

Quran and Mathematics-I

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ABSTRACT: Quran has not only emphasized on the acquisition of knowledge and laid down foundation of scientific method by making orders of observation, thinking, contemplation, utilization of vision and reasoning for derivation of result but, it also forwarded the greatest step towards knowledge and science by associating performance of its religious rituals with high standard mathematical sciences. For example, Mawaqeeat, regulation of lunar calendar, determination of direction of Qibla, Ilm ul Fara'id, (Inheritance) Islamic decorative art, calculation of Zkat, Ushr, and Kharaj, weight and measures. These Quranic commands and religious necessities compelled and led the muslim scientists to mathematical research which resulted in the invention of numeral and number system. So in this article the author has tried to bring the light on the mathematical aspect of Quran very briefly.

Mathematics & Religious Rituals in Islam

The importance of science and mathematics in Islam can be visualized by the fact that mathematical science is used in the performance of religious rituals in Islam. If we study the history of religions, we can not find a single such like example. There is no any other religion of mankind in which scientific or mathematical concepts and procedures are used in the performance of religious rituals.¹ The Rom Landau recognized the fact by saying that truly startling features of the Arabic achievements in mathematics is the result of its religious commands. It became vitally important for the Muslims to know correctly the position of Makkah in relation to all different parts or locations of the Muslims world. The Muslims were also compelled to determine the movements of sunrise and sunset, the rising and creation of the moon by which the Muslims regulate the observance of the fast of the Ramadan; and finally, the correct measurement of surfaces for the purposes of division of inherited land according to teaching of Quran. In order to perform all these diverse tasks, the Muslims had to developed the mathematical concepts.² Besides the Quranic inducement and appreciation of scientific knowledge, there are five main aspects of religious rituals in which mathematics is applied compulsorily;

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- 39 . Al-Khauuli Amin, *Al-Balāghah wa Ilm al-Nafs*, Majallah Kuliyah al-Ādāb, Fuad I'University, vol. 4, Part 2, December, 1939. The discussion was later on included in *Manāhij Tajdid*, op.cit., p. 315.
- 40 . Amin al-Khauuli quotes these varying dimensions of i'ijaz from Al-Qurtubi, *Al-Jāmi li Akhām al-Quran*, Cairo, Dar al-Kutub, vol. I, pp. 72-75.
- 41 . Al-Khauuli, *Manāhij Tajdid*, op.cit., p. 201.
- 42 . Ibid., p. 203.
- 43 . Al-Jahiz, Abu Uthman, *al-Bayān wa al-Tabyin*, al-Sindubi, 1345 A.H., vol. 1, p. 85. In his *Kitab al-Hayawān* too the author deals with this style differently. He says: "We have seen in the Quran how does it talk of the Arabs and the Bedonin with the implicities, concise words and by the style of short-cuts and when it addresses the Jews and the Christians or narrates of them it becomes elaborative and expresses extravagantly. Al-Sasi edition, vol. 1, p. 46.
- 44 . Al-Baqillāni, Abu Bakr, *I'ijaz al-Quran*, edited by al-sayyid Ahmad al-Saqr, Egypt, Dar al-Ma'arif, 1954, p. 51.
- 45 . Ibid., p. 88.
- 46 . Al-Sakkaki, Abu Yaqub, *Miftāh al-Uloom*, Egypt, al-Halbi, 13'18 A.H., p. 247.
- 47 . Al-Alawi, *Kitab al-Tirāz*, op.cit., vol. 3, p. 444.
- 48 . Al-Rafi'I, op.cit., pp. 256-257.
- 49 . Al-Khauuli, *Manāhij Tajdid*, op.cit., pp. 205-210.
- 50 . Al-Razi, Fakhruddin, *Al Tafsir al-Kabir*, Dar Ihya al-Turath al-Arabi, Beirut, New edition, 1417 A.H./1997 A.D., vol. 8, pp. 530-532.
- 51 . Al-Zamakhshari, Abul Qasim Mahmood bin Umar, *Al-Kashshāf*, ed. Ab dur Razzaq al-Mahdi, Dar Ihya al-Turath al-Arabi, Beirut, 1417/1997 Ist edition, Part III, pp. 339-340.
- 52 . Al-Khauuli, *Manāhij Tajdid*, op.cit., pp. 211-213.
- 53 . Al-Himsi, Nu'aym, op.cit., p. 134.

“No after-ache will they receive therefrom, nor will they suffer intoxication” (56: 19).

The two words combined altogether the defects of the wine used in this world, such as satiety, aches, excess, a sense of exhaustion, or loss of senses etc. Narrating the fruits available in the Paradise, another example of being concise as well as elaborative in the meaning, the Quran says :

“Whose season is not limited, nor supply forbidden” (56: 33).

The fruits provided therein will be free, unlimited and inexhaustible. There will be no prohibition by law or custom or circumstance as to when or how it is to be consumed. The two phrases combined together all these concepts (*I'ijaz al-Quran*, p. 170).

