid draws a connection between the surah name and its goal for 47 surahs<sup>195</sup> as a means to substantiate that the Qur’ān does not contain inconsistencies and support the validity of the surah goal<sup>196</sup>. This technique is predicated on the view that the surah names are divinely revealed. Muslim scholars however differ on this view. Badr al-Dīn al-Zarkāshī (d.1391) expressed doubt over its divine origin as the surah names are not all found in prophetic hadith and some surahs were given more than one name<sup>197</sup>. Ghazali (d.1996) also adopts this view on the basis that the surah name provides partial evidence to the contents of a surah<sup>198</sup>. Al-Baqāʿī holds the surah names as divinely revealed but fails to address al-Zarkāshī’s concerns.

For the majority of cases the surah goal devised by Khālid aligns comfortably with the surah name for surahs with diverse number of topics. For example, in S.2 “The Cow” (*al-Baqarah*), Khālid argues that the story of the cow<sup>199</sup> represents the gravest mistakes of the Children of Israel as a reminder to those who take responsibility on Earth to safeguard against it and their other mistakes such as materialism, disputation, disobedience to the prophet and implementing God’s laws without detestation<sup>200</sup>. Another example is S.7 “The Heights” (*al-ʿArāf*). The “Heights” represents a place in the Hereafter for people whose fate has yet to be decided as their good deeds equal their misdeeds. This reminds the reader not to be passive but to choose in the struggle between Truth and Falsehood, which is the surah goal<sup>201</sup>. Occasionally the suggested link between the surah name and surah goal is spurious. For example, in S.53 “The Star” (*al-Najm*), Khālid states that the star is “falling” and will die out according to V.1

whereas revelation is powerful and contains God's eternal words<sup>202</sup>. According to Khālid this harmonises with the surah's goal of choosing revelation as your source of knowledge over conjecture<sup>203</sup>. The link offered is questionable because in another part of the Qur'ān the star has been referred to as a guide at night<sup>204</sup>, and hence the "falling star" could more logically represent the sending down of revelation.

Khālid fails to cite a link between the surah name and its goal for the remaining 40 surahs that fall between S.54 "The Moon" (*al-Qamar*) and S.106 "Quraysh" (*Quraysh*). This does not imply that no such link exists. For some surahs the link is obvious. For example in S.63 "The Hypocrites" (*al-Munāfiqīn*), the surah goal is to be aware of the dangers of hypocrisy<sup>205</sup>. In other cases Khālid's silence is genuine, especially when the surah name is represented by the detached letters as in S.20 "Ta Ha" (*Tā Hā*), S.36 "Ya Sin" (*Yā Sīn*), S.38 "Sad" (*Ṣad*) and S.50 "Qaf" (*Qāf*). Whilst Khālid offers a basic rationale for detached letters<sup>206</sup>, their specific meaning are unknown and hence their link with the surah goal is unknown too.

Occasionally the surah name appears to have an overriding influence on the surah goal. In S.22 "The Pilgrimage" (*al-Hajj*), Khālid asserts that the surah goal is to appreciate the role of Hajj in building Muslim solidarity (*Ummah*)<sup>207</sup>. Further examination of the surah reveals that the Hajj is better viewed as a sub-topic as opposed to an overarching goal because many topics appear unrelated to it, such as the description of human creation, eschatology, physical phenomenon in the universe and Satanic insinuations. Perhaps a more relevant surah goal can be suggested, such as to devote oneself to God. The notion of devotion results in a closer relationship with more of the surah's topics because they relate to spiritual and physical devotional activities, such as self-reflection of human creation (V.5), Hereafter (V.19-V.23) and the universe (V.61-V.66); defending people who are oppressed (V.38-V.41); hardship during Hajj rites (V.26-V.34); and being a witness over others (V.78).

## Surah Pairs

A feature of Khālid's thematic approach is to identify a relationship between two surahs, thus forming a "surah pair". In total Khālid accounts for 9 surahs. He identifies five surah pairs as follows: S.1-S.2; S.2-S.3; S.8-S.9; S.26-S.27; S.33-S.34.

Each surah pair exhibits one of more properties that enable the surahs to complement each other. These forms of complementarity are derived from each surah pair below.

- S.1-S.2. This pair complement each other on the basis of principle and illustration: one surah states a principle in general terms and the other illustrates it. Khālid explains that S.2 contains the guidance that is supplicated for in S.1. Thus the major milestones of God's methodology (*manhaj*) illustrated in general terms as belief, ritual and ethical conduct in S.2 are characterised by the "straight path" in V.6 of S.1<sup>208</sup>. Another form of complementarity is that both S.1 and S.2 provide different types of evidence to support the same topic. The principle to begin praising God for His blessings before asking God for something in S.1 is applied in S.2. Anyone that seeks to become responsible on Earth is first required to praise God for His blessings as the children of Israel are reminded to in V.40<sup>209</sup>.
- S.2-S.3. The reasons for this pair are threefold: 1) both begin with the same detached letters (*Alif-Lām-Mīm*), 2) Both end with supplication, and 3) the pair form a unity by elaborating on the positive and negative sides of the same theme. Outlining God's methodology in S.2 denotes the positive element as it represents God's guidance whereas S.3 recognises the negative aspect, due to the likelihood of distraction and failure whilst implementing it. Hence S.3 addresses deviations from four angles: thought-based, action-based, internally (within the Muslim community) and externally (interacting with players outside it)<sup>210</sup>.
- S.8-S.9. The first surah draws lessons from the first battle at Badr by the prophetic community and the second surah from the last battle at Tabuk. Khālid states that these two events are side by side in their respective surahs to emphasise the progression between the two communities in time and to stimulate further research in the development of societies<sup>211</sup>.

- S.26-S.27. These surahs complement each other because they both provide different types of evidence to support the same thesis. In S.26, to gain civilisational success Khālid reads the narration of the poets in seventh century Arabia as seeking out innovations in media for spreading God's message to the masses. Khālid derives from the story of Solomon in S.27<sup>212</sup> other means of achieving civilisational success through the development of successful institutions equipped in knowledge, wealth of experience, management, discipline, and training.
- S.33-S.34. These surahs are linked because they provide different aspects of the same thesis, namely how to achieve civilisational continuity. S.33 addresses the need to improve the internal forces within the Muslim community and S.34 looks at surrendering to God to achieve this.

The above examples show that Khālid utilises four forms of complementarity: 1) principle and illustration, 2) difference in types of evidence, 3) difference in emphasis and 4) unity of opposites. The pairs must include surahs that are adjacent to each other, which highlight the importance of the current arrangement of surahs. Given that Khālid accounts for 12 surahs out of 114 suggests that this is a secondary feature of his thematic methodology.

Another aspect of surah pairing is *manāsbah*. Occasionally Khālid will link two surahs based on a common theme that one surah ends on and the next surah starts with. For example, S.52 ends with the fading of the stars and S.53 beginning with God swearing on setting of a star<sup>213</sup>. Khālid also links the end of S.56 with the beginning of S.57 as both glorify God (*tasbīh*)<sup>214</sup>.

### Surah Groups

A central concept of Khālid's thematic approach is surah groups. In his introduction Khālid writes:

*"....the arrangement of the surahs of the Qur'ān is also revelation from God. For that reason we conclude that all of the surahs are an expression of a complete unified*

*chain...if you understand all of the goals of the surahs holistically then it is as if you have understood the whole of the Qur’ān...”*<sup>215</sup>.

The passage above underlines the rationale behind surah groups. By combining each of the individual surahs into a larger surah group with its own group goal, then Khālid believes one can understand the whole Qur’ān. According to Khālid the surahs fall into nine groups. One unexplained anomaly is that two surahs, S.39 and S.40, have been left out of the groups. Table 1 below details the surah groups, group goals and corresponding juz’ divisions in which they sit<sup>216</sup>.

**Table 1 – Definition of the Surah Groups**

Group	Surah	Juz’	Group Theme
G.1	S.1-S.8	1-10	Major pillars of God’s methodology
G.2	S.9-S.32	11-21	Factors to realise God’s methodology
G.3	S.33-S.38	22-23	Surrendering to God
G.4	S.41-S.46	24-26	Performing precautionary duties to be responsible on Earth
G.5	S.47-S.49	26	Relationship to the prophet
G.6	S.50-S.57	27	Choice between guidance and error
G.7	S.58-S.66	28	Loyalty to Islam
G.8	S.67-S.77	29	Inviting others to God
G.9	S.78-S.114	30	Conclusion of God’s methodology

Each surah group is comprised of a collection of sequential surahs in the Uthmanic arrangement of the Qur’ān. Khālid assumes this composition is divinely ordained. Although there is a difference of opinion on this matter<sup>217</sup>, the strongest opinion according to Yasir Qadhi is that the Uthmanic codex is attributable to the prophet and hence divine for three reasons: 1) authentic sayings indicate that the Prophet narrated the order of some surahs to the companions, 2) a narration from a Successor shows that the arrangement was known by the Companions during the Prophet’s lifetime and 3) many scholars have discussed the wisdom behind its arrangement as a mark of its immutability<sup>218</sup>. One academic, Angelika Neuwirth, asserts that the compositional sequence of surahs do not follow any logical or theological guideline<sup>219</sup>. She fails to offer any support for this view.

## Relationships within a Surah Group

Khālid formulates a surah group by connecting the surahs using one of the four factors. Each factor will be discussed below.

- Surah goal
- Common topics
- Detached letters
- Oaths

### **Surah Goal**

In the same way that a surah goal relates to the individual themes of the surah, the surah goals are tied together to promote the group's master theme (*miḥwar*). This is Khālid's primary method as it is the exclusive means for grouping seven out of the nine surah groups. G.1 is taken as an example below.

The theme of G.1 is to establish the pillars that are required to qualify as a "successor"<sup>220</sup> (*khalīfah*) on earth. Khālid's concept of successorship (*istikhlāf*) is derived primarily from S.2 and not dissimilar from the views of other commentators<sup>221</sup>. It begins with the belief that God created man and the universe, and subsequently transferred the ownership of Earth to human beings. Throughout the course of history God appointed numerous nations on earth as successors (*khāla'if*) to manage it according to God's methodology (*manhaj*). Khālid considers this responsibility as a duty and purpose for mankind's existence. It involves the betterment (*iṣlah*), cultivation (*ta'mīr*) and guidance (*hidāyah*) of earth<sup>222</sup>. It seems Khālid is equating a successor with the idea of good citizenship.

With this understanding of *istikhlāf*, the surah goals are consistent with the group goal as they discuss various attributes and activities of a successor: Khālid sees S.2 as defining the duty of successorship; S.3 teaches how to persevere on God's methodology; S.4 views justice as a primary condition for successorship; S.5 is to fulfil the oaths of the *manhaj*; S.6 is belief and implementation of monotheism; S.7 is to change one's circumstance towards the direction of the *manhaj*; and S.8 is to know that victory requires spiritual and material effort. To what extent they form the pillars of *istikhlāf* as opposed to secondary characteristics is not so clear. One could argue the pillars are alluded to as the group contains the five objectives of Shariah, derived

within S.5<sup>223</sup>. Justice in S.4 is also deemed a fundamental component of Shariah<sup>224</sup> and associated with the successorship of Prophet David in S.38 “Sad” (Ṣād) V.26. Another justification for viewing these goals as the pillars is that managing the earth necessitates the use of faith for constructive activity. One can experience a sense of action in the surah goals of G.1 as opposed to a theoretical theological discourse.

### ***Common Topics***

In addition to connecting surahs using the surah goal Khālid links the surahs of a group by identifying common topics in each surah. In G.4 Khālid claims five common topics are detected in each surah of the group: 1) start with greatness of the Qur’ān, 2) discusses Moses and the children of Israel, 3) explains the transference of the message from the nation of Israel to the nation of Muhammad, 4) encourages unity and 5) ends with pardon and conceding delay in response to adversaries. Khālid writes that the surahs in the group are all Meccan and revealed at a time when the prophetic community was moving from a phase of invitation to confrontation<sup>225</sup>. Together with the historical context the topics are thus seen to inform the group theme: the precautionary duties required for successorship.

A few difficulties with G.4 arise. Whilst most of the five topics can be found in each surah of the group two exceptions exist. S.44 and S.46 do not discuss unity, and S.45 does not discuss the topic of giving pardon. Moreover it not clear why unity is considered a precautionary duty when disunity was already highlighted S.3 of G.1<sup>226</sup>.

### ***Detached Letters***

Khālid states that a commonality must exist between surahs if they contains the same detached letters<sup>227</sup>. Although G.4 was discussed above, another reason why Khālid formulates this group is because each surah begins with the same detached letters “Ḥā Mīm”. It seems that this feature may have been the primarily motivator for discovering the five common topics in the first instance. Given that most topics could be found in each surah of the group indicates that the detached letters symbolise some kind of affinity between surahs. Be that the case Khālid does not include S.40 in G.4 even though it begins with Ḥā Mīm. Perhaps this is because it does not begin with the value



of the Qur'ān nor discusses unity. Moreover Khālid remains silent on other groupings with detached letters. For example, no surah group is attempted between S.10- S.15<sup>228</sup> even though all begin with “*Alif-Lām-Rā*” and neither of S.29-S.32 which begin with “*Alif-Lām-Mīm*”. It may be possible to group S.10-S.15 on the basis that each surah name is related to a past prophet or nation of a past prophet<sup>229</sup> but this is not entertained by Khālid.

