OBJECTIVE-BASED EXEGESIS OF THE QUR'AN: A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK (*)

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ABSTRACT

Al-Tafsir al-Maqasidi represents an exclusive maqasidic (purposive) trend in Qur'anic exegesis. In the available trends in tafsir, the maqasidic approach has yet to be treated exclusively and has been subject to only partial discussions. For the sake of a better understanding, a transformation in this trend from being inclusive to exclusive is needed. Unlike other exegetical trends in terms of basic components, mechanisms and focus, al-Tafsir al-Maqasidi centres on exploring the objectives of the Qur'an in a methodological manner.It then outlines how the Qur'anic contents develop a purposive (maqasidic) unity based on objectives and their means.Subsequently, it explores how these objectives materialised in the first generation of Islam. Thus, an exegesis in the light of these basic components would usher new angles, dimensions and methods of understanding the particular aspects of the Qur'an.

Keywords: Tafsir, al-Tafsir al-Maqasidi, Qur'an, Objectives of the Qur'an, Methods of Tafsir, Trends of Tafsir.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Islam focuses on actions as means through which objectives could be achieved. The Qur'an and the traditions of the Prophet (pbuh) make it crystal clear that if the objective of any function or ritual in the name of Islam is not achieved, the very function will remain a nominal performance and devoid of substance. The Qur'an is outspoken on this issue as witnessed in the cases of the pilgrimage (hajj), fasting (*sawm*), jihad and others. In regards to pilgrimage, the verse of the Qur'an affirms that the rituals performed by pilgrimage be meaningful and fruitful when they lead to the attainment of righteousness (*al-birr*). The Qur'an says, "They ask you (O Muhammad SAW) about the new moons. Say: These are signs to mark fixed periods of time for mankind and for the pilgrimage. It is not Al-Birr (piety, righteousness, etc.) that you enter the houses from the back but Al-Birr (is the quality of the one) who fears Allah. So enter houses through their proper doors, and fear Allah that you may be successful." (Al-Qur'an, 2:189) "It is neither their meat nor their blood that reaches Allah, but it is piety from you that reaches Him. Thus have We made them subject to you that you may magnify Allah for His Guidance to you. And give glad tidings (O Muhammad SAW) to the Muhsinun (doers of good)." (Qur'an, 22: 37)

On several occasions, the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) clarified the significance of seeking to realise the objectives of prescribed actions. According to Prophetic narrations, rituals are valueless if their objectives are not attained. Regarding fasting, the Prophet said, "Allah has no interest in any person's abstention from eating and drinking, if that person does not give up lying and dishonest actions" [narrated by Abū Hurayrah in Øaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī]. In another tradition, he asserted that, "there are some people who fast, but their fasting is nothing more than abstention from food, and there are many who pray (at night), but whose praying is no more than being awake at night" [Musnad Aḥmad, narrated by Abu Hurayrah]. Evidently, attaining objectives is an important concern of the Qur'an and a requirement for the validity of actions. Hence, for promoting a better and easy understanding of the action-objective interconnection in the Qur'anic discourse, there should be a new genre of *tafsīr* that exclusively focuses on the maqāṣidic dimension of the Qur'an.

There are many trends in tafsīr i.e. jurisprudential, rhetorical, thematic, linguistic, socio-political, sectarian etc. developed to understand the Qur'an from different perspectives. Every trend has its distinctive role and contribution in understanding the Qur'an. For example, Tafsīr al-Bỳlhāwī focused on the linguistic explanation of the Qur'an, al-Kasshāf focused on its rhetorical aspects, Fī zilāl al-Qur'an by Syed Qutb focused on the Qur'anic worldview and the artistic beauty of the Qur'an, al-Jāmiʿ li Aḥkām al-Qur'an by al-Qurṭubī highlighted the legal aspects of the jurisprudential verses. These approaches to the understanding of the Qur'an highlight different analytical tools and tendencies. However, in the contemporary trends, although there are many tafsīr works such as Tafhīm al-Qur'an, al-Taḥrīr wa al-Tanwīr, Tafsīr al-Manār, Fīzilāl al-Qur'an, Tadabbur-i-Qur'an, al-Tafsīr al-ḥadīth which cast a noteworthy focus on the maqāṣidic interpretation of the verses, none of them have been exclusively dedicated to the maqāṣidic perspective. As a result, an exclusive maqāṣidic trend of tafsīr has yet to develop. It is therefore reasonable to argue that along with other trends of Qur'anic exegesis, an exclusively maqāṣidic approach could uncover important a new dimensions in our understanding of the Qur'an.