19. Ibid., p. 171.
20. Ibid., p. 173.
21. Ibid., p. 192.
22. Ibid., p. 207.
23. Ibid., p. 212.
24. Ibid., p. 232.
25. Ibid., p. 241.
26. Ibid., p. 242.
27. Ibid., pp. 249-250.
28. Ibid., pp. 299-300.
29. Al-Khauuli, Amin, *Manāhij Tajdid fi al-Nahw wa al-Balaghah wa Al-Tafsir wa al-Adab*, Dar al-Marifah, Egypt, September, 1961, Preface by Dr. Shukri Muhammad Abbad, pp. 8-9.
30. Al-Askari, Abu Hilal, *Kitab al-Sanā'atayn: Al-Nazm wa al-Nathr, Taba'h al-Astanzh*, p. 2.
31. Al-Alwi, Yahya bin Hamzah, *Kitab al-Tirāz al-Mutadhammin li Asrār al-Balāghah wa Uloom Haqāiq al- I'ijaz*, Cairo, Al-Muqtataf Publications, p. 13.
32. Al-Khauuli, Amin, *Manāhij Tajdid*, pp. 168-169.
33. Ibid.
34. Al-Sakkāki, Yusuf bin Abu Bakr al-Khawarizmi, *Miftāh al-Uloom*, Taba'h al-Halbi, Cairo, 1318 A.H., pp. 176, 216-217.
35. Ibid., p. 174.
36. Al-Ghazali Abu Hamid, *Ihya Uloom al-Din*, Al-Halbi edition, the fourth chapter on the Understanding of the Quran and its Interpretation by the Individual Opinion, vol. 1, pp. 259-2164.
37. Al Ghazali, Abu Hamid, *Jawāhir al-Quran, Egypt, Matb'ah, Kurdistan al-Ilmiyah, 1229 A.H.*, pp. 28-29.
38. Ibid., pp. 31-34.

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1. Al-Khauḍī, Amin, *Al Tafsir M'aālīm Hayatīhi wa Manhajuhu al-Yaum*, Cairo, 1315 AH, p. 20.
2. Ibid., p. 2.
3. Ibid., p. 112.
4. This sciencism by the novel interpretation of the Quran and the hadith was exhibited by Shaykh Muhammad Tawfiq Sidqui through his lectures on the laws of God executed in the universe.
5. Jawhari, Tantawi (al-Hakim al-shaykh), *Al-Jawāhir fī Tafsir al-Quran al-Karīm*, Mustafa al-Babi al-Halbi, Egypt, IInd ed. Shawwal 1350 AH No. 171, vol. I, pp. 1-2.
6. Ibid., p. 2.
7. Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 19.
8. Ibid., Vol. 25, p. 53.
9. Abduh, Muhammad, *Risālah al-Tawhīd*, Beirut, p. 96.
10. Rida, Sayyid Muhammad Rashid in his Preface to, Mustafa Sadiq al-Rafii, *I'ijaz al-Quran wa al-Balāghat al-Nabawiyah*, Egypt, al-Maktabah al-Tijariyah al-Kubra, 8th ed. 1389/1696, p. 17.
11. Al-'Aryān, Muhammad Saeed, Hayāt al-Rafii, Cairo, Matb'ah al-Istiqamah, IIIrd ed. 1375/1955, p. 163.
12. Al-Himsi, Nu'aym, *Tarikh Fikrah I'ijaz al-Quran*, Damascus, 1374/1955, p. 123. For the severe criticism in the derogatory style by al-Rafii, see his interaction to Mutazilites especially to Abu Ishaq Ibrahim al-Nazzam whom he titles *shaytan al-Mutakallimin*, the satan amongst the scholastic scholars. Al-Rafii, Mustafa Sadiq, *I'ijaz al-Quran wa al-Balāghat al-Nabawiyah*, op.cit., p. 162. On the same page the author repeats: "But al-Nazzam, who excessively supported the *Sarfah* theory of *I'ijaz* was amongst the satans of the scholasticism".
13. Al-Rafii, Mustafa Sadiq, *I'ijaz al-Quran wa al-Balāghat al-Nabawiyah*, p. 156.
14. Ibid., pp. 162-165.
15. Ibid., pp. 165-167.
16. Ibid., p. 166.
17. Ibid., p. 169.
18. Al-Rafii, for instance, has quoted al-Jahiz from his *Kitab al-Hayawān* saying: "I have written a book in which I have collected altogether the verses from the Quran so that you may identify the literary beauties of *i'ijaz* (abridgement) and *hadhf* (deletion from), and of *zāid* (addition to), *fuzul* (extra letters), and *isti'arah* (the metaphor). If you read them you will find their merit in being concise in the structure and expressive abundantly in the meanings and connotations by the lesser words. For example describing the wine to be used by the peoples of Paradise the Quran says :

and structures. This was theorized more systematically by Hamiduddin (Abdul Hamid) al-Farahi (1280-1349/1863-1930) and was further elaborated and applied in his urdu commentary of the Quran titled *Tadabbur-i Quran* by Amin Ahsan Islahi (1904-1997) one of the most accomplished students of Farahi.

chapter *al-Shu'ara*) changes their order slightly and explains the verse No. 195 as a subsequent to the verse No. 193. The verses are thus arranged as "with it came down the spirit of Faith and Truth, in the perspicuous Arabic tongue, to your heart and mind that you may admonish".