### **Oaths**

Like detached letters, another secondary technique for grouping surahs is the occurrence of an oath at the start of each surah. This applies to G.6<sup>230</sup>. The oaths are associated with various entities from the Qur'ān to natural phenomenon such as the wind, star and mountain. A clear oversight however is that four out of the eight surahs do not contain an oath: S.54, S.55, S.56 and S.57. A more solid approach for this grouping is based on occurrence of paradise and hell, which occurs in all surahs except S.53. Presenting two final destinations supports the group's theme of choice between guidance and error.

### **Relationships between Surah Groups**

An analysis of the groups immediately reveals Khālid's view of the Qur'ān's central message: to become a responsible successor on earth. Each group has been tailored to serve this overriding thesis. Through the book Khālid positions each group theme as a linear progression from G.1 to G.9 to support this central message. The first group begins the announcement of the thesis and its major milestones<sup>231</sup>; G.2 addresses the factors that are required to realise the methodology<sup>232</sup>; G.3 assumes that those who are convinced of God's signs and the benefits of God's methodology now need to submit to the God in all aspects of life<sup>233</sup>; G.4 outlines the precautionary duties of responsibility in the phase between invitation and confrontation<sup>234</sup>; G.5 reviews an integral aspect of the *manhaj* in one's relationship to Prophet Muhammad in terms of belief, obedience and respect as one cannot implement the *manhaj* without his practical example<sup>235</sup>; G.6 addresses those who are still in doubt of God's message to rethink and choose between guidance and error<sup>236</sup>; G.7 assumes that after selecting the path of guidance one needs to be loyal to Islam and not depend on other

civilisations<sup>237</sup>; G.8 elaborates on the fundamental duty of inviting others to God after one has committed wholeheartedly to God's methodology<sup>238</sup>; and G.9 is a general conclusion of the *manhaj*<sup>239</sup>.

Whilst this overall framework appears plausible some difficulties arise. The announcement of vicegerency on earth, whilst present in G.1, occurs in several other surah groups<sup>240</sup>. This highlights that G.1 is not as distinct as Khālid would have liked. G.2 contains 23 surahs, covering one-tenth of the Qur'ān. It appears diluted with a wide range of goals focussed on belief, purification, ritual and community interaction. The factors that aid the realisation of the methodology in G.2 and the foundational milestones in G.1 thus appear somewhat merged. One could argue that many of the goals in G.2 are also pillars for vicegerency, such as correct belief in God's decree, His promise, His protection and trust. The group theme of submitting to God in G.3 is problematic because many verses exist in G.1 and G.2 that also requires submission to God<sup>241</sup>. In G.4 the five common themes that inform the precautionary duties have already appeared as surah goals in G.2<sup>242</sup>. In G.8 lessons for inviting others to God can certainly be deduced but it is not clear why this duty is singled out amongst other duties of vicegerency. Additionally S.77 in this group is more closely aimed at the deniers of Islam<sup>243</sup> than the caller. Khālid conveniently labels G.9 as the conclusion of the *manhaj* on basis that it helps the reader carry out the *manhaj* in general. However it is perhaps more fitting to associate G.9 with the self-purification. Repeated references of the human's spiritual state are narrated, such as in S.79, S.89, S.90, S.91 and S.102.

### **Arrangement of Surah Groups**

It becomes obvious from Table 1 that Khālid aligns the surah groups according to the delineation of the traditional thirty divisions. A *juz'* has no religious significance except that it facilitates the reading of the Qur'ān in one month<sup>244</sup>. Whilst it may be a coincidence that surah groups G.5-G.9 fall neatly into *juz'* the likelihood is that Khālid utilised this division as a starting point for discovering the commonality between surahs. Once an affinity was confirmed for most surahs the *juz'* division seems to have remained. As observed above, certain groups aligned to a *juz'* are problematic. For example, S.77 could better fit in G.9 instead of G.8 but that would compromise G.9's

connection with the 30<sup>th</sup> *juz'*. The alignment of the surah groups to *juz'* therefore indicates a level of arbitrariness rather than supporting the groups based on the Qur'ānic text itself.

### **Conclusion of Khālid's Thematic Approach**

Overall Khālid employs a sophisticated approach to thematic exegesis. The concept of surah unity is better supported in comparison to surah groups. Surah pairs are also convincing but not rigorously analysed. Many of Khālid's thematic procedures are not new. Al-Biqā'ī introduced surah objectives, Farāḥī surah groups and Fazlur spoke of the Qur'ān possessing one overall message. Nevertheless the concept of *Āyah Miḥwariyyah* is innovative and forces the surah goal to be rooted in a subject matter of the Qur'ān. Khālid has convincingly demonstrated how a particular verse, in competition with other verses in a surah, can be elevated to a “thematic verse” status using techniques of frequency, intertextuality and circumstances of revelation.

## Chapter Six – Comparing the Thematic Approaches of Amr Khālīd and Amīn Iṣlāḥī

Khālīd and Iṣlāḥī share the same understanding of coherence using concepts of surah unity, surah pairing and surah groups. This chapter assesses how these concepts compare.

### Objectives of Coherence and Target Audience

Iṣlāḥī believes that the coherence of the Qur’ān is important for four reasons: 1) provides the Qur’ānic words with unmatched beauty and perfection; 2) demonstrates coherence; 3) facilitates the extraction of Qur’ānic wisdom; and 4) enforces one single interpretation of a verse. Khālīd concurs with the first two points but not the others. Rather Khālīd sees coherence as enabling the comprehension of the whole Qur’ān without understanding all of its verses. Iṣlāḥī’s commentary seems to be directed primarily at readers who doubt the coherence of the Qur’ān across all age groups. Khālīd directs his book to the youth.

### Surah Unity

Following Farāḥī, Iṣlāḥī’s central technique for achieving surah unity is to identify a surah’s “*‘amūd*” (literally “pillar” or “column”). The *‘amūd* of a surah is defined as “a central theme to which all its parts are intimately related”<sup>245</sup>. Farāḥī refers to it as the “essential thesis” and “basic intent” in a surah<sup>246</sup>. A cursory glance of the *‘amūd* would suggest a parallel with Khālīd’s surah goal. However it becomes clear after comparing the *‘amūd* and goal of the same surahs that the former more closely resembles the subject matter of the surah and aligns to events in Prophet Muhammad’s life. The latter is a deduction of the purpose behind the subject matter and contextualises it with perceived issues of the world in Khālīd’s life.

Iṣlāḥī provides an *‘amūd* for all 114 surahs. For most surahs the *‘amūd* and *hādaf* differ. For example, the *‘amūd* of S.42 “Consultation” (*al-Shūrah*) is the implications of monotheism to warn about the Day of Judgement. The *hādaf* is to be aware of disunity and the obligation of consultation. Indeed both topics of consultation and warning of

the Hereafter are explicitly narrated in the surah but both writers reference them in different ways. Iṣlāḥī subsumes the notion of consultation as a warning to the Quraysh that their system of tribal bias will eventually become uprooted<sup>247</sup>. Khālid interprets the warning of the Hereafter as a threat to those who disregard consultation.

But why does the *'amūd* and *hadaḥ* differ? The answer lies in the techniques they use to link diverse topics in a surah together. Whilst they both rely on the circumstances of revelation and intertextuality, Iṣlāḥī does not entertain the quantity of keywords or linkages with the surah name like Khālid and similarly Khālid does not rigorously apply sectional divisions or the “germ idea”<sup>248</sup> like Iṣlāḥī. The “germ idea” is that a particular section in a surah, dominated as it is by a main idea, may contain another idea in germ form. The germ idea grows to become or serve the main idea of the next section. According to Mir this idea explains how a theme in a Madinan surah “would sometimes appear to fade or melt into one another”. Iṣlāḥī does however seem to allude to Khālid’s concept of *Āyah al-Miḥwariyyah*. In S.51, S.52 and S.54, Iṣlāḥī explains the *'amūd* on the basis of a specific verse in the surah. For example, in S.52 the *'amūd* is to highlight the nature of the torment and its inevitable reality as stated in V.7-V.8. However Iṣlāḥī and Khālid select different verses as their *Āyah al-Miḥwariyyah* and thus the *'amūd* and *hadaḥ* differ.

Occasionally the *'amūd* and *hadaḥ* share some commonalities. For example, the *'amūd* in S.4 are the factors that make for social cohesion in a Muslim society. The *hadaḥ* is to be just and merciful to family and society, especially women. Clearly justice and mercy are necessary factors for societal cohesion.

Mir extracts four characteristics from the definition of *'amūd* offered by Farāḥī<sup>249</sup>. In practise it turns out that Khālid’s *hadaḥ* more closely conforms to Farāḥī’s understanding of *'amūd* compared to Iṣlāḥī.

- Centrality: the theme of the surah to which all other themes of the surah can be reduced. It was observed in earlier that in most cases Khālid is able to link diverse topics in a surah to the surah goal. Similarly Mir is convinced with Iṣlāḥī’s ability to do the same. For example, Mir claims that the three main

parts and twenty-three sections of S.4 aligns to the surah's *'amūd* explicitly or implicitly<sup>250</sup>. However like Khālīd, Iṣlāhī too suffers from centrality in some surahs. For example, the sectional divisions of S.2 are provided in Table 3 by Khālīd and Iṣlāhī. The *'amūd* of S.2 is the call to believe in the Qur'ānic scripture and the Prophet. Whilst Sections 1-4 appear to align to the *'amūd*, it is questionable how referring to war and spending in God's cause in Section 5 is a logical incentive to believe in the Qur'ān and Muhammad's Prophethood. Rather all sections favour a closer affinity with Khālīd's *hadaf* of S.2 for being responsible on earth and following the methodology defined in this surah.

**Table 3 – Sectional divisions of S.2 by Iṣlāhī and Khālīd**

Section	Iṣlāhī's sectional division of S.2	Link between section and <i>'amūd</i>	Khālīd's sectional division of S.2	Link between section and <i>hadaf</i>
1	V.1-V.39	Introduction – who would and would not believe in the scripture	V.1 – V.20	Groups of people of earth, of which only one can take responsibility on earth
2	V.40-V.121	Descendants of Israel are invites to believe in the Prophet	V.21-V.39	The first responsibility – the story of Prophet Adam
3	V.122-V.162	Muhammad's message is the same as Prophet Abraham	V.40-V.123	The nation of Israel that failed in the responsibility
4	V.163-V.242	Basic laws of the Shariah are given to the Muslim community	V.124-141	Experience of Abraham's success in the responsibility
5	V.243-V.283	Muslims are exhorted to wage war against the disbelievers and spend in God's cause	V.142-V.283	Commandments and prohibitions required for being responsible on earth
6	V.284-V.286	Conclusion – the Prophet and believer consider this book from God whether you accept or not	V.284-V.286	Errors can be made on the path of responsibility. Hence need to ask God for help and forgiveness

- Distinctiveness. The *'amūd* of any one surah must be clearly distinguishable from the *'amūd* of any other. Again both Iṣlāḥī and Khālīd take exception to this principle. For example, the *hadaf* of both S.32 and S.45 relate to humility but differ in their arguments. Similarly Iṣlāḥī cites many examples where the *'amūds* of surahs are essentially identical. For example, Iṣlāḥī admits this himself when he writes that there are no basic differences between the *'amūd* S.69 and S.70<sup>251</sup>.
- Universal. The *'amūd* must be free from the limitations of time and space. Iṣlāḥī contradicts this principle on several occasions as the *'amūd* refers to a specific group of people in time and place. For example, the *'amūd* of S.47 “Muhammad” (*Muḥammad*) is the practical manifestations of the warnings sounded to the Meccan disbelievers. Iṣlāḥī could overcome this by generalising Meccan disbelievers to the unfaithful. Although it was argued in Chapter 5 that Khālīd tailors the goals to meet the challenges of his audience today the surah goals appear sufficiently generalised to apply to other times and places.
- Concreteness. The *'amūd* should be some concrete theme and not based on linguistic features such as tone or mood. Iṣlāḥī falls short of this principle in S.68 “The Pen” (*al-Qalam*) as he writes that the *'amūd* is no different to the previous surah except in the “style, nature of arguments and the tone adopted”<sup>252</sup>. Khālīd does not refer to the surah’s mood to determine its goal.