2. DEVELOPMENTS OF THE MAQĀṢIDIC TRENDIN TAFSIR

Though there are maqāṣidic trends in contemporary Qur'anic exegesis, this trend was rarely fashionable in the early exegetical tradition. There is no discourse on the maqāṣid until after the introduction of the tafsīr bi al-ray approach. The exegetical narrations of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) known as "Book of Tafsir" contained no specific maqāṣid content. Yet, this silence does not necessarily mean that the maqāṣidic understanding of the Qur'an was absent during this early period. There is evidence suggesting the essence of the action-objective dynamic in the Qur'an during the revelation period. The following verses testify this claim: "This (the Qur'an) is a bayān." (al-Qur'an, 3:138), "And We have revealed unto thee the Remembrance that thou mayst explain (tubayyina) to mankind." (al-Qur'an,16:44) "Then lo! upon Us (resteth) the explanation (bayānahu) thereof." (al-Qur'an, 75:19) In these verses, the Qur'an is characterised as a bayān which signifies "exposing objectives in an eloquent language." (Ibn Manẓūr, 1984: 7/134) Al-bayān is an expression by which something's purport is manifested to the audience by a speaker. (Al-Rāzī, 1995: 1/73) A speech could be characterised as bayān only when it manifests an intended meaning. (Al-Munāwī, 1989: 148-149)

Moreover, "li tubayyina", in the above mentioned verses, contains a causative case which refers to the fact that one of the objectives of the Prophet (pbuh) is to interpret and convey the objectives of the Qur'anic message. (Ibn ʿĀshūr, 1984: 14/196) Moreover, delivering the maqāṣidic dimension of the Qur'an, being an aim of his prophethood, was delivered to mankind as the Prophet (pbuh) perfectly conveyed his entrusted message and amanah.

In the period subsequent to rophet Muḥammad (pbuh), his companions established various schools of Qur'anic exegesis. However, their precise, comprehensive knowledge of the reasons or contexts of revelations, and their being the direct addressees of the Qur'anic address enabled them to understand the objectives of (maqāṣid) the Qur'an. This rich legacy of understanding the wisdom behind the Qur'anic discourse as well as its real spirit meant that having a specific discourse on the maqāṣidic interpretation of the Qur'an redundant.

Though the period of the Tābiʿūn was a starting point for the emergence of distinct schools of Tafsīr in Makkah, Madīnah and Kūfah, nomaqāṣidic interpretive trend emerged in this period. Therefore, it can be argued that the maqāṣid of the Qur'an in this era was practically understood similarly to the first generation of Muslims.

At the end of the second (A.H.) /eight (C.E.) century, in the formative period of Qur'anic exegesis, a full length of exegetical works covering the whole Qur'an had started[1]but the focus remained within the linguistic domain. (Hussein Abdul-Raof, 2010: 29) The lexicographic nature of exegesis might not be an expression of Qur'an's universal maqāṣid or any specific verse because it does not leave any room for the identifying the tools of maqāṣid such as thematic induction, wisdom (ḥikmah), raison d'ītre (ʿillah) etc. to function. Mere semantic denotation of the verses is too narrow for the full-fledge functional scope of these tools. Hence, early exegetical genres contributed little to the maqāṣidic exegesis of the Qur'an.

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[1] A number of works in this period had been conducted in an extended manner and sequentially organized. The major works of this type are al-FarrÉ's (d.207/822) MaÑÉni al-Qur'Én; ÑAbd al-RazzÉk al-SanÑÉni's (d.211/827) Tafsīr al-Qur'Én; al-Akhfash al-AwsaÏ's (d. 215/830) MaÑÉni al-Qur'Én; and others. Along with these, many more "specialized Qur'Énic literatures such as those by al-KisÉʾī (d.187/803), MutasÉbih al-Qur'Én; AbËÑUbaydah (d.210/825), MajÉz al-Qur'Én; AbËÑUbayd (d.224/838), FaÌÉʾil al-Qur'Én; and Ibn QuÏaybah (d.276/889) Mushkil al-Qur'Én and Gharīb al-Qur'Én, present exegetical material in literary forms dictated by specific concerns (which provide the basis for later ÑulËm al-Qur'Én works)." [Andrew Rippin, The Qur'Én: Formative Interpretation (USA: Brookfield, Ashgate Publishing Company, 1999), xiii.]

The two popular approaches of exegesis in the classical period of Qur'anic literature were the "traditional" (tafsīr bi al-ma'thūr) and "hypothetical" (tafsīr bi al-rāy').[1] The distinctive feature of these voluminous commentaries is that they include long philosophical and theological discussion. (Watt, 1970: 171) In this period, a maqāṣidic interpretation is seen when the interpreters used synonymous terms for maqasidlike "al-murād", "al-maʿanī", "al-dalālah" etc. Although these terms do not encompass the meaning of maqāṣid,they should nevertheless be regarded as a substitute expression of maqāṣid. What al-Ùabarī means by "al-Maʿānī" is phrased by contemporary scholars as maqāṣid.Maqāṣidic exegesis in this period, received a significant treatment by both exegetical and non-exegetical literatures. Prominent interpreters like Al-Baghawi (d.510A.H. /1116C.E.), Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d.606A.H/1209C.E.), ʿIzz al-Dīn ibn ʿĀbd al-Salām(d.660AH/1261C.E),Burhān al-DīnAbū al-ḥasanIbrāhīm al-Biqāʿī (d.885A.H)contributed to the maqāṣidic exegesis of the Qur'an.