Al-Zamakhshari, then, explains how the revelation in the eloquent Arabic language was made on the heart of the Prophet (SAW). He says interpreting the verses in the divine tone: "In case the Quran was revealed in non-Arabic language, it was to be sent down to your ears and not to your heart because you would have heard the sounds of letters without understanding their meanings". The author then provides the rationale. Sometimes a person knows a number of languages. When he speaks the language he had first learnt nourished and habituated with, his heart automatically accesses the meanings which he has received by his heart and does not take into account how the words were set. In case he speaks besides his mother language, his attention is attracted first by the words then the meanings though he knows that language masterly. This approves the revelation was sent down alongwith the perspicuous Arabic language (*lisān Arabi mubin*).⁵¹

By applying the psychological method in understanding the situation of a person who speaks his mother tongue as well as that of who speaks other than his mother tongue, al-Zamakhshari exposed the uncertainty over the interpretation and made the issue easier and elaborate even to those who do not think he has provided the ultimate solution. By this argument, the learned commentator exposed the weakness and infirmity of those who quote the above verse to prove their thesis of the revelation with the meaning and not with the words, comments approvingly Amin al-Khauili.⁵² According to al-Khauili, the verses of the controversial meanings like this are not only required to be interpreted with the full cognizance of psychology but the entire Quran should be understood and explained in the given paradigm.

Amin al-Khauili asserts repeatedly his stand of not rationalizing the theory of *i'ijaz*, necessitating no justification at all and having confined its' rationalization within the literary taste and the professional sense of art. Surprisingly he finds no contradiction in his refutation of rationalizing the *i'ijaz* and in his justification of the psychological dimension of the theory of *i'ijaz* and his emphasis on a psychological interpretation of the Quran, as criticized by Nu'aym al-Himsi in his *Tarikh Fikrah I'ijaz al-Quran*.⁵³

In the modern times another trend in the theory of inimitability of the Quran was introduced with the title of *nizam al-Quran* e.g. the coherence maintained in the concepts and thoughts as well as in the literary constructions

in his tafsir. He cites the classical scholars as well as the modern one along with their arguments. "These issues are intricate and obscure too; no academic discussion may finalise it and no aspect of various interpretations may be preferred over others satisfyingly", criticizes Amin al-Khauḥi. But the majority of the scholars of *ahl al-sunnah* support the view elaborated well by Imam al-Razi who prefers the opinion that the revelation was made along with the words as well as the meanings⁵⁰, and not a single word was incorporated from his own by the Prophet (SAW).

This position was already clarified in the Quran itself when it declared explicitly in the chapter *al-Najm* :

"By the star when it goes down, your companion is neither astray nor being misled, nor does he say (aught) of (his own) desire. It is no less than inspiration sent down to him" (53: 1-4).

"Your companion" as referred to, is the holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW), who had lived among the Quraysh all his life. The Prophet (SAW) is defended against three kinds of charges that the Unbelievers had brought: (1) that he was going astray, either through defect of intelligence or through carelessness; (2) that he was being misled or deceived by evil spirits; and (3) that he spoke out of a whim or impulse, or from a selfish desire to impress his own personality. None of these charges was true. On the contrary he had direct inspiration from God.

The word *yantiqū* is significant and dissolves ultimately the controversy over the condition of revelation. It clearly expresses the revelation was sent down to the Prophet along with each and every word and not with the meaning only. Moreover it also elaborates the revelatory position of hadith though not recited. The scholars have, therefore, classified the revelation into *matlu* (being recited e.g. the Quran) and *ghayr matlu* (not being recited, e.g. the hadith) and have frequently used the two terms of *wahy al-Quran* and *wahy al-hadith* to connote the same. Then why is Amin al-Khauḥi surprised to see the rationale of the revelation with the words as provided by Fakhruddin al-Razi.

Mahmud bin Umar al-Zamakhshari (d. 538/1144), the prominent scholar of rhetoric and eloquence as well as of Quranic literary styles but the Mutazilite one in the belief and thought, has comprehended a refined psychological idea while explaining the debatable conceptions and trends derived from the verses of *al-Shu'ara* under discussion, al-Khauḥi appreciates him. This idea clarifies all the doubts and confusions about the nature of the revelation. Al-Zamakhshari while interpreting the verses (192-195 from the

psychological consideration to be verified by the witnesses and evidences of the conditions of human mind and its various trends. In the given situation the style of repetition, as the psychologists view, constitutes the most effective method to satisfy; and the best medium to concentrate the thought and the belief in the human mind slowly and gently without provoking the opponents by any argumentation or demonstrating any extremism, by maintaining the order of proof and the seemingly inference, as well as by the evidences and practical examples as discussed by the scholars of psychology. These may substitute the invention of the dimensions in rationalizing and justifying the Quranic repetition and turning it to a point of disputes and conflicts, al-Khauuli concludes.⁴⁹

Psychological Interpretation

Amin al-Khauuli, then necessitates to interpret the Quran psychologically though the scholars could not arrive at the psychological method to understand the *i'ijāz*. This Quranic technique of psychological paradigm and this dogmatic theory constitute the two aspects of the life dependent on the inner-passions.

Al-Khauuli, elaborating the role of psychological principles in the understanding and explanation of the holy Quran, cites few verses from the chapter *al-Shu'ara* and finds the classical commentators arguing by the theoretical evidences and logical deductions as well as the technical grammatical expositions; and applying the dry rhetorical methods and the sophistic ideologies as well. These are the outcome of the dead thinking and the narrow horizon. The Quran narrates some special characteristics of the Quran saying :

“Verily this is a Revelation from the Lord of the worlds: with it came down the Spirit of Faith and truth to your heart and mind that you may admonish in the perspicuous Arabic tongue” (26: 192-195)

Over these verses arose the heavy dispute and the distant principles and far-fetched foundations from the Quran were traced out. One group argued in favour of the abstract revelation of the Quran without the words and that the words of the Quran were uttered by the Prophet (SAW) himself from his own because the heart may not have received but the meaning only. This approach leads to deny the words of the Quran as inimitable.

