INTRODUCING ARABIC RHETORIC

by

SAFARUK Z. CHOWDHURY

وَإِن كُنتُمْ فِي رَيْبٍ مِّمَّا نَزَّلْنَا عَلَىٰ عَبْدِنَا فَأْتُوا
بِسُورَةٍ مِّن مِّثْلِهِ، وَادْعُوا شُهَدَاءَكُم مِّن دُونِ
اللَّهِ إِن كُنتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ﴿٢٣﴾

A New Revised & Expanded Edition

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Introducing Arabic Rhetoric

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by

SAFARUK Z. CHOWDHURY

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GENERAL ABBREVIATIONS

EI[1] = *Encyclopedia of Islam*, 1st edition
EI[2] = *Encyclopedia of Islam*, 2nd edition
GAL = Brockelmann's *Geschichte*
GALS = Sezgin's *Supplement*

TABLE OF ABBREVIATIONS

art. = article

bk. = book

pp. = pages

ᶜ = the Arabic letter ع

ʿ = the Arabic letter ء

!.هـ = 'end of quote' where a cited textual segment in Arabic ends.

s: = additional comments made by the translator

TABLE OF SYMBOLS

= *ḥadīth* number

(...) = contains transliteration of Arabic terms

[...] = contains additions by the translator

... / [...] = ellipsis where a textual segment is elided and omitted in translation by the translator

'...' = enclosure of a Qur'ānic verse in translation

§ = section

New Introduction

Since releasing *Introducing Arabic Rhetoric*, quite remarkably, it was received widely and with considerable positivity. Many teachers and students across the UK, Europe and the USA have given encouraging feedback and stated they use it as part of their official teaching curricula and even use it as one of the set texts for various courses online and in the classroom. This is a comforting testimony which is not really due to any greatness in the book, but more likely because of the intellectual demand and desire from English-speaking Muslims to learn more about Arabic rhetoric and its relation to the Qur'ān. However, over the years since the 2010 updated edition was available, a number of real criticisms and constructive recommendations for serious improvements have been given. I have endeavoured to meet those criticisms with suggested changes, which I hope, will go some way in redressing the evident lack found in the previous edition.

Firstly, I have made the book more structured without an abrupt beginning and abrupt end which previously was the case. It now feels like more of a textbook than a set of disparate lecture notes.

Secondly, I have on request, included a small chapter outlining in brief the origin, form and description of the Arabic language as well as its importance for Muslims. This seems fitting given that it is a book on Arabic rhetoric.

Thirdly, I have considerably expanded the chapter on Qur'ānic *iʿjāz*. Arguably, it was very small in size before without any substantial academic material. Now, the chapter is the largest with more arguments, analysis, needed revisions and further references. The inclusion of a chapter surveying the important contributons by al-Khaṭṭābī, al-Rummānī and al-Jurjānī to the *iʿjāz* discourse offers helpful material for students wishing to examine classical source texts on the topic that contain the major arguments and ideas developed by all subsequent scholars in medieval Arabic linguistics when elucidating the doctrine of Qur'ānic inimitability.

Fourthly, I have provided additional examples for each aspect of *Balāghah* so that the student and independent

researcher both have a substantial inventory of Qur'ānic examples to explore and analyse further.

Finally, I have added three Appendixes at the end. One is short study of the *balāghah* aspects from *sūrah* al-Ṭāriq. The second is broad a survey of key *balāghah* features found in the last ten *sūrahs* of the Qur'ān (105-114) and the effects they have on style, form and meaning production. The third is a translation of al-Dardīr's short tract *Tuḥfat al-Ikhwān fī ᶜIlm al-Bayān* with the original Arabic retained. Again, the additional material is for supplementary information to generate further self-study, research and exploration of the contents.

Therefore, with these changes, I hope the new expanded edition of *Introducing Arabic Rhetoric* will be more beneficial and of some help (despite its modest size) in enabling an appreciation of the Qur'ān, if not as an inimitable document, at least as a literay marvel.

S. Z. Chowdhury
London, 2015

INTRODUCING ARABIC RHETORIC

Chapter 1

The Importance of the Arabic Language

Arabs have always considered Arabic to be the most superior language. Ibn al-Fāris (d. 395/1004) – one of the most reknown lexicographers – famously said:

> When Allah – May His praises be Exalted – differentiated the Arabic language with clarity and purity (*al-bayān*), it became known that all other languages fall short of it...[1]

فلما خَصَّ – جل ثناؤه – اللسانَ العربيَّ بالبيانِ، عُلِمَ أن سائر اللغات قاصرةٌ عنه، وواقعة دونه

Ibn Kathīr (d. 774/1373) explaining the importance of the phrase "an Arabic Qur'ān" (قُرْآنًا عَرَبِيًّا) in Q. 12:2 states:

> 'Indeed, we revealed it as an Arabic Qur'ān so that you may gain understanding' and this is because the language of the Arabs is the most eloquent and clearest of languages, the most expansive and the most expressive for meaning that might arise in one's mind. Therefore, Allah revealed the noblest Book in the noblest language, to the noblest Messenger, through the most noble of angels, in the noblest land, commencing in the noblest month of the year, which is Ramaḍān, and thus the Qur'ān is perfect in every respect...[2]

{ إِنَّآ أَنزَلْنَاهُ قُرْآنًا عَرَبِيًّا لَّعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ } وذلك لأن لغة العرب أفصح اللغات وأبينها، وأوسعها، وأكثرها تأدية للمعاني التي تقوم بالنفوس، فلهذا أنزل أشرف الكتب بأشرف اللغات، على

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[1] Ibn al-Fāris, *al-Ṣāḥibī fī'l-Lughah*, 1:4.
[2] Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, 4:365.