In short, despite the maqāṣidic exegesis of al-Qur'an being non-exclusive, it received significant treatment from prominent Muslim scholarsduring the classical period. This period could be seen as a formative period of this trend in tafsīr.

A breakthrough in the maqāṣidic exegetical trends in contemporary times was brought about by prominent exegetes and scholars[2]such as Muḥammad ʿAbdu, Ibn ʿĀshūr, Mawdūdī, and Izzat Darwazah who strongly argued that introducing the objectives (maqāṣid)of Qur'an should be one of the principles of tafsīr. According to Muhammad ʿAbduh, a desired exegesis of the Qur'an presents understandings of the Qur'an according to its higher objectives that guide mankind toward happiness in this world and the hereafter. (ʿAbduh, 1993: 4/7) He asserted thatan over emphasis on Qur'anic styles, syntax, past stories, gharib al-Qur'an, legal discussion, theological debates, advice and mysticism may overshadow the main purpose of the Qur'an and shroud its

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[1] Al-Ùabarī's (d. 310/923) JÉmiÑ al-BayÉn was perhaps the first born of this genre. Some other notable tafsīrs of this period are Abu al-Layth al-Samrqandī's (d.375 A.H.) BaÍr al-ÑUlÉm, Al-Baghawī's (d.510 A.H.) MaÑÉlim al-Tanzīl, Ibn-ÑAÏiyyah al-Andalusī's (d.542 A.H.) al-MuÍarrir al-Wajīz, al-RÉzi's (d.606 A.H.) MafÉtīÍ al-Ghaib, al-QurÏubī's (d.671 A.H.) al-JÉmiÑ li AÍkÉm al-Qur'Én, Ibn Kathīr's (d.774 A.H.) tafsīr al-Qur'Én al-ÑAẒīm, al-ThaÑÉlibī's (d. 875A.H.) al-JawÉhir al-×assÉnfīTafsīr al-Qur'Én. Abdullah Saeed, *Islamic Thought: an Introduction* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 27.

[2] Such as MuÍammadÑAbduh (d.1905), RashīdRiÌÉ (d.1935), BadīÑuzzamÉnSaÑīdNËrsī (d.1960), Ibn ÑÓshËr (d.1973), ×asan al-BannÉ (d.1949), MuÍammdIqbÉl (d.1938), SayyedQuÏb (d.1966), AbulÑAlaMawdËdī (d.1989), IzzatDarwazah (d.1987), MuÍammad al-GhazÉlī (d. 1996), YusËf al-QaradÉwī (b.1926) and others.

original meanings. (ʿAbduh, 1993: 4/8) In the fourth introduction of his tafsir al-Tahrirwa al-Tanwir, IbnʿĀshūr makes it vital for an exegete to look into the maqasid of the Qur'an. He asserted that the main task of an exegete should be the illustration of Qur'an's objective. According to him, the value of a tafsīr should be evaluated on how it approaches the maqāṣidic dimension. He strongly opposed any kind of interpretation contradicting the objectives of the Qur'an. Thus, for IbnʿĀshūr, in interpreting the Qur'an an interpreter must possess knowledge of its maqāṣid. (al-Mawdūdī, 2000: 1/36)

Izzat Darwaza outlined an "exemplary methodology of understanding the Qur'an and its exegesis" in the introduction of his exegetical work entitled *al-Tafsīr al-ḥadīth* (the Modern Exegesis) and his book *al-Qur'an al-Majīd*. He delineated the best ways of understanding the Qur'an,[1] among which included "the Qur'an's fundamentals (*usus*) and their means". (Darwaza, n.d: 1/141) These two, according to him, represent the complete contents of the Qur'an. The former is the essence because it comprises the purposes of revelation and the prophet's mission, while the latter is the secondary (means). "Observance of this distinction between the fundamentals and means is very important for the reader of the Qur'an in order not to lose sight of the trunk and get lost in the undergrowth. The exegetes should pay more attention to what is essential, because any discourse about the secondary, auxiliary things leads nowhere." (Poonawala, 1993: 231)

Scholars'encouragement oftheapplication of the maqāṣidic approach in the exegesis of the Qur'an is reflected in a number of contemporary exegetical works such as Tafsīr al-Manār, al-Taḥrīrwa al-Tanwīr, tafhīm al-Qur'an, al-Tafsīr al-ḥadīth, tadabbur-i-Qur'an, FīÚilāl al-Qur'an and others. Exegetes generally approach the maqāṣidic trends of exegesis by firstly describing the themes and purposes of the sūrah at the beginning of that sūrah, and secondly, by focusing on the purpose of any specific verse. This approach is graduallybecoming a phenomenon in contemporary approaches to Qur'anic exegesis though it still lacks exclusive maqāṣidic coverage.