Those who deny the verbal revelation were pressed to claim that the revelation was made on the heart, in order to prove that the mine of reason and intellect was the heart or the mind. This was advocated by Fakhruddin al-Razi

- ii) The Quran repeated the stories and the historical events for the sake of extra benefits gained in the verses differently.
- iii) When Allah challenged the Arab pagans to produce a book like the Quran, some might mistakenly think that producing a book like the Quran was impossible for Allah too. The stories were, therefore, repeated to affirm that it was not impossible on His behalf and that the inimitability is established for the human being and not for Allah Himself.
- iv) The *takrār* occurred in the Quran to confirm and strengthen the warning and the admonition to the adversaries of the religion as the verse in the chapter *al-Takāthur* reads: "But nay, you soon shall know!" (102: 3).
- v) In case the style of *takrār* being a beauty in the Arabic language was not used in the Quran contradicting the Arabs' styles, it was to be treated a great defect and a strong motive to defame the noble Quran.⁴⁷

The rationale provided by al-Alawi interacts mainly the repetition in the Quranic stories and neglects other usages in the Quran.

Al-Khauuli cites Mustafa Sadiq al-Rafii too. Al-Rafii after having criticized al-Jahiz in this regard says: "*Takrār* constitutes in fact a secret from the secrets of Hebrew literature, which was used by the Quran in most of its statements so that the Jews should know that this was a non-human composition, and should realize one of the meanings of *i'ijaz* since they were familiar with that as the Arab realized its *i'ijaz* in the matters of their own. The most eloquent piece in the classical Hebrew poetry was the one that combined the following: the nimble interpretation; the refined presentation; the clarity of the words; the expressive compounds; the elaborate meanings; the repetition of the statements alongwith all its benefits as the attestation, exaggeration, clarification, realization and so on; the use of the synonym words; the comparison between the contrasts and other varieties of wordly beauties which come under another kind of repetition".⁴⁸

The statement provided here by al-Rafii is inefficient to explain the justification of *takrār*, says Amin al-Khauuli. How this secret of repetition was accessed by the Jews only? In case the claim was correct it must be thought as the stange by the then Arabs and the challenging position of the Quran in an area that was not familiar to the Arabs could not be established.

Criticising all these justifications of the Quranic repetition, Amin al-Khauuli finally provides a psychological paradigm for the rationale of the repetition style used in the Quran, which is based on a global human

of the Prophet Musa in the different chapters following the various methods and the numerous rhyming words with the unified meaning. You should turn to your intellect in case you do mistake, or become confused or you are trapped in any misperception".⁴⁵ Thus, he finds the rationale of repetition in the order and arrangement maintained in the Quran.

Al-Sakkāki, entitled by al-Khauḍi as 'the chief of the rhetoricists' (*Shaykh al-balāghiyin*), discusses the issue of the repetition in the Quran (*takrār*) while disapproving the allegations charged against the Quran in his book *Miftāh al-Uloom*. He says : "One of the allegations they charge against the Quran is that the repetition is a fault, defective and useless and the Quran consists of this repetition. They give in this regard the examples of the story of Pharaoh and the like, and the verses oft-repeated like the one that reads: "Then which of the favours of your Lord will you deny?" in the 55th chapter *al-Rahmān*; and the verse that reads: "And woe, that Day to the Rejectors of Truth!" in the 77th chapter *al-Mursalāt*, and other verses that come under this category".

Al-Sakkāki responds to this objection saying "Refreshing a meaning in various forms and voices, you have taken it as a mere repetition and a defect in the statement because of your ignorance". He quotes a couplet in this contest that reads :

"If my merits, of which I have been so proud, are considered as my demerits, tell me how do I excuse!"

Al-Sakkāki then questions: "In case there was no extra benefit besides the enemies being rebuked, they should have claimed at the time of being challenged repeatedly to produce any thing like unto the Quran, that the first challenge was enough and that should not be repeated again and gain. And the oft-repeated verse in the chapter *al-Rahmān* as well as in that of *al-Mursalāt* was treated as *radif* that is repeated in the *qasidah* (a poem) in tandem with every stanza. According to another school this stands a *tarji'* in a poem in which it is repeated alongwith a number of stanzas. This repetition may be taken into account also as a reminder to the lessons".⁴⁶

Yahya bin Hamza al-Alawi in his *Kitāh al-Tirāz* interacts this style of *takrār* elaborately. That may be summarized as below :

- i) The *takrār* in the Quran was used to purify, expand and elevate the human nature of the Prophet (SAW) as well as to provide a solace and consolation to him. This was not a mere repetition.

regard al-Jāhiz, al-Bāqillāni, al-Sakkāki, al-‘Alawī and amongst the modern scholars al-Rafīi as well.