## Surah Pairs

A major concept of coherence unique to Iṣlāḥī (not Farāḥī) is the linking of a surah with the next sequential one to form a surah pair. Iṣlāḥī argues the Qur’ān testifies to this idea based on the literal translation of the words “*Sab’an al-Mathānī*” in verse S.15 “Al-Hijr” (*al-Ḥijr*) V.87. Literally the word “*Mathānī*” is the plural of “*Mathna*”, which means “dual” and thus is supposed to symbolise a surah pair<sup>253</sup>. The common translation for this expression is the “seven oft-recited verses”. Notwithstanding some minor methodological issues with Iṣlāḥī’s pairing scheme<sup>254</sup>, Mir identifies 82 surahs as unambiguously constituted as pairs and 16 implicitly linked. When a surah pair is taken

as a whole they help to explain a number of features within a surah, such as why statements are made without being substantiated. Based on Iṣlāḥī's pairing Mir identifies seven principal forms of complementarity.

Khālid's concept of surah pairs is identical to Iṣlāḥī but clearly not as rigorous as nine surahs are accounted for. The four forms of complementarity that Khālid employs<sup>255</sup> are also utilised by Iṣlāḥī in the same way. Iṣlāḥī demonstrates three additional forms as follows: 1) Brevity and Detail: one surah states a theme briefly and the other treats it at length, like S.16 and S.17; 2) Premise and Conclusion: one surah states a premise and the other draws a conclusion, as in S.105 and S.106<sup>256</sup>; and 3) Supplementary Surah<sup>257</sup>: a certain point discussed in one surah is discussed in detail in the supplementary surah, for example S.48 and S.49<sup>258</sup>.

Out of the five surah pairs by Khālid, three agree with Iṣlāḥī (S.1-S.2, S.2-S.3 and S.8-S.9) and two do not (S.26-S.27 and S.33-S.34). Instead Iṣlāḥī considers a pair between S.25-S.26 and S.27-S.28. As for S.33, this is considered a supplementary surah to a surah group<sup>259</sup>. The likely reason for such differences is due to one's selection of the topic to be considered for complementarity. The common thesis of civilisational success and continuity between S.26-S.27 is at variance to Iṣlāḥī's view as the surah's *'amūd*.

Like Khālid, Iṣlāḥī also draws examples of *manāsabah* for the same surahs, S.52-S.53<sup>260</sup> and S.56-S.57<sup>261</sup>.

## Surah Groups

The surah group is another major concept of coherence by Iṣlāḥī. He formulates seven groups, each possessing an overall theme. Akin to surah pairs, Iṣlāḥī argues that the word "seven" in "*Sab'an al-Mathani*" indicates seven groups. Each surah in the group should reflect an aspect of the group theme<sup>262</sup>. Each group contains a Meccan bloc of surahs followed by a Madinan bloc. The significance of the former bloc is that it should contain doctrinal statements which are practically manifested in the later bloc<sup>263</sup>. Iṣlāḥī understands the sequence of the groups to align to the prophetic Islamic



movement. The formulation of the surah groups, their respective Meccan and Medinan blocks and themes are presented in Table 4.

**Table 4 – Surah Groups by Iṣlāḥī**

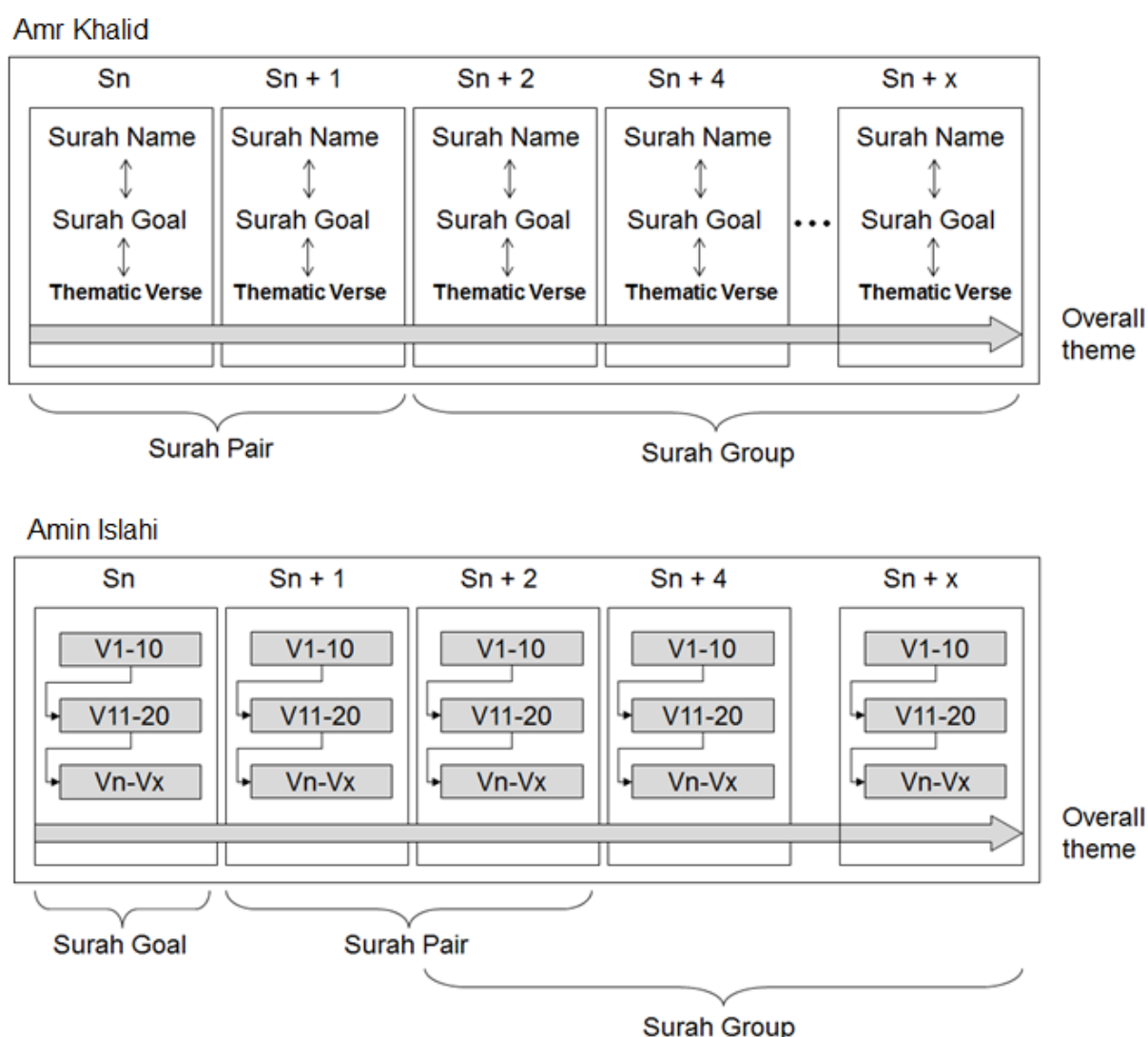
Group	Surahs	Meccan Bloc, Madinan Bloc	Group Theme
G.1	S.1-S.5	S.1, S.2-S.5	Islamic Law ( <i>Shari'ah</i> )
G.2	S.6-S.9	S.6-S.7, S.8-S.9	The consequences of denying the Prophet for the disbelieving Meccans
G.3	S.10-S.24	S.10-S.23, S.24	Glad tidings of the Prophet's domination in Arabia
G.4	S.25-S.33	S.25-S.32, S.33	Prophethood of Muhammad and the requirements of faith in him
G.5	S.34-S.49	S.34-S.46, S.47-S.49	Belief of monotheism ( <i>tawḥīd</i> ) and the requirements of faith in this belief
G.6	S.50-S.66	S.50-S.56, S.57-S.66	Belief of the Hereafter and the requirements of faith in this belief
G.7	S.67-S.114	S.67-S.109, S.110-S.114	The admonition to the Quraysh about their fate in the Herein and Hereafter if they deny the Prophet

When comparing the groups by Iṣlāḥī and Khālid, it is noticeable that Khālid's groups contain a smaller number of surahs except G.1 and G.2 and hence devises more number of groups, nine instead of seven. Overall the groups are different in terms of their constitute surahs and group themes. This is due to differences in their underlying thesis of the Qur'ānic message. Khālid does not entertain the concept of Meccan and Medinan blocs. Similarities do exist however. Their groups partly align at S.50 and S.67 as both begins G.6 and G.7 respectively. The group themes of G.1 and G.6 are also common. For example, Islamic law as the theme of G.1 for Iṣlāḥī, can be seen as being analogous to the milestones of the *manhaj* by Khālid. Both serve their respective theses. Indirectly the Madinan bloc in G.5 aligns to Khālid's G.5 as both comprise of S.47-S.49.

Like Khālid, Iṣlāḥī's conception of surah groups is not without some difficulties. Although Mir concludes that Iṣlāḥī's groups are well differentiated after examining G.2 and G.3<sup>264</sup>, for other surah groups evidence suggests otherwise. The belief of

monotheism in G.5 is narrated outside this group between G.1-G.4, such as 2:163, 4:171, 5:73, 6:19, 13:16, 14:48, 16:22, 18:110, 21:108, and 29:46. This suggests the groups are not as distinct as first thought. It also seems that by enforcing seven groups, Iṣlāhī necessarily compromises the need to introduce more groups. Mir also finds issues in the Meccan and Medinan blocs, the most contentions being Iṣlāhī's labelling of S.111 as Madinan when universal Muslim scholarly agreement brands it Meccan<sup>265</sup>. Figure 2 illustrates Khālid's and Iṣlāhī's thematic approach of the Qur'ān.

**Figure 2 – An illustration of the thematic approaches of Khālid and Iṣlāhī**



## Chapter Seven – Conclusion

### Critical Appraisal of Khālīd's Methodology

In the introduction of “Qur’ānic Contemplations” Khālīd clarified that his objectives were to demonstrate the miraculous nature of the Qur’ān through its coherence and convey a message of the Qur’ān through its goals to the youth. Overall the success of this project can be concluded in the affirmative. Like Iṣlāḥī, Khālīd approach to coherence is wholly thematic, ignoring methods associated with the study of linguistics. Notwithstanding some exceptions the concept of surah unity using surah goals is well supported for most surahs. The central issue of ignoring verses that do not concur with the surah goal can be reconciled by introducing the concept of cross-surah goals. In many surahs repeated occurrences of the prophet’s duty to warn as well as references to the signs of God in the universe can be considered goals that traverse all if not most surahs because Muhammad required constant reminder of them throughout his testing mission of Prophethood. Although the technique of surah goals is not new the concept of *Āyah al-Miḥwariyyah* is innovative and a useful indicator for determining the surah goal and thematic approaches more generally. Khālīd’s presentation of surah goals advances over Qutb’s less distinct surah goals although it remains to be seen how they compare with al-Biqā’ī.

Albeit less rigorous the concept of surah pairs is also convincing, especially considered with Iṣlāḥī’s analysis. It is a progression of the age-old technique of *manāsabah*, which focused on linking the end of surahs with the beginning of the next. The concept of surah groups by both Khālīd and Iṣlāḥī however is less convincing and plagued with several irreconcilable issues as noted in previous chapters.

### Strengths and Limitations of Thematic Approaches

This study has shown that Qur’ānic coherence can be demonstrated with a thematic approach as diverse and unrelated topics within a surah can become interconnected by serving an overall goal. Additionally what seems as repetitive topics throughout the Qur’ān can in fact understood differently within the context of the surah goal. As observed above however, not all topics in a surah fit within the surah goal. This

indicates that a limitation exists by connecting topics of the Qur'ān on themes only. Other approaches for linking unrelated verses can be based on linguistic, rhetoric and pragmatics methods. These have been highlighted by Salwa el-Awa, Neal Robinson and Michel Cuypers in Chapter 3.

Secondly a thematic approach offers flexibility of interpretation. Khālīd is able to present a seventh century text to the needs of his audience in the twenty-first century by elevating a particular thematic verse, generalise it and then understand all other topics as subservient to it. Thus complex or controversial verses in a surah can be ignored or understood generally within the context of the surah goal. For example, the literal meaning of the verse legitimising "hitting" the wife if she cause unrest after a number of other disciplinary options have failed in S.4 "Women" (*al-Nisā'*) V.34, cannot be understood in its literal sense as that would contradict the surah goal of justice in society and women. In essence therefore, a thematic approach does not necessarily introduce a new interpretation but helps to prioritise one of multiple competing interpretations. This notion resonates with some of the ideas of Abu Zayd, who promoted the ethical and moral discourse of the Qur'ān instead of the literal meaning of every verse<sup>266</sup>. One could argue however that the conventional study of the principles of jurisprudence (*Uṣūl al-Fiqh*) already provides the framework for prioritising legal verdicts. The limitation with this thematic approach is its subjectivity. As Khālīd and Iṣlāḥī have arrived at different surah goals then one can elevate a particular theme over the other to satisfy personal motives. For example, Khālīd tends to relate surah goals according to his perceptions of Islam central teachings and challenges facing the world. Iṣlāḥī claimed that by applying coherence in his exegesis he was forced to arrive at one interpretation of the Qur'ānic verses<sup>267</sup> but even he is locked in their experiences of time and place albeit subconsciously.