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[1]. His other exemplary methodologies of understanding the Quran and its exegesis are: connection between the Quran and the biography of the Prophet (pbuh); observance of close connection between the Prophet's milieu and his mission on the one hand, and between the Quranic revelation and the pre-Islamic milieu on the other; understanding the Quranic language in its vocabulary, idiom, style, and syntax; Quranic stories; the angels and the jinn in the Quran; phenomena of nature and its laws in the Quran; life in hereafter in the Quran; the Self of Allah in the Quran; the sequences and context of the Quranic verses; Understanding the Quran through the Quran.

3. SCOPE OF MAQĀṢIDIC TAFSIR

In the Qur'an, it is not necessary that every verse must refer to an objective. Rather, several verses or a group of verses revolving around a particular theme could share one purpose. Hence, Tafsīr al-Maqāṣidī is classified into three dimensions.Firstly, one verse could carry one maqṣad or more. Interpretation of the maqāṣid found in one verse could be one aspect of tafsīr al-maqāṣidī. For example, the second verse of Sẽrah al-Baqarah: "This is the Scripture whereof there is no doubt, a guidance unto those who ward off". This verse clearly indicates that constituting Huda (a guide) is one of objectives of the Qur'an. Secondly, a group of verses could carry a single maqṣad. For example, all the verses of Sūrah al-Ikhlāṣ contains the single maqṣad of tawḥīd. Finally, several scattered verses carrying an identical causative particle of a theme could indicate a maqṣad, such as establishing justice, which is mentioned in a number of verses. (Al-Qur'ān, 57: 25, 4: 105, 2: 213)
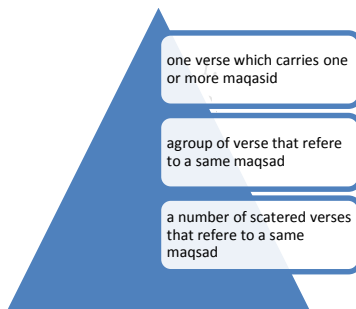

Figure1: The scopes of al-tafsīral-maqāṣidī

4. PRINCIPLES OF AL-TAFSIR AL-MAQASIDI

First, as al-Tafsīr al-Maqāṣidīis a focused interpretation of the Qur'anic objectives. The first is to identify an objective (maqṣad) from the Qur'anic text through a methodological process. The identified objective should be grounded on reliable and persuasive evidence whether logical and/or textual. For example, "certification of Prophethood" is one of the lofty objectives (maqasid) of the Qur'an thatcould be proved in a methodological way. Numerous textual proofs of the Qur'anic verses assert this when containing a common effective cause (ʿillah) for the Qur'anic revelation in this connection. The verses are:

- It is He Who sent down to thee (step by step), in truth, the Book, confirming what went before it. (Al-Qur'an, 3:3)

- O ye People of the Book! believe in what We have (now) revealed, confirming what was (already) with you. (Al-Qur'an, 4:47)

- This Qur'an is not such as can be produced by other than Allah; on the contrary it is a confirmation of (revelations) that went before it, and a fuller explanation of the Book. (Al-Qur'an, 10:37)

Linguistically, the word "مُصَدِّقَاً" (muṣaddiqa) is used in the above verses as a circumstantial phrase (ḥāl) which poses emphasis in a way that gives meaning that the Qur'an can be nothing but a confirming book for previous scriptures as well as for itself. (Darwaza, n.d: 4/5) From the grammatical perspective, the word "تَصْدِيقَ" (taṣdīqa) in Q,10: 37 is used as a causative object (mafʿullahu). (al-ʿAkbarī, n.d: 2/675) This methodological evidence support that "confirming the prophecy" is one of the main objectives of the Qur'an. In addition, these verses introduce the Qur'an as a "confirming Scripture" of divine truths revealed to the Prophets who came before Prophet Muḥammad (pbuh). (Al-Ùabarī, 2000:6/160) These truths include the promise and good tidings about sending him as a prophet, revealing the Qur'an to him, (Ibn Kathīr,n.d: 2/5) tawhīd, prophecies, stories and some selected laws (Al-Baghawī, n.d: 2/6) which promote human welfare regardless of the era. (Al-Rāzī, 1995: 7/137) In the Qur'anic, prophecy is indivisible (al-Qur'an, 2:136) as all the Messengers have preached the same essential message of tawhīd. (Fazlur Rahman, 1999: 82-83) It therefore becomes evident that one of the major purposes of the Qur'an is the confirmation of the prophecy, particularly that of the last Prophet. The logical and textual strength of evidences presented above provide an irrefutable and definite identification for "certifying the prophethood" as one of the main objectives of the Qur'an. If the objective is not precisely identified, it would be very difficult to proceed to the next steps i.e. "corroborating with means" as well as "reflection of that very maqṣad in the practical life of the first generation of Muslims." It is impossible that a fake objective be corroborated by "means" available in the Qur'an. Similarly, practical reflection of that very objective will not be seen in the lives of the first generation of Muslims because only the real objectives were actualised in them.