Al-Jahiz has quoted a narrative of Ib al-Sammāk, a statement from Torah and a saying of al-Dhuhri to the effect that repetition is regarded as boring and tiring always, and constitutes a defect in any statement or writing. Then he says : “In brief the repetition has no demarcation nor any concise definition. This style is to be evaluated as per the value and status of the listeners and those who attend it amongst the common men as well as the elites. We have found Allah has narrated repeatedly the stories of Musa, Hood, Harun, Sho’aib, Ibrahim, Lut, ‘Aad and Thamud, as well as has oft-described the Paradise and the Hell and other things, because it has addressed all the nations from Arabs and non-Arabs, and most of them usually are stupid and ignorant, or mentally pre-occupied contestant. The stories and narratives are not overlooked generally by any group”.⁴³

Al-Bāqillāni in his book *i’ijaz al-Quran* dealing with a varieties of *bad’i* (rhetoric) in the Quran, has discussed *takrār* as a beautiful style which was frequently used in the pre-Islamic poetry. He has quoted two couplets from *Jahiliyah* literature in this regard. He then claims there are so many examples in the Quran. In the chapter *Inshirah* the holy Quran repeatedly pronounces that whatever difficulties or troubles are encountered by men, God always provides a solution, a way out, a relief, a way to lead to ease and happiness, if we only follow His path and show our faith by patience and well-doing. The Quran declares :

“So verily, with every difficulty, there is relief. Verily, with every difficulty there is relief” (94: 5-6)

In the following chapter *al-Kāfirūn*, this style of repetition is again used :

“Say : O ye that reject Faith! I worship not that which you worship, nor will you worship that which I worship. And I will not worship that which you have been wont to worship, nor will you worship that which I worship. To you be your way and to be mine” (109: 1-6).

According to al-Bāqillāni, there emerged an additional meaning to the *takrār*, since it benefits the meaning of reporting about the (*ghayb*) unseen.⁴⁴

Al-Bāqillāni deals with the Quranic repetition also amid his discussion on the novel composition and beautiful arrangement of the Quran. He referring to the Quranic order, says: “For this reason only the Quran repeated the story

impact on the human soul like the effectiveness of the verses on the minds and souls; the sweetness and the deliciousness a man feels while reciting the Quran; the rhythmical music and refined tuning produced out of well balanced construction of the letters, words and sentences of the Quran; the psychological eagerness and extempore urge to read it and feeling no more bored inspite of the repetition; the reporting that the pious Muslims used to recite the whole Quran in one night or they used to read the longest chapters of it in their individual prayers; the quality that the school children may easily memorise it and others, are not meant by this term *al- i'ijaz al-nafsi*, though the scholar does not negate these dimensions. He, rather, does not rely on them to elaborate the theory of psychological inimitability of the Quran.

The scholar also does not mean by this term to derive the issues and ideologies of psychology from the Quran in support of the view that the Quran elaborates every thing (*tibyān li kulli shayin, the Quran, 16: 84*). This method, inspite of not being so useful, if applied, commits an injustice to the magnificent status and value of the Quran, al-Khauuli analyses.

This term *al- i'ijaz al-nafsi* implies an interpretation that is entirely based on the realization of what the Quran has applied amongst the psychological phenomena, and the spiritual laws around which it has revolved its explanation argumentatively, satisfyingly, contestingly, provocatively and frighteningly. It is not advisable, says Amin al-Khauuli, to rationalize any sentence of the Quran, or to quote any word from any verse or any literary style of the Quran to prove any point concerning the psychology. The entire context, in contrast, in the perspective of the whole situation being interactive to the soul and to what is discovered by the science in this regard should be studied alongwith the comprehension of all its depths. In the psychological paradigm only may be elaborated rationally the concise words of the Quran and its extravagant statements; its explicites as well as its implicities; its brief statements as well as its explanatory one; its repetitives as well as its prolongations; its division and elaboration and its order and arrangement. All should be dealt with in the light of the criteria mentioned above systematically and organisedly.⁴²

The Quranic Repetition

Elaborating the psychological dimension of *i'ijaz*, Al-Khauuli deals in detail with the *takrār* (repetition) a literary style in the Quran and provides its psychological paradigm. He first explains how the classical scholars of the Quranic rhetoric and eloquence have narrated its various aspects and literary beauties avoiding the psychological perspectives. The author cites in this

that no explicit text contradicts the scientific truths discovered so far. This approach, criticizes al-Khauuli, however, constitutes a sort of leniency and indulgence towards the Quran. Understanding the realities of the universe and its unique phenomena depends on the exercise of the human instincts and intense emotions and interacts with the apparent visibles in respect of their exciting the soul and inspiring to the senses their splendours and magnificence and the people's being thrilled to them, and not in respect of being the accurate and exact laws relating to them. And defending the scientific realities complies in no way the necessary realization of the magnificence of the Power that manages the universe. Al-Khauuli points out that the Quran may possibly contain the meanings that are seemingly contradictory to the scientific realities and this does not affect its revelatory position since it is not a book of science and it is not unavoidable, therefore, to link the Quran ingenuinely to the science.

Psychological Inimitability

Shaykh Amin al-Khauuli advocates the psychological dimension of the inimitability of the Quran. It was a direct connection of the science of rhetoric to the discipline of psychology that channelised the theory of the psychological inimitability of the Quran as well as it stressed the need to interpret the Quran psychologically keeping in view all the secrets of the motions of human soul in the fields covered by the religious beliefs and actions of the Quran, its dogmatic argumentations, its exercise and training to the instincts and hearts and its transmission of the ancestors and the ancient nations. How marvelously the Quran dealt with these issues! What psychological realities did the Quran apply in these passion-oriented meanings and the objectives of inner consciousness? And how much the considerations of these points were effective in hightening the words of God and making the propagation of the religion successful?³⁹

Al-Khauuli describes all the dimensions of *i'ijaz* as propounded by the classical scholars in detail⁴⁰ and does not satisfy with them in his psychological perspective because these do not maintain a sufficing relations with the literary technique. After realizing the connection between the rhetoric and the psychology, the scholar accessed a 'novel saying' and an 'strange opinion' in understanding the theory of *i'ijaz*, though this does not constitute a rationalization of it in its complete meaning'.⁴¹

The psychological inimitability of the Quran (*al- i'ijaz al-nafsi*), a new trend developed by the scholar, may not be confused with the classical interpretations of the Quranic scholars. Various dimensions of the Quranic

3. whatever was cited from Ali bin Abi Talib in this regard.