A third strength of a thematic commentary is that it acts a sophisticated teaching aid. By extracting the themes of a surah and the Qur'ān as a whole, students are able to digest the key messages of the scripture before progressing to the next level of detail. If not studied further, the drawback is that the essential details of the Qur'ān are compromised with over-generalisations and over-simplifications.

Overall Khālid has made a significant contribution in the field of thematic exegesis of the Qur'ān. It is hoped that many of Khālid's readers have been positively impacted by his message by becoming more responsible on earth. Such a message could probably not have been articulated a better way except through a thematic approach. As seen throughout the centuries, the need to prove the inimitability of the Qur'ān and present the scripture as a solution to today's challenges will indeed continue. There is no doubt that a thematic approach to exegesis has been one way to make that happen.

### **Further Study**

Of several possible areas for further research two are suggested. Like Khālid, al-Biqā'ī formulates surah goals in his voluminous work *"Naẓm al-Durur Fī Tanāsub al-Ayāt"*. A comparative study of surah goals by Khālid and al-Biqā'ī would be useful to explore the extent to which the context of their respective time and places impacts their formulation of the surah goal. Moreover comparing al-Biqā'ī's rationale behind the connection between the surah name and the surah goal will also uncover validity of the surah name as a method for interpretation. Another area for research is to explore the extent to which thematic divisions align with linguistic and rhetorical divisions.

## Appendix A

Table identifying the *Āyah Miḥwariyyah*, surah goal (*hadaḥ*), and the link between the *hadaḥ* and surah name for each surah of the Qur'ān by Khālīd.

Surah No.	Surah Name	No. of Verses	Explains surah?	Āyah Miḥwariyyah?	Link between <i>hadaḥ</i> and surah name?	Surah Goal ( <i>Hadaḥ</i> )
S.1	<i>Al-Fātiḥah</i>	7	X		X	The goals of the Qur'an
S.2	<i>Al-Baqarah</i>	286	X	V.30, 31	X	Being responsible on earth and outline of its methodology
S.3	<i>Āla 'Imrān</i>	200	X		X	Persevere on the path of God
S.4	<i>Al-Nisa'</i>	176	X	V.13, 14, 58	X	Be just and merciful to family and society, especially women
S.5	<i>Al-Mā'idah</i>	120	X	V.115	X	Fulfil your oaths and everything that has preceded
S.6	<i>Al-An'ām</i>	165	X	V.82, 104	X	Unity of God and disassociating partners with Him
S.7	<i>Al-'Arāf</i>	206	X		X	Where are you in the struggle between Truth and Falsehood?
S.8	<i>Al-Anfāl</i>	75	X	V.45	X	Principles of victory are both spiritual and material
S.9	<i>Al-Tawbah</i>	129	X		X	The door of repentance remains open to all types of people
S.10	<i>Yūnus</i>	109	X		X	Belief in the decree of God
S.11	<i>Hūd</i>	123	X	V.112, 113	X	Maintain a balanced approach during trials
S.12	<i>Yūsuf</i>	111	X	V.90	X	Trust in God's plan and do not despair
S.13	<i>Ra'd</i>	43	X	V.17	X	Truth is strong and Falsehood is weak
S.14	<i>'Ibrāhīm</i>	52	X	V.24	X	Blessing of Faith
S.15	<i>Al-Hijr</i>	99	X		X	God preserves His religion
S.16	<i>Al-Naḥl</i>	128	X	V.18, 53, 81	X	Recognise all of God's blessings and not to use them for harmful purposes
S.17	<i>Al-Isrā'</i>	111	X	V.9, 10	X	Be aware of the value of the scripture/Qur'an and not to neglect it like previous nations

S.18	<i>Al-Kahf</i>	110	X		X	Preservation from tribulation
S.19	<i>Maryam</i>	98	X		X	Children inheriting the faith
S.20	<i>Tā Hā</i>	135	X			Islam leads to happiness
S.21	<i>Al-Anbiyā'</i>	112	X		X	Taking the previous prophets as roles models
S.22	<i>Al-Ḥajj</i>	78	X		X	The role of Hajj in building Muslim solidarity ( <i>Ummah</i> )
S.23	<i>Al-Mu'minūn</i>	118	X		X	Most important attributes of the believers
S.24	<i>Al-Nūr</i>	64	X	V.35	X	Etiquettes between individual and society
S.25	<i>Al-Furqān</i>	77	X	V.42	X	Warning of the implications of denying faith
S.26	<i>Al-Shū'arā'</i>	226	X		X	Delivering the message of Islam in most suitable and influencing way
S.27	<i>Al-Naml</i>	93	X	V.44, 18	X	The importance of civilisational progress over other nations
S.28	<i>Al-Qaṣaṣ</i>	88	X		X	Trust in God's promise
S.29	<i>Al-'Ankabūt</i>	69	X		X	Be conscious of God's trials
S.30	<i>Al-Rūm</i>	60	X		X	Signs of God
S.31	<i>Luqmān</i>	34	X		X	Education of children
S.32	<i>al-Sajdah</i>	30	X		X	Humility to God
S.33	<i>Al-Aḥzāb</i>	73	X	V.36	X	Surrender to God in times of hardship
S.34	<i>Saba'</i>	54	X		X	Surrendering to God leads to civilisational continuity
S.35	<i>Fāṭir</i>	45	X		X	Surrendering to God is the path to power
S.36	<i>Yā Sīn</i>	83	X	V.20, 21, 22	X	Invite others to God regardless of the results
S.37	<i>Al-Ṣaffāt</i>	182	X	V.103	X	Surrender to God's instructions even if you do not appreciate its wisdom
S.38	<i>Ṣad</i>	88	X			Return to God without arrogance
S.39	<i>Al-Zumar</i>	75	X		X	Sincerity to God
S.40	<i>Ghāfir</i>	85	X	V.51		Importance of <i>Da'wah</i> and entrusting its affair with God
S.41	<i>Fussilāt</i>	54	X	V.3	X	Wholehearted acceptance of God's

						instructions
S.42	<i>Al-Shūrah</i>	53	X		X	Be aware of division and execute consultation
S.43	<i>Al-Zukhruf</i>	89	X		X	Beware of the world's embellishments and materialism
S.44	<i>Al-Dukhān</i>	59	X			Do not be dazzled by power and position
S.45	<i>Al-Jāthiyah</i>	37	X		X	Caution against pride
S.46	<i>Al-Aḥqāf</i>	35	X		X	An example of who accepts and refuses God's instructions
S.47	<i>Muḥammad</i>	38	X	V.21	X	Obedience to the prophet
S.48	<i>Al-Fath</i>	29	X		X	Those deserving of divine openings
S.49	<i>Al-Ḥujurāt</i>	18	X		X	Etiquette with prophet and society
S.50	<i>Qāf</i>	45	X			Choice between guidance and error based on a sound heart
S.51	<i>Al-Dhāriyāt</i>	60	X	V.50		Sustenance is in God's hand
S.52	<i>Al-Ṭūr</i>	49	X	V.21		Choice between guidance and error depends on your actions in this world
S.53	<i>Al-Najm</i>	62	X		X	Choose the source of your knowledge
S.54	<i>Al-Qamar</i>	55	X			Become familiar with God's treatment of previous nations
S.55	<i>Al-Raḥmān</i>	78	X			Become familiar with God's blessings
S.56	<i>Al-Waqi'ah</i>	96	X			Choose between three groups
S.57	<i>Al-Ḥadīd</i>	29	X	V.25		Be balanced between materialism and spirituality
S.58	<i>Al-Mujādilah</i>	22	X			Be loyal to the methodology of Islam
S.59	<i>Al-Ḥashr</i>	24	X			Identify different situations of loyalty
S.60	<i>Al-Mumtaḥanah</i>	13	X			Test of one's loyalty to Islam
S.61	<i>Al-Ṣaff</i>	14	X	V.4		Align your rows for God's cause
S.62	<i>Al-Jumu'ah</i>	11	X			Role of Friday congregational prayer in one's loyalty to Islam
S.63	<i>Al-Munāfiqūn</i>	11	X			Dangers of hypocrisy
S.64	<i>Al-Taghābun</i>	18	X			Social distractions weaken one's loyalty



						to Islam
S.65	<i>Al-Ṭalāq</i>	12	X		X	Unity of the community
S.66	<i>Al-Taḥrīm</i>	12	X			The role of women in establishing loyalty to Islam
S.67	<i>Al-Mulk</i>	30	X			Obligation to call others to God and the tools for <i>Da'wah</i>
S.68	<i>Al-Qalam</i>	52	X			Obligation to call others to God and the tools for <i>Da'wah</i>
S.69	<i>Al-Ḥaqqah</i>	52	X			Obligation to call others to God and the tools for <i>Da'wah</i>
S.70	<i>Al-Ma'ārij</i>	44	X			Obligation to call others to God and the tools for <i>Da'wah</i>
S.71	<i>Nūḥ</i>	28	X			Obligation to call others to God and the tools for <i>Da'wah</i>
S.72	<i>Al-Jinn</i>	28	X			Obligation to call others to God and the tools for <i>Da'wah</i>
S.73	<i>Al-Muzzammil</i>	20	X			Obligation to call others to God and the tools for <i>Da'wah</i>
S.74	<i>Al-Muddathir</i>	56	X			Obligation to call others to God and the tools for <i>Da'wah</i>
S.75	<i>Al-Qiyāmah</i>	40	X			Obligation to call others to God and the tools for <i>Da'wah</i>
S.76	<i>Al-Insān</i>	31	X			Obligation to call others to God and the tools for <i>Da'wah</i>
S.77	<i>Al-Mursalāt</i>	50	X			Obligation to call others to God and the tools for <i>Da'wah</i>
S.78	<i>Al-Naba'</i>	40				Conclusion of God's methodology ( <i>manhaj</i> )
S.79	<i>Al-Nāzi'āt</i>	46				Conclusion of God's methodology ( <i>manhaj</i> )
S.80	<i>Al-'Abasa</i>	42	X			Conclusion of God's methodology ( <i>manhaj</i> )
S.81	<i>Al-Takwīr</i>	29				Conclusion of God's methodology ( <i>manhaj</i> )
S.82	<i>Al-Infiṭār</i>	19				Conclusion of God's methodology ( <i>manhaj</i> )
S.83	<i>Al-Muṭaffifin</i>	36				Conclusion of God's methodology ( <i>manhaj</i> )
S.84	<i>Al-Inshiqāq</i>	25				Conclusion of God's

						methodology ( <i>manhaj</i> )
S.85	<i>Al-Burūj</i>	22				Conclusion of God's methodology ( <i>manhaj</i> )
S.86	<i>Al-Ṭāriq</i>	17	X			Conclusion of God's methodology ( <i>manhaj</i> )
S.87	<i>Al-'Alā</i>	19				Conclusion of God's methodology ( <i>manhaj</i> )
S.88	<i>Al-Ghāshiyah</i>	26				Conclusion of God's methodology ( <i>manhaj</i> )
S.89	<i>Al-Fajr</i>	30				Conclusion of God's methodology ( <i>manhaj</i> )
S.90	<i>Al-Balad</i>	20				Conclusion of God's methodology ( <i>manhaj</i> )
S.91	<i>Al-Shams</i>	15	X			Conclusion of God's methodology ( <i>manhaj</i> )
S.92	<i>Al-Layl</i>	21				Conclusion of God's methodology ( <i>manhaj</i> )
S.93	<i>Al-Ḍuḥā</i>	11	X			Conclusion of God's methodology ( <i>manhaj</i> )
S.94	<i>Al-Sharḥ</i>	8				Conclusion of God's methodology ( <i>manhaj</i> )
S.95	<i>Al-Ṭīn</i>	8	X			Conclusion of God's methodology ( <i>manhaj</i> )
S.96	<i>Al-'Alaq</i>	19	X			Conclusion of God's methodology ( <i>manhaj</i> )
S.97	<i>Al-Qadr</i>	5				Conclusion of God's methodology ( <i>manhaj</i> )
S.98	<i>Al-Bayinnah</i>	8				Conclusion of God's methodology ( <i>manhaj</i> )
S.99	<i>Al-Zalzalah</i>	8				Conclusion of God's methodology ( <i>manhaj</i> )
S.100	<i>Al-'Adiyāt</i>	11				Conclusion of God's methodology ( <i>manhaj</i> )
S.101	<i>Al-Qāri'ah</i>	11				Conclusion of God's methodology ( <i>manhaj</i> )
S.102	<i>Al-Takāthur</i>	8	X			Conclusion of God's methodology ( <i>manhaj</i> )
S.103	<i>Al-'Asr</i>	3	X			Conclusion of God's methodology ( <i>manhaj</i> )

S.104	<i>Al-Ḥumazah</i>	9				Conclusion of God's methodology ( <i>manhaj</i> )
S.105	<i>Al-Fīl</i>	5	X			Conclusion of God's methodology ( <i>manhaj</i> )
S.106	<i>Al-Quraysh</i>	4	X			Conclusion of God's methodology ( <i>manhaj</i> )
S.107	<i>Al-Ma'ūn</i>	7				Conclusion of God's methodology ( <i>manhaj</i> )
S.108	<i>Al-Kawthar</i>	3				Conclusion of God's methodology ( <i>manhaj</i> )
S.109	<i>Al-Kāfirūn</i>	6				Conclusion of God's methodology ( <i>manhaj</i> )
S.110	<i>Al-Naṣr</i>	3				Conclusion of God's methodology ( <i>manhaj</i> )
S.111	<i>Al-Masad</i>	5				Conclusion of God's methodology ( <i>manhaj</i> )
S.112	<i>Al-Ikhlāṣ</i>	4				Conclusion of God's methodology ( <i>manhaj</i> )
S.113	<i>Al-Falaq</i>	5				Conclusion of God's methodology ( <i>manhaj</i> )
S.114	<i>Al-Nās</i>	6				Conclusion of God's methodology ( <i>manhaj</i> )

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## End Notes

<sup>1</sup> Gary Bunt, *Study Skills for Islamic Studies* (Lampeter: University of Lampeter, 2008), p.80.