Second, outlining the conceptual background, in the light of Qur'an and Sunnah, of the identified maqṣad. The whole discussion should be no more

than a summary of the concept of that very maqṣad. This component could benefit from other trends of tafsīr i.e. thematic, linguistic, rhetorical, societal etc. that elaborate various aspects of the selected objective. For example, gaining "God-consciousness" (taqwa) is among the main objectives of the Qur'an. In this connection, the interpreter should provide basic ideas on taqwa such as definition, importance, implications, impacts, benefits etc.

Third, combining between objectives andtheir means. This combination is logical, as Mawdudi pointed out that, "there are essentially two component factors in any work which a man has to perform. The first thing is the purpose for which a work is done and the second thing is the particular shape of that work which is chosen to achieve that purpose." (al-Mawdūdī, 1995) As maqāṣid and their means are interrelated and complementary, a maximum number of means or motive forces mentioned in the Qur'an and Sunnah that lead to the selected maqṣad should be organised according to the sequence of their revelations and gradual directions (tadarruj) of the Prophet Muḥammad.

Wasāi'l (means) should expose the incentives that could lead to their maqāṣid and describe how these means could help in achieving that maqṣad. For example, belief (iman) (al-Quran: 2/177), worship (al-ibadah) (al-Quran: 2/21), fulfilling the promise (al-wafa bi al-ahd) (al-Quran: 3/76), patience (al-Quran: 2/177), truthfulness and certification of the Divine Truth (al-Quran: 39/33), controlling anger and forgiveness (al-Quran: 2/237), remembrance of Allah and seeking forgiveness to Him for sin (al-Quran: 7/201), mutual cooperation (al-ta'awun) (al-Quran: 05/02), warning of Divine Judgment/Punishment (al-Quran: 20/113), acting upon justice (al-Quran: 5/08)etc. are presented in the Qur'an as means to gaining taqwa.

Thus, an interpreter should explore the agents that promote taqwa and organise them according to the sequence of their revelation. Wasāi'l (means) are the functions and rituals and maqṣad are the values or virtues. A virtue or value is developed by certain actions. Thus, these actions should be considered as the wasāi'l for the higher values. The Qur'an mentions actions and rituals that could lead to achieve their respective values and virtues. Strength, accuracy and genuineness of the values lie on the standard of its functions and rituals. Any defect in adopting the means directly affects the smooth attainment of the aims. If aims are not expectedly achieved, it should be understood that wasāi'l have not been properly observed.

Fourth, the objectives of the Qur'an are interrelated. Each plays a complementary rolein promoting others, no matter whether it is a secondary or basic objective. This relation could be understood from the unity of Qur'anic

concepts known as thematic unity (al-wahdah al-mawdūʿiyyah) because maq*ạ̄*id are derived from a reading of Qur'anic concepts. Thus, the interpreter should highlight how the selected objective of the Qur'an relates with its other objectives. This includes explaining how taqwa, a major objective of the Qur'an (Qur'an: 2:2, 3: 185), correlates with others major objectives like Prophethood (Qur'an, 3:3; 4:47) and justice (Qur'an, 4:105).

Fifth, it is believed that most of the maq*ạ̄*id were actualised in the first Islamic era because the Prophet was the practical embodiment of the Qur'an and his companions embodied the Qur'anic generation. Their lives were promoted by the maqāṣid of the Qur'an. Realising a relatively similar impact of the Qur'an and a similar standard of life in contemporary time depends on how perfectly the maqāṣid of the Qur'an are approached.If the quality of personality or lifestyle does not meet the same standard, it should be assumed that the impact of the selected maqṣad could not take root in someone's personality in a manner similar to the first generation. Thus, the selected maqṣad it should be interpreted reflected in the lives of the first Qur'anic generation. This would provide a fresh provision for us in the contemporary world of how a maqṣad should be implemented into practical life. This approach may propel the theoretical directions to the practical.
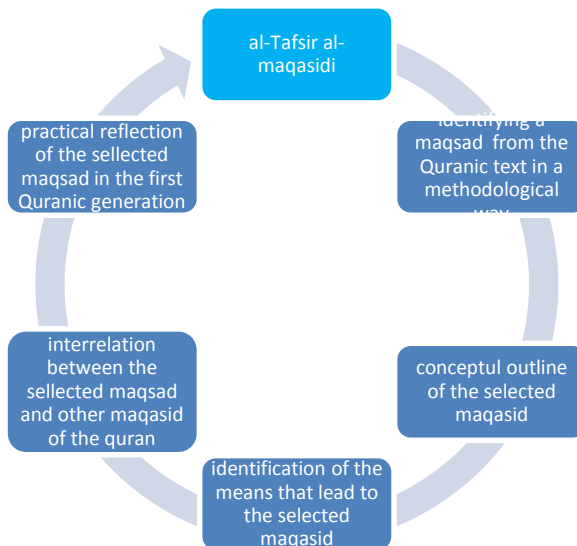