The first argument was responded by al-Shātibi saying that the first verse cited by these scholars basically signified the religious obligations and prayers (*'ibādāt*), while the second verse had meant the Divine Slate (*Lawh Mahfooz*) and not the Quran. The second point was refuted by him arguing that the Arabs were aware of the uses of such letters as they were informed of such uses like that of *jummal* by the Jews and the Christians. These *fawātih* are also understood in terms of *mutashābih* (allegorical) verses whose meanings are not disclosed except to God. Their interpretation in the terms not familiar is unjustifiable and our ancestors did not allow it.

The third argument was responded by al-Shātibi saying that it was not permissible to ascribe a concept or meaning to the Quran that is not required by it. The understanding of the Quran may not depend in any way on the acquisition of a knowledge not entrusted with by the ordinances of Shariah. In case any one tries to understand the Quran without the prescribed means would be misled necessarily.

Appreciating the stand of al-Shatibi, Shaykh Amin al-Khauuli adds the following points :

1. The linguistic dimension in the realms of the words and their gradual implications. We can not ascribe to the words the meanings and concepts that were strange at the time of the revelation, and were coined later on.
2. The literary or expressive dimension so as to words are in conformity with the context and the requirement of the situation. Whether this scientific interpretation is conformed to the situation of Arabs when the Quran was revealed during the Prophet period? Was it justified that the Arabs addressed by the Quran were familiar with these scientific connotations? Suppose these meanings were available in the Quran but the words did not carry the meanings at that time, the question arises whether the Arabs grasped these meanings from the Quran at that time? And if they understood these meanings why did their scientific renaissance not emerge with the revelation of the Quran? And in case they did not understand them how these could be considered as the divinely intended and designed meanings?
3. The religious dimension as the most valuable point because the Quran is the book of religion and not a book of science. How the sciences are derived from the Quran while the books on science are changed with the passage of time and generation due to advancement of the sciences ?

Amin al-Khauuli evaluates this trend and finds its harms and defects more in abundance than its benefits and merits. He argues that it suffices to prove the absence of any conflict between the religion of Islam and the science

Al-Ghazali has, then, detailed the Divine doings and the various branches of knowledge necessary to understand them. The divine acts of rendering a man sick and restoring his health may not be understood without the knowledge of medical sciences. The divine acts in the universe may not be grasped without astronomy. Enumerating thus various divine actions and the knowledge relating to them, al-Ghazali finally says that “if the divine actions explicit in the Quranic verses are counted in detail it will be too descriptive. All of them may not be pointed out except in their entirety.”³⁸

Shaykh Amin al-Khauuli, then, elaborates this inclusive approach to the interpretation of the Quran and the trend of rationalizing the theory of *i'ijaz* as propounded by other scholars like Fakhruddin al-Razi, Muhammad al-Iskandarani, Fikri Pasha, Abdur Rahman al-Kawakibi, Mustafa Sadiq al-Rafii, Tantawi Jawhari and Muhammad Tawfiq Sidqui.

Al-Shātibi's Approach

Al-Khauuli, then, cites Abu Ishaq al-Shātibi (d. 790/1388), the Malikid jurist and the author of *al-Muafaqāt*, who nullifies any attempt to interpret the Quran by the rational or scientific method, and disapproves all the falsifications of sciencism in the tafsir as well as in the theory of *i'ijaz*. The arguments of al-Shātibi are based on the following points :

1. Islamic Shariah is *ummi*-based one and has incorporated all the interests and beneficial considerations.
2. The Arabs possessed a varieties of knowledge, some of which were testified by the Shariah while others were nullified. How it was advisable for the Quran to consist all the sciences of the ancestors as well as of the future generations.
3. The holy companions and their immediate followers were more knowledgeable of the Quran than us but they did never claim of such things.

Imam al-Shātibi has also quoted the arguments of those scholars who advocated a scientific and reason-based interpretation of the Quran as in the following :

1. The Quran explicitly announces :
 “And we have sent down to you the Book explaining all things”.
 (16: 89)
 “Nothing have We omitted from the Book”. (6; 38)
2. *Fawātih* (the beginnings) of the Quranic chapters e.g. the unjointed letters which ere unfamiliar to Arabs, and the various explanatory sayings in this regard, and

establish the rhetorical purpose, neither this can fulfil the religious need of realizing the inimitability of the Quran, and thus being confined to this method would be treated a technical mistake and moreover a religious negligence – if we are allowed to say this”, says al-Khauuli.³⁵

Al-Khauuli's discussions on “The Tafsir : The Milestones in its Life and its Methodology Today” criticizes the trend of sciencism in the interpretation of the Quran. This trend explores the scientific discoveries, the technological advancements as well as the philosophical theories in the interpretation of the Quran. The trend was intensified later on to cover all the sciences of the world alongwith the religious dogmas and beliefs.

Al-Ghazali's Stand

The inclusive trend in the field of tafsir was originated by Amin al-Khauuli into the writings of Abu Hamid al-Ghazali (d. 505/1111) especially in his *Ihya Uloom al-Din*.³⁶ Al-Ghazali says: “Whatever was found by the scholastics hard to understand and in which the people differed in the theories and the ideologies, was available in the Quran explicitly or implicitly”. The Quran implies the fundamentals of all the sciences. Al-Ghazali elaborates this approach in his other writings.