<sup>2</sup> Massimo Campanini, 'The Qur'ān: Modern Muslim Interpretations', Trans. by Higgitt, Caroline (Oxon: Routledge, 2011), p.3

<sup>3</sup> Amīn Iṣlāḥī, 'Pondering Over The Qur'ān (*Tadabbur-e-Qur'ān*): Volume One Tafsir of Surah al-Fatiḥah and Surah al-Baqarah', Trans. by Kayani, Mohammad S (Selangor: Islamic Book Trust Kuala Lumpur, 2007), p.34

<sup>4</sup> Amīn Iṣlāḥī, 'Selections from the *Tadabbur-i-Qur'ān*', Trans. by Saleem, Shehzad (Lahore: al-Mawrid, 2004)

<sup>5</sup> Muhammad Abdel Haleem 'The Qur'ān: A New Translation' (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005)

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., p.ix

<sup>7</sup> Massimo Campanini, 'The Qur'ān: Modern Muslim Interpretations', p.211

<sup>8</sup> Muhammad Abdel Haleem 'The Qur'ān: A New Translation', p.9

<sup>9</sup> The need to interpret the Qur'ān became increasing critical from the second generation of Muslims onwards due to the nature of the text and the development of Muslim society. The nature of the text contained a plethora of features that motivated further investigation such as the self-declared clear and ambiguous verses, grammatical usage, dialects, poetry or multiple meanings of words. At the same time the context of an ever-changing Muslim society which had expanded into new geographies, languages and peoples from contrasting intellectual traditions further propelled the study of Qur'ānic interpretation. See Oliver Leaman, 'The Qur'ān: An Encyclopaedia' (Oxon: Routledge, 2006), p.625 and Abdullah Saeed, 'Interpreting the Qur'ān: Towards a Contemporary Approach' (Oxon: Routledge, 2006), p.9.

<sup>10</sup> Yasir Qadhi, 'An Introduction to the Sciences of the Qur'aan' (Birmingham, Al-Hidaayah Publishing and Distribution, 2003), p.24

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., p.163. The majority of Muslim scholars agree to 114 surahs but a minority view the total number at 113 on the basis that *Surah Anfāl* and *Tawah* as one surah.

<sup>12</sup> Yasir Qadhi, 'An Introduction to the Sciences of the Qur'aan', p.155-6

<sup>13</sup> Muhammad Abdel Haleem, 'Understanding the Qur'ān: Themes and Style (London: I.B. Tauris & Co, 2011), p.1. The subject matter of the Qur'ān covers numerous topics such God, the universe, humanity, Prophethood, accounts of previous messengers and eschatology. The Qur'ān is characterised by its own stylistic features such as possessing a reinforcement of messages, contrast of themes, grammatical shifts of pronouns and qualities of debate, disputation, postulation and refutation. See Jane Dammen McAuliffe, 'Introduction', in McAuliffe, Jane (ed.), 'The Cambridge Companion to the Qur'ān' (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p.4.

<sup>14</sup> According to the majority of Muslim scholars a Companion is defined as someone who met the Prophet while believing in him and died as a believer. See Mohammad Kamali, 'Principles of Islamic Jurisprudence' (Cambridge: Islamic Texts Society, 2003), p.314.

<sup>15</sup> This copy is reputed to exist today in Uzbekistan. See Yasir A Qadhi, 'An Introduction to the Sciences of the Qur'aan', p.151.

<sup>16</sup> Massimo Campanini, 'The Qur'ān: Modern Muslim Interpretations', p.93

<sup>17</sup> Neal Robinson, 'Discovering the Qur'ān: A Contemporary Approach to a Veiled Text' (London: SCM-Canterbury Press Ltd, 2003), p.51

<sup>18</sup> Yasir Qadhi, 'An Introduction to the Sciences of the Qur'aan', p.21

<sup>19</sup> Farid Esack, 'The Qur'ān: A User Guide' (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2005), p.128

<sup>20</sup> For example, Muhammad Ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī's (d. 922) exegesis "The Comprehensive Explanation of the Interpretation of the Qur'ānic Verses" (*Jāmi' al-Bayān 'an Ta'wīl Ayah al-Qur'ān*), see Yasir A Qadhi, 'An Introduction to the Sciences of the Qur'aan', p.290.

<sup>21</sup> Although classical scholars have offered various definitions between the two, "*tafsīr*" was generally used to denote exoteric philological exegesis denoting one literal meaning of individual words, whereas "*ta'wīl*" referred to esoteric exposition of subject matter characterised by many connotations of a word or the actual intent behind a verse. Today the Sunni "orthodoxy" use *ta'wīl* pejoratively to denote rejection of the obvious meaning and adoption of a more obscure meaning. See Farid Esack, 'The Qur'ān: A User Guide', p.129.

- <sup>22</sup> Yasir Qadhi, 'An Introduction to the Sciences of the Qur'aan', p.304
- <sup>23</sup> Mohammad Kamali, 'Principles of Islamic Jurisprudence' (Cambridge: Islamic Texts Society, 2003), p.67-9
- <sup>24</sup> Yasir Qadhi, 'An Introduction to the Sciences of the Qur'aan', p.323
- <sup>25</sup> Ibid., p.335
- <sup>26</sup> For example, see S.48 "Triumph" (*al-Fath*) V.29 and S.98 "Clear Evidence" (*al-Bayyinah*) V.8. Ibid., p.307
- <sup>27</sup> Farid Esack, 'The Qur'ān: A User Guide', p.136
- <sup>28</sup> Massimo Campanini, 'The Qur'ān: Modern Muslim Interpretations', p.34
- <sup>29</sup> Massimo Campanini, 'The Qur'ān: Modern Muslim Interpretations', p.20
- <sup>30</sup> Yasir Qadhi, 'An Introduction to the Sciences of the Qur'aan', p.338
- <sup>31</sup> For example see Caner Taslaman, 'The Qur'ān: Unchallengeable Miracle' (Istanbul: Citlembik Publications, 2006)
- <sup>32</sup> Massimo Campanini, 'The Qur'ān: Modern Muslim Interpretations', p.35
- <sup>33</sup> Other exegetes that have contributed to this field are Sayyid Qutb, Muhammad Mutawalli al-Sharawi and Hasan Turabi, and among the Shia, Iranian exegete Ayatollah Maḥmūd Taleqani (d. 1980). See Hussein Abdul-Raof, 'Theological Approaches to Qur'ānic Exegesis: A practical comparative-contrastive analysis' (Oxon: Routledge, 2012), p.3.
- <sup>34</sup> Massimo Campanini, 'The Qur'ān: Modern Muslim Interpretations', p.37
- <sup>35</sup> Ibid., p.114
- <sup>36</sup> Ibid., p.73-90
- <sup>37</sup> The classification is typically found in Arabic works and makes an explicit distinction to thematic exegesis. Four types are identified: 1) Analytical exegesis (*Tafsīr al-Tahlīlī*) is characterised by uncovering detailed meanings from the expressions and grammatical constructions of all verses, 2) Synoptic exegesis (*Tafsīr al-Ijmālī*) examines the verses with generality of meaning by expressions moulded by the interpreter's own language, 3) Comparative exegesis (*Tafsīr al-Muqārin*) gather the scholarly opinions of those before and assesses them, and 4) Thematic exegesis (*Tafsīr Mawḍū'ī*) examines the themes of verses at level of the Qur'ān or the Surah. See also p2 Hussein Abdul-Raof, Theological Approaches to Qur'ānic Exegesis.
- <sup>38</sup> This typology was first proposed by John Wansbrough and consists of five groups as follows: 1) Narrative Tafsir refers to the Qur'ānic text and its commentary as one, thus providing the context of the text, 2) Legal Tafsir is material arranged in legal themes on the verses regarded as dealing with law; 3) Textual Tafsir uses lexical explanations and grammatical analysis, 4) Rhetorical Tafsir focus on literary qualities of the Arabic language outside the norms of Arabic prose and poetry to show the miraculous nature of the Qur'ān, and 5) Allegorical Tafsir refer to esoteric interpretations using thematic and textual commentary. Farid Esack critiques this typology as it was dependent on a limited number of exegetical works for each genre and employed of Jewish literary terms to imply the borrowing of Jewish material by the Arabs (p140, Esack).
- <sup>39</sup> Samir Rashwānī, 'Methodology of Thematic Commentary for the Glorious Qur'ān' (*Manhaj Tafsīr Mawḍū'ī Li al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*) (Halab: Dar al-Multaqi, 2009), p.40
- <sup>40</sup> Ibid., p.41
- <sup>41</sup> Ibid., p.41
- <sup>42</sup> Ibid., p.43
- <sup>43</sup> Ibid., p.44
- <sup>44</sup> Ibid., p.43
- <sup>45</sup> Ibid., p.45
- <sup>46</sup> Ibid., p.45
- <sup>47</sup> Abdul al-Sattar Sa'īd, , 'An Entrance to the Thematic Commentary' (*Madkhal ilā al-Tafsīr Mawḍū'ī*) (Cairo: Dar al-Tawzi' wa al-Nashir al-Islamiyyah), p.28
- <sup>48</sup> Samir Rashwānī, 'Methodology of Thematic Commentary for the Glorious Qur'ān' (*Manhaj Tafsīr Mawḍū'ī Li al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*), p.74
- <sup>49</sup> Ibid., p.277
- <sup>50</sup> Amīn Iṣlāḥī, 'Pondering Over The Qur'ān (*Tadabbur-e-Qur'ān*): Volume One Tafsir of Surah al-Fatiḥah and Surah al-Baqarah', Trans. by Kayani, Mohammad S (Selangor: Islamic Book Trust Kuala Lumpur, 2007), p.36
- <sup>51</sup> Ibid., p.77.
- <sup>52</sup> Mustafa Muslim, 'Research in Thematic Commentary' (*Mubāḥith Fī al-Tafsīr Mawḍū'ī*) (Damascus: Dar al-Qalam, 2000), p.23