Figure2: The principles of al-tafsīr al-maqāṣidī

5. THE DISTINCTION OF AL-TAFSĪR AL-MAQĀṢIDĪ WITH OTHER TRENDS OF TAFSĪR

5.1. Trends in Tafsīr that are Incoherent with al-Tafsīr al-Maqāṣidī: Al-Tafsīr al-Maqāṣidī shares little resemblance with some well-known trends in tafsīr not intrinsically developed for dealing with the Qur'an's objectives. In other words, reflecting on the maqāṣidic aspect does not fall into their main or secondary concern due to their focus on scientific, linguistic, and jurisprudential tafsīr etc.

5.2 Trends in Tafsīr Contradictory to al-Tafsīr al-Maqāṣidī: there are some trends in tafsīr which could be contradictory to the maqāṣidic trend because they are devoted to specific interests such as philosophical and mystical trends. The mystical trend, for instance, colours the interpretations of the verses with the philosophy of mysticism. Thus, the objectives of the Qur'an are seldom reflected upon. In this connection, al-Dhahabi pointed out that, "while interpreting the Qur'an, a mystic (sufi) interpreter often goes beyond the outward or explicit indications of the verse and manipulate them in order to support the mystical views in the name of so called inner meanings. Ibn Arabi's al-Futuhat al-Makkiyyah and al-Fusul are the best examples of this kind." (al-Dhahabi, 2000: 252) Quoting numerous examples of mystical interpretations, he concludes that this trend of tafsīr has an obvious contradiction to the maqāṣidic approach. He asserted that, "a speculative mystic trend of tafsīr often takes the Qur'an out of its objective. The Qur'an aims at reaching out to a particular objective with its texts and verses. Whereas, the sufi aims at a particular objective through his own speculations and perspectives. This uneven direction of the objective manifests contrast and incoherence. He detracts the Qur'an from its intended aim and objective." (al-Dhahabi, 2000: 256)

5.3. Trends in Tafsīr that are Analogous to al-Tafsīr al-Maqāṣidī: There are some trends in tafsīr that could be seedbeds for the maqāṣidic trend such as social and thematic trends. These are neither devoid of maqāṣidic colour nor exclusively representing it, as both are carrying shared components but while maintaining their own distinctive exclusive dimensions. These trends would be major sources for the maqāṣidic trend of tafsīr. For example, a thematic tafsīr on taqwa essentially discusses a wide range of issues of which al-Tafsīr al-Maqāṣidī could benefit in terms of conceptual outline of taqwa, determining the means that could lead to taqwa, and examples of the impact of taqwa on the first generation of Islam etc.

Societal Trend: most of the maqāṣidic trends of tafsīr are limited to outlining the maqāṣid of a verse or a couple of verses. In other words, they usually do not mention means or wasāī'l that could lead to achieving those higher purposes. For example, achieving taqwa is introduced in the Qur'an as a universal maqsad of the Qur'an in the following verse:

> And thus have We bestowed from on high this [divine writ] as a discourse in the Arabic tongue, and have given therein many facets to all manner of warnings, so that men might remain conscious of Us, or that it give rise to a new awareness in them (Al-Qur'an, 20: 113)

Many exegetes of the Qur'an such as al-Razi, al-Alusi, al-Khazin, Al-Shawkani, Al-Biqa'i, Al-Qurtubi, Ibn Ashur and others agree on the fact that this verse describes that the Qur'an was revealed for the reason that people could be God-conscious. (al-Rāzī, 1995) They mostly consider "the Qur'anic revelation" (anzalnahu Qur'ana) here as a causative element for gaining taqwa. Al-Alusi, while interpreting this verse, says, "theQur'an was revealed for the purpose of achieving taqwa. If in case it is not achieved, it could at least develop the sense of remembrance." (al-Alusi, n.d) Likewise, Al-Khazin says, "the Qur'an was revealed for the reason that people could be God-fearing and restraint from what they should not do." (al-Khazen, n,d) Ibn Ashur tries to prove the same idea from the philological angle. He asserted that 'laʿalla', mentioned in this verse, is a particle signifies "expectation" with a meaning that the concern of the Qur'an is to approach people toward taqwa and remembrance. (Ibn ʿĀshūr, 1984: 16/315).