Al-Ghazali, for example, in his book *Jawāhir al-Quran*, seemingly written after *Ihya Uloom al-Din*, establishes the fifth chapter of the book to explain how all the sciences were derived from the Quran. He has discusses in the fourth chapter of the book the religious sciences and their divisions and classifications and the relevant details. He mentions the sciences of the language as well as the linguistics as necessary to understand the religion. After describing the medicine, the astrology, the astronomy, the zoology, the anatomy, the physiology, the palmistry, the study of magic and talismans, al-Ghazali points out that there are other sciences unknown to us, but the world may not be evacuated of the people who might have known them. There may be other sciences possibly and potentially existing which are not yet explored. Some sciences were discovered by the human beings previously and were disappeared later on, and there remains no person in the world who might have claimed to know them. Some sciences are inaccessible to human being and are attainable to the angels beloved to God only. Al-Ghazali, then, claims that the preliminaries of all these sciences, whether enumerated by us or not, are not out of the Quranic jurisdiction and scope; all of them are dipped into a single ocean from the oceans of the knowledge of God, and that is the ocean of the Divine Dynamism that has no coast”.³⁷

al-Tirāz by al-‘Alawī. To the learned author, the theory of *i‘ijaz* left its tremendous impact on the shaping and orientating the compositions in the discipline of the rhetoric which can not be grasped without turning to the various schools of scholasticism dealing with the theory of *i‘ijaz*.³²

Critic of Rationalisation

Al-Khauḷi mentions the theory of rationalizing the *i‘ijaz al-Quran* that prevailed the books composed by the scholastic theologians as well as by the rhetoricists like al-‘Alawī and others. To al-Khauḷi, this very exclusive approach to the theory of *i‘ijaz* “faded the literary spirit and turned the Arabic rhetoric to the dry measures with no soul, no technique and no taste”.³³ The author declared this rationalizing approach as an optimistic opinion (*rai fāil*) and a fictitious stand (*madhhab dhaif*), and that this school was nullified by Imam Yusuf bin Abu Bakr al-Khawarizmi popularly known as al-Sakkaki (1160-1228 AD), who was entitled by al-Khauḷi as a “champion of the classical rhetoric and a rider in the forefront”. Al-Sakkaki says :

“You must know the issue of *i‘ijaz* is surprisingly interesting. It may be realized but can not be described as the case is with the measurement in the poetry or the salt in the food. The tool of identifying the *i‘ijaz* in the Quran, to me, is only the literary taste; and the method to acquire this taste is implied in the long service of both these disciplines (e.g. the rhetoric and the eloquence)”.

Al-Sakkāki, then evaluates all the four rationalizing stands of the scholars disapproving them one by one, and finally says :

“These were the four sayings; the fifth one is the stand taken by those who possess the literary taste, and that signifies that the dimension of inimitability of the Quran concerns the nature of rhetoric and eloquence. You will find no access to this fifth stand except after a long service and experience with these two disciplines when Allah bestows his grace and grants his wisdom to whom He wishes”.³⁴

Basing his interpretation of the theory of *i‘ijaz* on the arguments offered by al-Sakkaki, Al-Khauḷi elaborates the way to access the *i‘ijaz* in his emphasis on “the construction of the literary taste technically and on the consecutive practice of and experience with the rhetoric according to the requirements and principles of true technical training”. This *i‘ijaz* comprehensible by the taste, however, can not be explored by the definitions, deliberations and notes over the metaphors and the like, raised by Saduddin Masud bin Umar al-Taftazani (1312-1389 AD). “This method can not create any literary taste, and can not

Tajdid, edited and published by one of his distinguished students Dr. Shukri Muhammad Abbad.

According to the preface written by Dr. Abbad, Shaykh Amin al-Khauuli was the champion of both the traditionalism and the modernism in the language, rhetoric and literary issues, as well as in the thoughts and the methodology he applied. Both the modernization and the traditionalism had penetrated his nature and thought interactively as the realism and idealism interacted. He was, therefore, titled a (*manhaji*) methodological teacher and scholar.²⁹

In his discussion on the "Arabic Rhetoric and the Impact of Philosophy on it", a lecture he delivered in the evening of March 19, 1931 in the premises of the Royal Geographical Society, Amin al-Khauuli elaborates how the Arabic rhetoric was a medium to access the inimitable position of the Quran according to the classical scholars like al-Baqillani, al Jurjani, al-Razi, al-Alawi, al-Sakkaki and others. This noble purpose of Arabic rhetoric was explored in the very beginning by Amr bin Ubaid Abu Uthman al-Basari (d. 144/761) the chief of Mutazilites in his age, for instance, who regarded the rhetoric "an instrument to establish the arguments of God in the minds of the scholastic scholars so that they welcome them without any delay". Abu Hilal al-Askari (d. after 1005 AD), the author of *Kitab al-Sanā'atayn* likely elaborated the significance of teaching the rhetoric in the same perspective, since the negligence of this discipline would have culminated in the absence of the knowledge of the theory of *i'ijaz al-Quran* argumentatively and scientifically. Recognising the inimitable position of the Quran blindly, to al-Askari, was not desirable nor does it suit to a man of knowledge and understanding.³⁰ The learned scholar also quotes Amir Yahya bin Hamzah al-Alawi (d. 745/1344), the author of *Al-Tirāz al-Mutadhammin li Asrār al-Balāghah wa Uloom Haqūiq al-I'ijaz*, who has specified the motive of studying the rhetoric as the recognition of *i'ijaz* only. Al-Alawi defines the *balaghah* as 'a discipline of knowledge by which we possibly may know the issues of *i'ijaz* because there is a consensus on behalf of the researchers that there is no way to be informed of the realities of *i'ijaz* and to draw its rules out of eloquence and expression except by identifying this science of rhetoric and strengthening its foundation".³¹