- <sup>53</sup> Ibid., p.25
- <sup>54</sup> Yasir Qadhi, 'An Introduction to the Sciences of the Qur'aan', p.332
- <sup>55</sup> The Mu'tazilites were one of the two most influential schools of theology. Founded in the early eighth century by Wasil ibn 'Ata' (according to traditional accounts), they placed great stock in the power and autonomy of reason for guiding the interpretation of revelation and the determination of proper belief. See Peter Groff, 'Islamic Philosophy A-Z' (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007), p.152.
- <sup>56</sup> Samir Rashwānī, 'Methodology of Thematic Commentary for the Glorious Qur'ān' (*Manhaj Tafsīr Mawḍū'ī Li al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*), p.81
- <sup>57</sup> They are: 1) seeking the knowledge of God, 2) seeking the path towards God, 3) man's condition at the time of attaining to God, 4) condition of those who have traversed the path to God and those who have deviated, 5) arguments of the disbelievers against the truth and proofs that counter them and, 6) fulfilment of obligations at the stages of the path to God. See Muhammad Quasem, 'The Jewels of the Qur'ān: al-Ghazali's Theory' (Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya Press, 1997), p.23-32
- <sup>58</sup> The *Maqāṣid* look at the general philosophy and objectives of Qur'ānic injunctions, not the specific words and sentences of the text. Al-Ghazali wrote categorically that the Shariah pursued five objectives, namely those of faith, life, intellect, lineage and property, which were to be protected as a matter of absolute priority. See Mohammad Kamali, 'Shari'ah Law: An Introduction' (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2008), p.125
- <sup>59</sup> Samir Rashwānī, 'Methodology of Thematic Commentary for the Glorious Qur'ān' (*Manhaj Tafsīr Mawḍū'ī Li al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*), p.129
- <sup>60</sup> Mustansir Mir, 'Coherence in the Qur'ān: A Study of Iṣlāḥī's Concept of Naẓm in *Tadabbur-i-Qur'ān*' (Indianapolis: American Trust Publications: 1986), p.13
- <sup>61</sup> Ibid., p.14
- <sup>62</sup> Ibid., p.16
- <sup>63</sup> Ibid., p.17
- <sup>64</sup> Mustafa Muslim states the first was al-Nisaburi. See Mustafa Muslim, 'Research in Thematic Commentary' (*Mubāḥith Fī al-Tafsīr al-Mawḍū'ī*), p.66
- <sup>65</sup> Mustansir Mir, 'Coherence in the Qur'ān: A Study of Iṣlāḥī's Concept of Naẓm in *Tadabbur-i Qur'ān*', p.18
- <sup>66</sup> Mustafa Muslim, 'Research in Thematic Commentary' (*Mubāḥith Fī al-Tafsīr Mawḍū'ī*), p.70-8
- <sup>67</sup> Ibid., p.80-90)
- <sup>68</sup> Yasir Qadhi, 'An Introduction to the Sciences of the Qur'aan', p.163
- <sup>69</sup> Samir Rashwānī, 'Methodology of Thematic Commentary for the Glorious Qur'ān' (*Manhaj Tafsīr Mawḍū'ī Li al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*), p.261
- <sup>70</sup> This refers to S2 V62. See Taqī al-Dīn Ibn Taymiyyah, 'The Great Commentary' (*Tafsīr al-Kabir*) (Beruit: Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 2005), Vol. 3, p.481
- <sup>71</sup> Samir Rashwānī, 'Methodology of Thematic Commentary for the Glorious Qur'ān' (*Manhaj Tafsīr Mawḍū'ī Li al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*), p.261
- <sup>72</sup> Ibid., p.275
- <sup>73</sup> Ibid., p.322
- <sup>74</sup> Ibid., p.280
- <sup>75</sup> Ibid., p.315
- <sup>76</sup> Quoted in H.A.R. Gibb, *Mohammedanism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971), p.25
- <sup>77</sup> Montgomery Watt, 'Bell's Introduction to the Qur'ān' (Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 1970), p.xi
- <sup>78</sup> Massimo Campanini, 'The Basics: The Qur'ān', trans. by Oliver Leaman (Oxon: Routledge, 2007) p.36
- <sup>79</sup> Mustansir Mir, 'Coherence in the Qur'ān: A Study of Iṣlāḥī's Concept of Naẓm in *Tadabbur-i-Qur'ān*', p.2
- <sup>80</sup> For example by Oliver Leaman: 'The Qur'ān: An Encyclopaedia' (Oxon: Routledge, 2006)
- <sup>81</sup> In Muhammad Abdel Haleem's book, "Understanding the Qur'ān: Themes and Styles", the author combines a number of approaches: thematic, stylistic and comparative. In the outset he agrees with Fazlur Rahman that more thematic studies are needed as it can "give a balanced view of what the Qur'ān says on any given topic" (p.vii). Haleem also believes that the correct method for understanding the Qur'ān is in light of its context (*maqām*) and to explain one part of it with another, also referred to as internal relationships or intertextuality. This he demonstrates in his chapter on Surah Rahman. Unlike previous authors Haleem's choice of themes is not concerned with covering a high-level and comprehensive set that enables multiple Qur'ānic subject matter to fall under them. Instead he picks a mixture of unrelated themes: some covering the "perennial themes" that Muslims consider to have

been seriously misunderstood or not explored properly by Westerners writers, such as tolerance, war and peace, and marriage and divorce; themes that demonstrate the Qur'ān's pattern of persuasion, expressions and style, such as themes titled the "Water in the Qur'ān", "Pronoun Shift (*al-iltifāt*) and the "Face of God"; and finally the major subject of the Qur'ān, such as Paradise. To some extent this work relates to the "Isolated Themes" group above. See Muhammad Abdel Haleem, 'Understanding the Qur'ān: Themes and Style, p.161-2.

<sup>82</sup> In Kenneth Cragg's "Readings in the Qur'ān", the approach taken varies with the previous authors. Whilst he briefly introduces his eight major themes of the Qur'ān, referred to as "readings", he then subsumes all Qur'ānic verses under these headings, forming the bulk of the book. Cragg is insistent on letting the Qur'ān speak for itself. He justifies a thematic approach because it is "most open to categories where the Qur'ān's intention is most dependably found" (p.33) and suggests other readings according to chronology or style are less satisfactory as the former reduces the timelessness of the text and the latter, for restricting the Qur'ān as a book of literature. Whilst addressing contemporary concerns of the Qur'ān, Cragg alludes to the central message of the Qur'ān: "calls to subdue lusts of power and attitudes of wilful self-sufficiency" (p.73). Overall the primary goal behind this theme-based work is to attract a wider audience to comprehend the meaning of the whole Qur'ān within the context of growing care for interfaith relationships (p.62). See Kenneth Cragg, 'Readings in the Qur'ān' (London: Fount Paperbacks, 1995).

<sup>83</sup> In "The Five Themes of the Glorious Qur'ān" (*al-Maḥāwir al-Khamsah Li al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*), Muhammad Ghazali discusses the following themes: One God, Universe Indicating the Creator, Qur'ānic stories, Resurrection and Reward, and the Domain of Education and Legislature. He fails to offer any detailed rationale for his adopted approach or selection of these five themes. Rather the author of the prologue, 'Abd al-Haleem 'Awis, briefly provides these answers by highlighting that Muslims have occupied themselves with literal and partial exegetical procedures thus being incapable of expanding its great Qur'ānic meanings and derive its values (p.5). Like Fazlur, Ghazali provides a subsection for each theme using verses from different surahs to support his argument and occasionally links themes together; for example, the theme of Education and Legislature is discussed with reference to the characteristics God loves and dislikes. Ghazali mainly addresses the concerns of Muslims and occasionally orientalist views. For example, a lengthy treatment is given on how the repeated Qur'ānic story of Adam in Surah Baqarah and Surah 'Araf both serve different objectives (*maqṣud*) in their respective surahs to refute the view that Qur'ānic stories are repeated for the sake of repetition and reminder (p.83). See Muhammad Ghazali, 'The Five Themes of the Glorious Qur'ān' (*al-Maḥāwir al-Khamsah Li al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*) (Cairo: Dar al-Shuruq, 2010).

<sup>84</sup> See Jacques Jomier, 'The Great Themes of the Qur'ān' (London: SCM Press, 1997)

<sup>85</sup> See Maḥmūd Hijazi, 'Thematic Unity in the Glorious Qur'ān' (*al-Waḥdah al-Mawḍū'īyyah Fī al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*) (Cairo: Dar al-Kutub al-Hadithah, 1970)

<sup>86</sup> See Toshihiko Izutsu, 'God and Man in the Qur'ān: Semantics of the Qur'ānic Weltanschauung' (Petaling Jaya: Islamic Book Trust, 2008)

<sup>87</sup> Fazlur Rahman, 'Major Themes of the Qur'ān' (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2009), p.15

<sup>88</sup> Ibid., p.3

<sup>89</sup> Ziauddin Sardar, 'Reading the Qur'ān: The Contemporary Relevance of the Sacred Text of Islam' (London: C.Hurst & Co. Ltd, 2011), p.213

<sup>90</sup> Ibid., p.25

<sup>91</sup> Ibid., p.233

<sup>92</sup> Like *Tafsīr Manār*, Mawdudi's exegetical approach in "Towards Understanding the Qur'ān" is also conducted on a verse by verse basis. In his introduction Mawdudi is keen to argue that the arrangement of the Qur'ān is aligned to a central purpose and theme; the purpose being the salvation of man, and the central theme being the attitude man ought to adopt towards God, universe and life. It seems Mawdudi is either responding to claims that the Qur'ān lacks coherence of composition, as concluded by some Orientalists such as Thomas Carlyle and Montgomery Watt (need reference), or readily acknowledges that their position genuinely resonates in his own readings. By way of introduction to each surah Mawdudi provides a brief summary of the subject matter and central themes. Additionally, brief comments are occasional made about a particular surah being characterised by a unity of theme and inner coherence but without supporting evidence, as in S.3 "Ala Imran". See Sayyid Abul A'la Mawdudi, 'Towards Understanding the Qur'ān', Trans. by Ansari Zafar I (Leicester: The Islamic Foundation, 1988), p.230

<sup>93</sup> Yasushi Kosugi et al, 'Intellectuals in the Modern Islamic World: Transmission, Transformation and Communication' (Oxon: Routledge, 2006), p.21

- <sup>94</sup> Ibid., p.20
- <sup>95</sup> Rashid Rida, '*Tafsīr Manār*' (Cairo: Dar al-Manar, 1947), Vol.1, p.105-122
- <sup>96</sup> Rashid Rida, '*Tafsīr Manār*', Vol. 4, p.21
- <sup>97</sup> Muhammad Ghazali, 'A Thematic Commentary on the Qur'ān', Trans. by Shamis, Ashur (Surrey: The International Institution of Islamic Thought, 2000), p.151
- <sup>98</sup> Ibid., p.176
- <sup>99</sup> See Husayn Tabātabā'ī, 'The Balance in the Qur'ān' (*al-Mizān Fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān*) (Beirut: Muassasat al-'Alami Li Maktubat, 1974)
- <sup>100</sup> See Maḥmūd Bustānī, 'Structural Methodology in Exegesis' (*al-Manhaj al-Banā'ī Fī al-Tafsīr*) (Beirut: Muassasah al-Wafa', 1984) and Samir Rashwānī, 'Methodology of Thematic Commentary for the Glorious Qur'ān' (*Manhaj Tafsīr Mawḍū'ī Li al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*), p.314
- <sup>101</sup> Muhammad Daraz, 'The Qur'ān: An Eternal Challenge' (*al-Naba' al-Azim*), Trans. by Salahi, Adil (Leicester: The Islamic Foundation, 2001), p.179
- <sup>102</sup> Ibid., p.131
- <sup>103</sup> Ibid., p.135
- <sup>104</sup> Sayyid Qutb, 'In the Shade of the Qur'ān' (Fi Zilal al-Qur'ān), Trans. by Shamis, Ashur & Iṣlāḥī, Adil (Leicester: The Islamic Foundation, 1999), Vol.1, p.10
- <sup>105</sup> Mustansir Mir, 'Coherence in the Qur'ān: A Study of Iṣlāḥī's Concept of Naẓm in *Tadabbur-i Qur'ān*', p.67
- <sup>106</sup> See Mustafa Muslim (Ed.), 'A Thematic Commentary of the Surahs of the Glorious Qur'ān' (*al-Tafsīr al-Mawḍū'ī Li Suwar al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*) (Sharjah: Jamiah al-Shariqah, 2010)
- <sup>107</sup> Hamid al-Din al-Farāḥī, 'Exordium to the Coherence in the Qur'ān', Trans. by Hashmi, Tariq M (Lahore: Al-Mawrid, 2004), p.6
- <sup>108</sup> Mustansir Mir, 'Coherence in the Qur'ān: A Study of Iṣlāḥī's Concept of Naẓm in *Tadabbur-i Qur'ān*', p.38
- <sup>109</sup> Said Hawa', 'The Foundation of Exegesis' (*Asās Fī al-Tafsīr*) (Cairo: Dar al-Salam, 1985)
- <sup>110</sup> Yasir Qadhi, 'An Introduction to the Sciences of the Qur'aan', p.164
- <sup>111</sup> Samir Rashwānī, 'Methodology of Thematic Commentary for the Glorious Qur'ān' (*Manhaj Tafsīr Mawḍū'ī Li al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*), p.308
- <sup>112</sup> Salwa El-Awa, 'Textual Relations in the Qur'an: Relevance, Coherence and Structure' (Oxon: Routledge, 2006), p.161
- <sup>113</sup> In "Discovering the Qur'ān: a Contemporary Approach to a Veil Text", Neil Robinson analyses the coherence of six Meccan and Madinan surahs using a number of linguistic and thematic approaches. He also examines the plausibility of certain hypotheses put forward by Richard Bell and French Arabist, Pierre Crapon de Caprona. Where possible, Robinson divides the surah into sections unified by topic such eschatology, narrative, signs, polemic etc., and links them through relationships in their meaning, such as in S.79 "The Forceful Charges" (*Nazīāt*) (p.184) or unified through the repetition of stock phases as in S.2 "The Cow" (*al-Baqarah*) (p.203). When a surah is viewed as possessing a discursive style that prevents the identification of discrete sections based on a single major theme, Robinson finds coherency by linking sequences in sound, rhythm and grammatical constructs. S.21 "The Night Journey" (*al-Isrā'*), for example, is integrated on this basis (p.193). For all the surahs analysed Robinson concludes that they are coherent and unified.
- <sup>114</sup> Dayah, Islam, 'Al-Hawāmīm: Intertextuality and Coherence in Meccan Surah' in Neuwirth, Angelika et al, 'The Qur'ān in Context: Historical and Literary Investigations into the Qur'ānic Milieu' (Leiden: Brill, 2010)
- <sup>115</sup> Mathias Zahniser, 'Major Transitions and Thematic Borders in the Two Long Suras: al-Baqara and al-Nisā'' in Boulatta, Issa (Ed.), 'Literary Structures of Religious Meaning in the Qur'ān' (Oxon: Routledge, 2000)
- <sup>116</sup> Two relevant books by this author: Hussein Abdul-Raof 'The Qur'ān Outlined: Theme and Text' (London: Ta-Ha Publishers Ltd, 2001) and Hussein Abdul-Raof 'Consonance in the Qur'ān: A Conceptual, Intertextual and Linguistic Analysis' (Muenchen: Lincom Europa, 2005)
- <sup>117</sup> Carl Ernst, 'How to Read the Qur'ān: A New Guide, with Select Translations' (Carolina: The University of North Carolina Press, 2011)
- <sup>118</sup> Gheity argues that the concept of coherence needs to be redefined as one should not assume non-linearity of the Qur'ānic text signifies lack of coherence, disunity and fragmentariness. He views non-linearity as a linguistic feature of Qur'ānic discourse, which plays a crucial part in distinguishing revelations from ordinary speech. See Amer Gheity & Arsalan Golfam, 'The Qur'ān as a Non-Linear Text: Rethinking Coherence', Intl. J. Humanities, 15:1 (2008), p.124