Scholars' views on this verse provide an important clue in determining what should be considered as a universal maqṣad of the Qur'an. Their identification of taqwa as a universal maqsad is rationalised by the causative particles or the causative case (tʿalīl) that is directly concerned with the Qur'anic revelation. In other words, if the term "Qur'anic revelation" (using the words anzala al-Qur'an, nazzala al-Qur'an, tanzil, wahy, etc.) occurs in any verse followed by mentioning its reason, it could be considered a universal maqsad because it is a general reason for the entire Qur'anic discourse. Based on this logic, taqwa is introduced both as a universal and secondary maqsad of the Qur'an.

While interpreting this verse, though the interpreters traced its objective, they hardly referred to any means that could lead to this objective. The benefit of setting an objective and its means side by side is that the readers of tafsīr could gain a clear direction of Qur'anic precepts. The absence of this

dimension in tafsīr encourages producing a tafsīr which would fill this existing gap, as expected from al-Tafsir al-Maqasidi.

Thematic Trend: Among the various trends of tafsīr, the thematic trend is relatively closer to al-Tafsīr al-Maqāṣidī. The focus of a thematic tafsīr could be abstracted to the second component of al-Tafsīr al-Maqāṣidī entitled "overall outline of the selected objective", if the topic is an objective of the Qur'an instead of any of its theme. In addition, al-Tafsīr al-Maqāṣidī would take full advantage of the maqāṣidic dimension of thematic tafsīr.

- Al-Tafsīr al-Maqāṣidī is restricted to outlining the objectives of the Qur'an. In contrast, thematic tafsīr could extend its scope to a specific Qur'anic theme, term and concept such as "Jihad in the Qur'an, Jews in the Qur'an, Women in the Qur'an, international relations in the Qur'an, phenomenal verses in the Qur'an etc."

- Al-Tafsīr al-Maqāṣidī introduces the maqāṣidic unity of the Qur'an which consists of an objective, its means and how it was reflected in the practice of the first Muslim community, whereas the thematic tafsīr introduces a thematic unity of the Qur'an. (Muhammad Abd al-Salam, 1994: 9)

- Thematic tafsīr deals with either a Qur'anic term[1] or a Qur'anic topic[2] or a whole sūrah of the Qur'an that contains various topics (al-Khalidi,

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[1]. This trend in the thematic tafsir deals with a selected term from the Quran such as al-Ilah, al-Ummah, al-silm, al-abd, al-khalifah etc. An interpreter of this trend firstly looks into the verses where this very term and all sorts of its derivatives are occurred. He then, having collected all the relevant verses, tries to find out the indications and lessons that laid in those verses. Ahamd Hasan Farhat's book "al-Ummah fi Dalalatiha al-Quraniyyah could be a better example of this trend of Quranic interpretation. This book includes several chapters, firstly, a presentation of the verses containing the term ummah; secondly, linguistic denotations; thirdly, meanings of term in Quranic use; fourth, reflection of Quranic meanings in Prophet Muhammad's formulation of ummah in Madinah; fifth, an Islamic critique on western elements of forming a ummah; finally, elaboration of the meanings and dimensions of the ummah in the Quran practically reflected in the Muslim ummah. [Salah Abd al-Fattah al-Khalidi, al-Tafsir al-Mawduibayna al-Nadhriyyahwa al-Tatbiq (Jordan: Dar al-Nafais, 2001), 53]

[2]. In the topical trend of al-Tafsir al-Maqasidi, an interpreter firstly gathers a possible number of the Quranic verses about the selected topic and then introduces analytically various aspects and dimensions of that very topic. For example, ruling system in the Quran, methods of Islamic calling in the Quran, the concept of moderation in the Quran etc. This trend is more comprehensive than terminological trend because it refers unlikely to the synonymous terminologies and other topics that are incorporated or containing the complementary agents

2001: 295)[,1] but al-Tafsīr al-Maqāṣidī cannot deal, at one time, with one sūrah as a whole containing different topics or objectives unless a sūrah contains one theme or one objective.
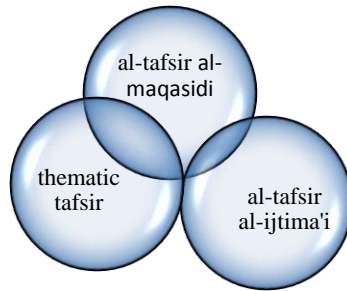