Al-Khauuli also explains that due to keeping in mind the noble purpose of studying the science of Arabic rhetoric, most of the scholars in the varying stages named their books with the title of *i'ijaz* like *Dalā'il al-I'ijaz* by al-Jurjani, *Nihāyah al-Iijaz fi Dirāyah al-I'ijaz* by Fakhruddin al-Razi and *Kitab*

come. You can not possibly escape out of the zones in which your lives have been cast, without authority from God. Be grateful to God for the chances He has given you. All that has been promised unto you will come to pass: nor can you frustrate it in the least bit' (6: 134).

According to al-Rafii, the verse quoted above implies in its design the discovery of flying in the air and that it would be explored by the *ins* (the human being). This interpretation could be realized only after the passage of thirteen centuries. This novel rationale was provided by the inimitable rhetoric of the Quran.²⁸ This was interpreted by al-Rafii as strengthening (*al-siyāṣah al-mantiqiyah*) the logical argumentation by the method of the rhetoric (*tariqah al-balāghah*). Apart from the spiritual and synthetic inimitability advocated by al-Rafii, another trend emerged in the theories of *i'ijaz al-Quran* and that was the trend of psychological inimitability of the Quran (*al-i'ijaz al-nafsi*) founded in the modern times by Shaykh Amin al-Khauuli.

Amin al-Khauuli

Amin al-Khauuli (1313-1385/1895-1966), a member of al-Majma' al-Lughawi in Egypt, got his education in Azhar and was graduated therefrom in Islamic judiciary. He was appointed after sometime the teacher in the Old Egyptian University and held some other offices therein. In 1953 he was attached with the Ministry of Education and worked there till 1955. He represented his country in a number of seminars and academic delegations abroad. He died in Cairo. Among his contributions are *al-Balāghah al-Arabiyyah*, *Fann al-Qawl*, *Malik bin Anas* (three volumes), *Al-Mujaddidun fi al-Islam*, *Al-Azhar fi al-Qarn al-Ishrin*, *al-Adab al-Misri*, *al-Jundiyah fi al-Islam*, *Min Huda al-Rasul*, *Mushkilat Hayatina al-Lughawiyah* and *Kunnash fi al-Falsafah*. In the initial stage of his career when he was appointed to look after the religious affairs in the Egyptian embassy at Rome, he created controversy over some sensitive issues and was then transferred to Berlin. There too he provoked a number of elements and was therefore called back by the Egyptian government. Being a creative writer he was criticized from some corners.

Amin al-Khauuli revived the issue of *i'ijaz* in the modern time by his thorough discussions on the subject. He touched the issue and its whereabouts methodologically in his three discussions: (i) the "Arabic Rhetoric and the Impact of Philosophy on it", (ii) "Tafsir: Milestones in its life and its Methodology Today" and (iii) "The Arabic Rhetoric and the Psychology" published first in the *Majallah kulliyah al-Aadāb*, vol. IV, part 2, December, 1936. All these articles were included later on in the book titled *Manāhij*

the upper hand) attracts our attention. This should be reflected in again and again.²⁶

On this topic the individual opinion of al-Rafii regarding the inimitable features of the Quran may be summarized as under :

1. The music and the rhyme the holy Quran implied.
2. The spirit reflecting transparently in the order and arrangement maintained in the Quran. This while addressing the soul does not constitute the words with the meanings only; it rather forms an enlightened life, a spiritual creation. In it lies the sound of natural soul in the construction of the Arabic language, and the sound of thought or the intellect and this was abundantly available to the Arabs. The distinction of the Quran lies in a third sound e.g. the sound of sensitivity in the words and the illustrated meanings.²⁷
3. The Quran is free from the words supportive; these are used in the books of the most eloquent literary men. To al-Rafii, the Quran has used the words unavoidable to communicate the meaning it intends. No additional or supportive words are found in the Quran.
4. The Quran comprises of the inimitability both in the inner and outer dimensions. It consists in its design the fundamental principles of the sciences and discoveries explored by the human being only in the modern time. Responding to Ibn Rushd (d. 595) who discussed briefly how the Quran covered all the logical methods of education both in imagination (*tasawwur*) as well as in testification (*tasdiq*), al-Rafii says that it is not strange in the logic that the words are expressive and elaborating to all the levels of understanding as well as they lead the elites to explore the specialized justification and otherwise interpretation (*tawil*) and simultaneously the argumentative nature of these words does not result in specifying one interpretation and rooting the others out. It is quite possible the true interpretation would have emerged after a long period in which the human intellect would have matured. This was demonstrated in the modern times. A distinguished verse from the Quran reads :

"O ye assembly of Jinns and men! If it be you can pass beyond the zones of the heavens and the earth, pass you! Not without authority shall you be able to pass!" (55: 33)

See the chapter *al-An'aam* verses 130-134, where the jinns and men are addressed collectively. That whole passage should be read as a commentary on this verse. 'If you think that because you do things in secret, or because some of your sins do not seem to meet their inevitable punishment, or some of your good deeds seem to go unnoticed, do not be deceived. Judgement will soon