- <sup>119</sup> Salwa El-Awa, 'Textual Relations in the Qur'an: Relevance, Coherence and Structure', p.2
- <sup>120</sup> Ibid., p.161
- <sup>121</sup> Michel Cuypers, 'Semitic Rhetoric as the Key to the Question of the naẓm of the Qur'ānic Text', *Journal of Islamic Studies*, 13:1 (2011), p.4
- <sup>122</sup> Ibid., p.5
- <sup>123</sup> See Michel Cuypers, 'Banquet: A New Reading of the Fifth Surah of the Qur'ān' (Miami: Convivium Press, 2009)
- <sup>124</sup> John Esposito & Ibrahim Kalin, 'The 500 Most Influential Muslims in the World' (Amman: The Royal Islamic Strategic Studies Centre, 2009), p.48
- <sup>125</sup> Prodger, Matt, 'Superstar Muslim preacher Amr Khaled battles al-Qaeda', BBC Newsnight, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/9264357.stm>, [Accessed on 1 September 2013]
- <sup>126</sup> See Asef Bayat, 'Making Islam Democratic: Social Movements and the Post-Islamist Turn' (Stanford: Stanford UP, 2007)
- <sup>127</sup> Samia Seragelden, 'The Islamic Salon: Elite Women's Religious Networks in Egypt' in 'Muslim Networks: From Hajj to Hip Pop' (Carolina, The University of North Carolina Press, 2005)
- <sup>128</sup> Richard Antoun highlights that the preacher acts as a "culture broker" whose job is to reconcile "great" and "little" traditions, thereby acting as a local interpreter of the relationship of popular religion to the religion of the specialists. See Richard Antoun, *Muslim Preacher in the Modern World: A Jordanian Case Study in Comparative Perspective* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1989), p.19
- <sup>129</sup> Samuel Harris, 'Development Through Faith: The Ma'adi Life Makers and the Islamic Entrepreneurial Spirit' (Washington DC: Georgetown University, 2008), p.9
- <sup>130</sup> Ibid., p.15
- <sup>131</sup> Ibid., p.12
- <sup>132</sup> Al-Sayed Zaied, 'Da'wa for Dollars: A New Wave of Muslim Televangelists', *Arab Insight*, 2:1 (2008), p.25
- <sup>133</sup> Although specific studies are required, it likely Khalid was influenced by the general rise in religiosity growing up in the late 1970s and 1980s. A number of factors exist. On the social level, the number of mosques, Islamic NGOs, religious groups, independent preachers, religious publications and religious media has increased significantly over the past forty years (p.7). Since the mid-1970s, the Egyptian state began to rely more heavily on religious laws, language and symbolisms to legitimate its authority and its policies (p.9). Veteran Islamic preachers such as Muhammad Ghazali, Sheikh 'Abd al-Hamid Kishk and Sheikh Muhammad Mutwalli al-Sha'rawi, influenced a number of famous actresses, singers and dancers to return to Islamic religiosity such as Shams al-Barudi, Hana Tharwatt, Yasmin al-Khiyyam, Sahar Hamdi, Afaf Shoeib, Soheir al-Babli and Sawsan Basr and Hanan Turk (p.64). See Dina Shehata, 'Mapping Islamic Actors in Egypt', (Cairo, Netherlands-Flemish Institute: Al-Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Studies, 2012).
- <sup>134</sup> See Khalid's resume on his website, [www.amrkhaled.net/newsite/uploads/Resume-English-updated.pdf](http://www.amrkhaled.net/newsite/uploads/Resume-English-updated.pdf), [Accessed on 1 September 2013]
- <sup>135</sup> Samia Seragelden, 'The Islamic Salon: Elite Women's Religious Networks in Egypt', p.163
- <sup>136</sup> Khalid returned to Egypt in 2005, see "Riz Khan's One on One", Al-Jazeera, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PXBZGv8zjXE>, [Accessed on 1 September 2013].
- <sup>137</sup> amrkhaled.net
- <sup>138</sup> Khalid's resume refers to the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Jordan and Lebanon
- <sup>139</sup> For example, Khalid hosted an interfaith conference in Copenhagen in March 2006, after the controversies over the Danish cartoons mocking the Prophet Muhammad. See Time100, Amr Khaled, [http://www.time.com/time/specials/2007/time100/article/0,28804,1595326\\_1615754\\_1616173,00.html](http://www.time.com/time/specials/2007/time100/article/0,28804,1595326_1615754_1616173,00.html), [Accessed on 1 September 2013]
- <sup>140</sup> Amr Khalid, 'Aspects of Islam and Social Coexistence: The Case for Britain' (Lampeter: University of Wales, Lampeter, 2010)
- <sup>141</sup> Ahramonline, 'Preacher Amr Khaled Steps Down from leading Egypt Party', July 2013, <http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/76745/Egypt/Politics-/Preacher-Amr-Khaled-steps-down-from-leading-Egypt-.aspx>, [Accessed on 1 September 2013]
- <sup>142</sup> One exception is a book in English called "Velo: An Egyptian Tale". See Amr Khalid, 'Velo: An Egyptian Tale' (Cairo: Malamih Publishing House, 2007)
- <sup>143</sup> See "Riz Khan's One on One", Al-Jazeera, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PXBZGv8zjXE>, [Accessed on 1 September 2013]

- <sup>144</sup> This has also been the case with Khalid's PhD research area where he explored the concept of social coexistence within the context of Britain. See Amr Khalid, 'Aspects of Islam and Social Coexistence: The Case for Britain' (Lampeter: University of Wales, Lampeter, 2010)
- <sup>145</sup> Yusuf al-Qaradawi discusses the principal aims of human life as worship of God, vicegerency of God and construction of the earth. See Yusuf al-Qaradawi, 'Islam: The Future Civilisation' (Cairo, El-Falah Foundation, 1998), p.189-193
- <sup>146</sup> Amr Khalid, 'Qur'ānic Contemplations: reflecting on the goals of each chapter of the Qur'ān', p.11
- <sup>147</sup> Ibid., p.13
- <sup>148</sup> Jamaat Islami is considered the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest party after secular Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM) and the Pakistan People's Party (PPP). See The Express Tribune, Jamaat-e-Islami Boycotts Vote in Karachi, Alleges Rigging, AFT, May 2013, <http://tribune.com.pk/story/547549/jamaat-e-islami-boycotts-vote-in-karachi-alleges-rigging/>, [Accessed on 1 September 2013]
- <sup>149</sup> The core of these ideas centre on non-political involvement of religious organisations, see Husnul Amīn, 'From Islamic to Post-Islamism: A Study of a New Intellectual Discourse on Islam and Modernity in Pakistan', Erasmus University Rotterdam, 2012, p.161
- <sup>150</sup> For example: <http://www.tadabbur-i-Qur'an.org/>, <http://www.renaissance.com.pk/index.html>, <http://www.al-mawrid.org/index.php>, <http://www.hamid-uddin-Farāhī.org/>, <http://www.Amīn-ahsan-Iṣlāhī.com/>, <http://www.ghamidi.net/>
- <sup>151</sup> Husnul Amīn, 'From Islamic to Post-Islamism: A Study of a New Intellectual Discourse on Islam and Modernity in Pakistan', p.83
- <sup>152</sup> Amīn Iṣlāhī, 'Pondering Over The Qur'ān (*Tadabbur-e-Qur'ān*): Volume One Tafsīr of Surah al-Fatiḥah and Surah al-Baqarah', p.667
- <sup>153</sup> Husnul Amīn, 'From Islamic to Post-Islamism: A Study of a New Intellectual Discourse on Islam and Modernity in Pakistan', p.146
- <sup>154</sup> He represented the party's intellectual and educational arms; he produced number of written works concerned with the relationship of Islam with invitation (*Da'wah*), politics and self-purification, developed the party's members from both a religious and party-loyalty perspective, and defended its position from adversaries. He also was jailed for a short period on two occasions due to some of the party's political activities. See Abdul Rauf, 'Life and Works of Mawlana Amīn Ahsan Iṣlāhī (1904-1997)', 'Pakistan Journal of History and Culture', 30:1 (2009), 183-219, p.188
- <sup>155</sup> Husnul Amīn, 'From Islamic to Post-Islamism: A Study of a New Intellectual Discourse on Islam and Modernity in Pakistan', p.146
- <sup>156</sup> Some students of these circles were Mohammad Saleem Kayani, Khalid Mas'ud and Javed Ghamidi.
- <sup>157</sup> There were all several attempts by succeeding Pakistan governments to offer Amīn Iṣlāhī university posts, awards and financially compensation but he refused all offers. See Abdul Rauf, 'Life and Works of Mawlana Amīn Ahsan Iṣlāhī (1904-1997)', p.195.
- <sup>158</sup> Examples of these topics include exegesis like "Principles of Understanding the Qur'ān" (*Mubādi Tadabbur Qur'ān*); purification and self-development: "Real Sense of God-Consciousness" (*Haqiqāt Taqwā*) and "Purification of the Soul" (*Tazkiyah Nafs*); general books on Islam: "Understanding Islam" (*Tafhīm Islām*) and "Status of Women in Islamic Society" (*Islāmi Mu'asharh mayn 'Awrat ka Muqām*); political topics: "Islamic State" (*Islāmi Riyāsat*) and "Juristic Differences and How to Resolve them in an Islamic State" (*Islami Riyāsat mayn Fiqhī Ikhtilafāt ka Adl*); defending Jamaat-e-Islami: "Collection of Critical Essays" (*Tanqīdāt*); and differences in political concepts of his former political party: "Collection of Iṣlāhī Articles" (*Maqālat Iṣlāhī*).
- <sup>159</sup> Amīn Iṣlāhī, 'Selections from the *Tadabbur-i-Qur'ān*', Vol.8, Trans. by Saleem, Shehzad (Lahore: al-Mawrid, 2004), p.3
- <sup>160</sup> Farāhī studies all Meccan surah with exception of S.66. He regarded S.112 as Makkan too unlike Iṣlāhī. See Mustansir Mir, 'Coherence in the Qur'ān: A Study of Iṣlāhī's Concept of Naẓm in *Tadabbur-i Qur'ān*', p.42.
- <sup>161</sup> Amīn Iṣlāhī, 'Pondering Over The Qur'ān (*Tadabbur-e-Qur'ān*): Volume One Tafsīr of Surah al-Fatiḥah and Surah al-Baqarah', p.32
- <sup>162</sup> Amr Khalid, 'Qur'ānic Contemplations: reflecting on the goals of each chapter of the Qur'ān', p.11-12
- <sup>163</sup> Ibid., p.25
- <sup>164</sup> Ibid., p.12
- <sup>165</sup> This Surah Group coincidentally aligns to the 30<sup>th</sup> portion of the Qur'ān (*juz'*). This phenomenon will be discussed in more detail in the Surah Group section.
- <sup>166</sup> Amr Khalid, 'Qur'ānic Contemplations: reflecting on the goals of each chapter of the Qur'ān', p.75