Figure3: Some trends in tafsīr intertwine with al-tafsīr al-maqāṣidī

The sole objective of al-Tafsīr al-Maqāṣidī is to introduce an exclusive trend of maqāṣidic interpretation of the Qur'an. To do so, it firstly combines the objectives of the Qur'an and their means of objectives which are mutually complementary. This interconnection forms a kind of maqāṣidic unity in the Qur'an of which other trends of tafsīrhave been reluctant.
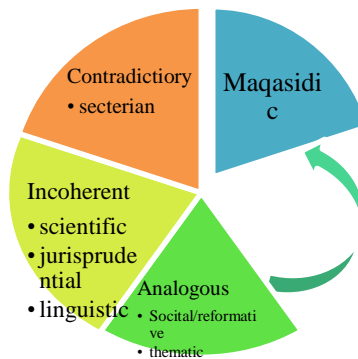

Figure4: The interrelations between different trends in tafsīr

for a better understanding. [Salah Abdul Fattah al-Khalidi, al-Tafsir al-Mawduibayna al-Nadhriyyahwa al-Tatbiq (Jordan: Dar al-Nafais, 2001), 55]

[1] . In thematic tafsir of the Quranic surah, an interpreter focuses on all the central themes that the selected surah containing. He analytically interprets all the topics and presents the main objectives of the surah in a way so that it appears as a body of unity. Many previous and contemporary works highlights this trend such as al-Razi'sMafatih al-Ghaib, al-Biqai'sNadhm al-Durar, RahsidRida'sTafsir al-Manar, Ibn Ashur's al-Tahrirwa al-Tanwir, Fi Zilal al-Quran, al-Mawdudi'sTafhim al-Quran, Al-Islahi's Pondering upon the Quran, Abu Hamid al-Ghazali's the Thematic Tafsir of the Quran etc.

6. CONCLUSION

For each of the objectives of the Qur'an, there must be mention of its means. An objective can never be reached without its proper means. While writing a maqāṣidic tafsīr, the prime task for an exegete is to explore the maqāṣid as well as their means (wasā''l). Thus, a full-fledge work of al-Tafsīr al-Maqāṣidī would gather a maximum number of maqāṣid and their wasāi'l mentioned in the Qur'an. The readers of tafsīr may find this trend as a repertory of Qur'anic maqāṣid.

  If a tafsir is produced based on the concept of maqāṣid al-Qur'an, the room for egoistic interpretation of the Qur'an (tafsīr bi al-rāi' al-madhmūm) would be minimised. A well-defined maqṣad is unchangeable and must be corroborated by the means established by clear evidence from the Qur'an. In this case, an unscrupulous interpreter who tries to misinterpret a maqṣad based on his whim will be rendered helpless when attempting to support his interpretation by the established means for this maqṣad from the Qur'an. As a result, there will appear an inconsistency between the maqāṣid and wasāi'l. No maqṣad is acceptable as a maqṣad if it is not supported by the obvious means from the Qur'an or Sunnah. Any interpretation of the Qur'anic maqāṣid devoid of this integration could be proved unsound.

  The interpretation of any verse could vary according to the changing tides of time, but any well-defined maqāṣidic interpretation may not be inconsistent because it interprets the maqṣad which does not vary with the pace of time. Therefore, maqāṣidic tafsīr would be cantered to a fixed idea or topic. Whereas, non-maqāṣidic tafsīr would be decentralised or multi-faced in order to fit with the time and context.

  The prolonged distance of time and space between now and the early Islamic era has been a hindrance to forming a comprehensive practical scenario of the impacts of the Qur'an on society. However, all the personal and societal transformations into an ideal stage in that period were nothing but the real impact of the maqāṣid al-Qur'an. Hence, the maqāṣidic highlights in the Qur'anic interpretation could be an effective impetus to reproduce a rather similar of the Qur'an on contemporary societies. It could marginalise the paradigm of ritualistic disagreements or debates and redirect it toward the debate of quality building. For example, prayer (salah), whose rituals are widely disagreed upon by the different schools of Islamic thought. However, there is hardly any disagreement on its objectives. So, a maqāṣid-focused exegesis could minimise focus on disagreements.

  According to al-Ghazali, an objective (maqsid) of the Qur'an represents its core and the ideas other than the maqasid are peripheral. It could be an

interesting approach if the periphery are understood in the light of the core. In another sense, if Qur'anic themes are presented in a form of how they are co-related in relation with a single objective of the Qur'an, an objective-based (maqāṣidic) unitary approach could be born. This study argued that al-Tafsīr al-Maqāṣidī brings the Qur'anic understanding from the periphery to the centre because the maqṣad of the verse is the core or centre and its other details are complementary. The maqāṣidic perspective of Qur'anic interpretation could be a vehicle for transforming human ritual functions into developing values and virtues because the maqāṣid of the Qur'an are mostly described as either values or virtues.

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