- <sup>167</sup> For example, similar events in Moses' life are interpreted with reference to the surah goal. In S.7 Moses' struggle with the nation of Israel shows how he chose the path of Truth; in S.10 Moses trusted in God even though he did not see the wisdom in the events that unfolded; in S.18 story of Moses and Khidr represents a test of one's limited knowledge; and in S.20 Moses' struggles with the Pharaoh drew him closer to God and happiness.
- <sup>168</sup> Amr Khalid, 'Qur'ānic Contemplations: reflecting on the goals of each chapter of the Qur'ān', p.126
- <sup>169</sup> Ibid., p.133
- <sup>170</sup> Ibid., p.138
- <sup>171</sup> Ibid., p.274
- <sup>172</sup> Ibid., p.305
- <sup>173</sup> Ibid., p.353
- <sup>174</sup> Ibid., p.80
- <sup>175</sup> Ibid., p.190
- <sup>176</sup> Ibid., p.224-227
- <sup>177</sup> Ibid., p.179
- <sup>178</sup> Ibid., p.243
- <sup>179</sup> Ibid., p.323
- <sup>180</sup> Give examples
- <sup>181</sup> Amr Khalid, 'Qur'ānic Contemplations: reflecting on the goals of each chapter of the Qur'ān', p.340
- <sup>182</sup> Ibid., p.46
- <sup>183</sup> Ibid., p.184
- <sup>184</sup> In this surah Khalid suggests that V.29 "A seed that produces strong roots..." represents material power, as a prerequisite to be deserving of God's divine openings.
- <sup>185</sup> Ibid., p.291
- <sup>186</sup> Ibid., p.327
- <sup>187</sup> Ibid., p.209
- <sup>188</sup> The verse is S.49 "The Private Rooms" (*Al-Hujarāt*), V.13: "People, We created you all from a single man and a single woman, and made you into races and tribes so that you should recognize one another." See Amr Khalid, 'Aspects of Islam and Social Coexistence: The Case for Britain', p.271
- <sup>189</sup> Amr Khalid, 'Qur'ānic Contemplations: reflecting on the goals of each chapter of the Qur'ān', p.370
- <sup>190</sup> Khalid admits that since leaving Egypt his views have matured since Islam practised in different countries other than in Egypt. See "Riz Khan's One on One", Al-Jazeera, : <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PXBGv8zjXE>, [Accessed on 1 September 2013]
- <sup>191</sup> See section on Surah Groups later in this chapter.
- <sup>192</sup> Amr Khalid, 'Qur'ānic Contemplations: reflecting on the goals of each chapter of the Qur'ān', p.209
- <sup>193</sup> Freedom House, "Country on a Crossroads: Egypt", <http://www.freedomhouse.org/report/countries-crossroads/2007/egypt>, [Accessed on 1 September 2013]
- <sup>194</sup> "Riz Khan's One on One", Al-Jazeera, : <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PXBGv8zjXE>, [Accessed on 1 September 2013]
- <sup>195</sup> Khalid does not offer a link between the surah name and surah goal for all the surahs from Surah Mulk onwards.
- <sup>196</sup> Amr Khalid, 'Qur'ānic Contemplations: reflecting on the goals of each chapter of the Qur'ān', p.12
- <sup>197</sup> For example, S.9 "Repentance" (*al-Tawbah*) is also called "*Barā'ah*"; S.40 "The Forgiver" (*Ghāfir*) is also called "*Mu'min*"; and S.45 "The Kneeling" (*al-Jāthiyah*) is also called "*Sharī'ah*". See Yasir Qadhi, 'An Introduction to the Sciences of the Qur'aan', p.164, and Samir Rashwānī, 'Methodology of Thematic Commentary for the Glorious Qur'ān' (*Manhaj Tafsīr Mawḍū'ī Li al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*), p.324.
- <sup>198</sup> Samir Rashwānī, 'Methodology of Thematic Commentary for the Glorious Qur'ān' (*Manhaj Tafsīr Mawḍū'ī Li al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*), p.324
- <sup>199</sup> There are two incidents involving a cow. The first is V.54 in which the nation of Israel wronged themselves by worshipping a calf (*'ijl*) and the second in V.67, where they almost failed to slaughter a specific cow. The word "*al-Baqarah*" is used in the latter verse.
- <sup>200</sup> Amr Khalid, 'Qur'ānic Contemplations: reflecting on the goals of each chapter of the Qur'ān', p.30-2
- <sup>201</sup> Ibid., p.115
- <sup>202</sup> Ibid., p.381
- <sup>203</sup> Ibid., p.380
- <sup>204</sup> See S.6 "Livestock" (*al-An'ām*) V.97
- <sup>205</sup> Amr Khalid, 'Qur'ānic Contemplations: reflecting on the goals of each chapter of the Qur'ān', p.408
- <sup>206</sup> Ibid., p.46



- <sup>207</sup> Ibid., p.240
- <sup>208</sup> Ibid., p.44
- <sup>209</sup> Ibid., p.29
- <sup>210</sup> Ibid., p.45
- <sup>211</sup> Ibid., p.147
- <sup>212</sup> Ibid., p.280
- <sup>213</sup> Ibid., p.379
- <sup>214</sup> Ibid., p.388. Khalid also links end of S.3 with beginning of S.4 as both mention God consciousness (*taqwā*), ibid., p.67.
- <sup>215</sup> Ibid., p.12
- <sup>216</sup> The divisions do not nearly start and finish at the beginning of each surah so more than one surah can fall into the same *juz*'.
- <sup>217</sup> One opinion, held by Anas ibn Malik (d.712) and Abu Bakr al-Bāqillāni (d. 1013), is that the arrangement was based on the personal reasoning of the Companions on the grounds that different companions held a copy in another arrangement. Proponents argue that this proof is weak because these copies were used for personal use and incomplete, and written during the time when revelation had not completed. The second opinion, held by Jalal al-Din Suyūti (d.1505) and Abu Bakr al-Bayhaqī (d.1066), is that the arrangement is divine except Surah *Tawbah* and Surah *Anfāl*, based on a narration by Abd Allah Ibn Abbas (d.687) in discussion with Uthman ibn Affan. Proponents argue that this narration is too weak to establish any proof. See Yasir Qadhi, 'An Introduction to the Sciences of the Qur'aan', p.161.
- <sup>218</sup> Yasir Qadhi, 'An Introduction to the Sciences of the Qur'aan', p.162
- <sup>219</sup> Angelika Neuwirth, 'Structural, linguistic and literary feature', in McAuliffe, Jane (ed.), 'The Cambridge Companion to the Qur'ān' (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p.98
- <sup>220</sup> "*Khalīfah*" is also referred to a "trustee" or "vicegerent". See Muhammad Abdel Haleem, 'The Qur'ān: A New Translation (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), p.7.
- <sup>221</sup> Al-Qaradawi writes that the second aim of mankind is the vicegerency of God. It means to implement God's orders on earth and establish the truth and justice. Yusuf al-Qaradawi, 'Islam: The Future Civilisation', p.191. Jaafar Idris, however, concludes that the modern concept of man as God's vicegerent vague and insistent as espoused by Abduh, Qutb and Mawdudi are. See Jaafar Idris, 'Is Man the Vicegerent of God', Journal of Islamic Studies, 1:1 (1990), p.109
- <sup>222</sup> Samir Rashwānī, 'Methodology of Thematic Commentary for the Glorious Qur'ān' (*Manhaj Tafsīr Mawḍū'ī Li al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*), p.26
- <sup>223</sup> Amr Khalid, 'Qur'ānic Contemplations: reflecting on the goals of each chapter of the Qur'ān', p.95
- <sup>224</sup> Mohammad H Kamali, 'Shari'ah Law: An Introduction', p.30
- <sup>225</sup> Samir Rashwānī, 'Methodology of Thematic Commentary for the Glorious Qur'ān' (*Manhaj Tafsīr Mawḍū'ī Li al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*), p.350
- <sup>226</sup> Ibid., p.61
- <sup>227</sup> Amr Khalid, 'Qur'ānic Contemplations: reflecting on the goals of each chapter of the Qur'ān', p.347
- <sup>228</sup> Technically S.13 should not be included in this group as its detached letters are "*Alif Lām Mīm Rā*" instead of "*Alif Lām Rā*"
- <sup>229</sup> According to Haleem the people of Hijr were a tribe of Thamud. See Muhammad Abdel Haleem, 'The Qur'ān: A New Translation, p.164.
- <sup>230</sup> Samir Rashwānī, 'Methodology of Thematic Commentary for the Glorious Qur'ān' (*Manhaj Tafsīr Mawḍū'ī Li al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*), p.376
- <sup>231</sup> Ibid., p.135
- <sup>232</sup> Ibid., p.136
- <sup>233</sup> Ibid., p.317
- <sup>234</sup> Ibid., p.346
- <sup>235</sup> Ibid., p.361
- <sup>236</sup> Ibid., p.373
- <sup>237</sup> Ibid., p.393
- <sup>238</sup> Ibid., p.414
- <sup>239</sup> Ibid., p.425
- <sup>240</sup> For example, see S.10 "Jonah" (*Yūnus*) V.14, S.35 "The Creator" (*Fāṭir*) V.39 and S.38 "Sad" (*Ṣād*) V.26
- <sup>241</sup> For example, see S.2 "The Cow" (*al-Baqarah*) V.131, S.3 "The Family of Imran" (*Āla 'Imrān*) V.20, S.4 "Women" (*al-Nisā'*) V.125, S.5 "The Feast" (*al-Mā'idah*) V.44, S.6 "Livestock" (*al-An'ām*) V.14, S.27 "The Ants" (*al-Naml*) V.44 and S.37 "Ranged in Rows" (*al-Ṣaffāt*) V.103.

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<sup>242</sup> For example, the value of Qur'ān is the surah goal of S.17 "The Night Journey" (*al-Isrā'*); transference of the message from previous prophets to Muhammad in S.19 "Mary" (*Maryam*); forgive and patience is the surah goal of S.12 "Joseph" (*Yūsuf*).

<sup>243</sup> This is evident due to the following verse that is repeated nine times in this short surah: "Woe, on that Day, to those who denied the truth!" See Muhammad Abdel Haleem, 'The Qur'ān: A New Translation, p.403

<sup>244</sup> Yasir Qadhi, 'An Introduction to the Sciences of the Qur'aan', p.165

<sup>245</sup> Amīn Iṣlāḥī, 'Pondering Over The Qur'ān (*Tadabbur-e-Qur'ān*): Volume One Tafsīr of Surah al-Fatiḥah and Surah al-Baqarah', p.38

<sup>246</sup> Mustansir Mir, 'Coherence in the Qur'ān: A Study of Iṣlāḥī's Concept of Naẓm in *Tadabbur-i Qur'ān*', p.39

<sup>247</sup> Amīn Iṣlāḥī, 'Pondering Over The Qur'ān (*Tadabbur-e-Qur'ān*): Volume One Tafsīr of Surah al-Fatiḥah and Surah al-Baqarah', p.45

<sup>248</sup> See Mustansir Mir, 'Coherence in the Qur'ān: A Study of Iṣlāḥī's Concept of Naẓm in *Tadabbur-i Qur'ān*', p.53.

<sup>249</sup> Ibid., p.39

<sup>250</sup> Ibid., p.49

<sup>251</sup> Amīn Iṣlāḥī, 'Selections from the *Tadabbur-i-Qur'ān*', Vol.8, p.487

<sup>252</sup> Ibid., p.441

<sup>253</sup> The phrase in S.39 "The Throngs" (*al-Zumar*) V.23 is also used to support surah pairs: "*Kitāban Mutashābihan Mathānī*".

<sup>254</sup> Give example, Iṣlāḥī's rule of adjacency between surah pairs breaks down: S.55 and S.56 are called a pair while later on S.56 and S.57 are called a pair. Mir also identifies a lack of clarity in Iṣlāḥī's terminology of supplementary surah. See Mustansir Mir, 'Coherence in the Qur'ān: A Study of Iṣlāḥī's Concept of Naẓm in *Tadabbur-i Qur'ān*', p.80-83.

<sup>255</sup> See Chapter 5 -Thematic Exegesis of Amr Khalid

<sup>256</sup> Mustansir Mir, 'Coherence in the Qur'ān: A Study of Iṣlāḥī's Concept of Naẓm in *Tadabbur-i Qur'ān*', p.77-9

<sup>257</sup> A Supplementary Surah has no independent entity as a dual of a surah.

<sup>258</sup> Amīn Iṣlāḥī, 'Pondering Over The Qur'ān (*Tadabbur-e-Qur'ān*): Volume One Tafsīr of Surah al-Fatiḥah and Surah al-Baqarah', p.40

<sup>259</sup> Mustansir Mir, 'Coherence in the Qur'ān: A Study of Iṣlāḥī's Concept of Naẓm in *Tadabbur-i Qur'ān*', p.76

<sup>260</sup> Amīn Iṣlāḥī, 'Selections from the *Tadabbur-i-Qur'ān*', Vol.8, p.38

<sup>261</sup> Ibid., p.174

<sup>262</sup> Amīn Iṣlāḥī, 'Pondering Over The Qur'ān (*Tadabbur-e-Qur'ān*): Volume One Tafsīr of Surah al-Fatiḥah and Surah al-Baqarah', p.39

<sup>263</sup> Mustansir Mir, 'Coherence in the Qur'ān: A Study of Iṣlāḥī's Concept of Naẓm in *Tadabbur-i Qur'ān*', p.95

<sup>264</sup> Ibid., p.87

<sup>265</sup> Ibid., p.90

<sup>266</sup> Massimo Campanini, 'The Qur'ān: Modern Muslim Interpretations', p.54

<sup>267</sup> Amīn Iṣlāḥī, 'Pondering Over The Qur'ān (*Tadabbur-e-Qur'ān*): Volume One Tafsīr of Surah al-Fatiḥah and Surah al-Baqarah', p.35