أشرف الرسل، بسفارة أشرف الملائكة، وكان ذلك في أشرف بقاع الأرض، وابتدىء إنزاله في أشرف شهور السنة، وهو رمضان، فكمل من كل الوجوه

The Arabic language is inextricably linked to Islam and indispensable for understanding its legal references. Loss of Arabic is tantamount to loss of accessibility to Islam. Below are some comments reproduced from the Islamic sources on the importance of Arabic.

Ibn ᶜAbbās – considered the greatest interpreter of the Qur'ān – made the following comments regarding the importance of Arabic:

> I did not know the true meaning of the verse 'The originator of the heavens and the earth' until I heard an Arab lady say: 'I created it!', meaning 'I *originated* it'.[3]

ما كنتُ أدري ما معنى: ﴿ فَاطِرِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ﴾ [الأنعام: 14] حتى سمعتُ امرأةً من العربِ تقول: أنا فطرتُه؛ أي: ابتدأته

> If anything of the Qur'ān escapes you, then avail yourself with poetry as it is the recordings of the Arabs.[4]

إذا خَفِيَ عليكم شيءٌ من القرآنِ، فابتغوه في الشِّعرِ؛ فإنَّه ديوانُ العرب

From the two comments, Arabic is correctly learnt from Arabs in how they use their language. Classical poetry (*jāhiliyya* [= Pre-Islamic]) is one means by which to know how Arabic words were used correctly in their appropriate contexts. This would then inform how one understands the Qur'ān as it was revealed in the language and style of the Arabs of the time.

The second *khalīfah* ᶜUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb strenuously emphasized the importance of Arabic. Ibn Taymiyyah (d. 728/1328) relates:

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[3] Ibn Ḥazm, *al-Iḥkām fī Uṣūl al-Aḥkām*, 1:17 and cf. al-Āmidī, *al-Iḥkām*, 1:51. Emphasis not in the original.

[4] al-Ālūsī, *Rūḥ al-Maᶜānī*, 21:192.

> Moreover, the Arabic language itself is from the religion and learning it is obligatory.[5] Understanding the Qur'ān and *Sunnah* is an obligation and this is not possible except through the Arabic language and 'if an obligation cannot be achieved through something then that thing itself becomes an obligation'. Then related to this is an obligation on an individual and obligations on a group of people and this is the meaning of what Ibn Abī Shaybah narrated: ᶜĪsā b. Yūnus told us from Thawr from ᶜUmar b. Yazīd who said: ᶜUmar wrote to Abū Mūsā al-Ashᶜarī the following: 'I proceed: attain deep understanding of the *Sunnah* and give to deep understanding of the Arabic language because the Qur'ān is in Arabic.' In another narration from ᶜUmar, he said: 'I proceed: Learn Arabic as it is part of your religion and learn the obligations as they are also part of your religion'. This is what ᶜUmar ordered of attaining deep understanding of Arabic as well as knowing the rules of the Shariah combining both which are needed because the religion comprises of knowing statements [of the Prophet] and [his] actions. Knowledge of Arabic is the only way to gaining knowledge of the rulings related to his statements and knowledge of his *Sunnah* is the only to know the rulings related to his actions...[6]

وأيضا فإن نفس اللغة العربية من الدين ومعرفتها فرض واجب فإن فهم الكتاب والسنة فرض ولا يفهم إلا بفهم اللغة العربية وما لا يتم الواجب إلا به فهو واجب. ثم منها ما هو واجب على الأعيان، ومنها ما هو واجب على الكفاية، وهذا معنى ما رواه ابن أبي شيبة حدثنا عيسى بن يونس عن ثور عن عمر بن يزيد قال: كتب عمر إلى أبي موسى الأشعري رضي الله عنه أما بعد: فتفقهوا في السنة، وتفقهوا في العربية، وأعربوا القرآن فإنه عربي. وفي حديث آخر عن عمر رضي الله عنه أنه قال: تعلموا العربية فإنها من دينكم، وتعلموا الفرائض فإنها من دينكم. وهذا

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[5] Ibn Taymiyyah, *Iqtidā' Sirāṭ al-Mustaqīm*, 2:207.

[6] Ibn Taymiyyah, *Iqtidā' Sirāṭ al-Mustaqīm*, 1:519:

> The Arabic language is one of the overt symbols of Islam and its people...

الذي أمر به عمر رضي الله عنه من فقه العربية وفقه الشريعة يجمع ما يحتاج إليه لأن الدين فيه فقه أقوال وأعمال، ففقه العربية هو الطريق إلى فقه أقواله، وفقه السنة هو الطريق إلى فقه أعماله

al-Shāfiʿī (d. 204/820) said in his groundbreaking legal manual *al-Risālah*:

> It is obligatory upon every Muslim to learn the Arab tongue to the utmost of his power in order to profess through it that "there is no God at all but God and Muhammad is His servant and Apostle" and to recite in it [i.e. the Arabic tongue] the Book of God and to utter in mentioning what is incumbent upon him, the *takbīr* and what is commanded, the *tasbīḥ*, the *tashahhud* and others.[7]

يجب على كل مسلم أن يتعلم من لسان العرب ما يبلغه جهده في أداء فرضه فيما ورد التعبد به...

The Andalucian jurist al-Shāṭibī (d. 790/1388) in his masterpiece *al-Muwāfaqāt* commented:

> And what is meant here is that the Qur'ān was revealed entirely in the language of the Arabs so the only way by which to understand it is through that language. This is because Allah (Most High) says: 'We have indeed revealed this Qur'ān in Arabic so that you can attain understanding'. He also said: 'In a clear Arabic tongue' and He further said: 'a tongue of the one they refer to is foreign but this is in fact a clear Arabic tongue' as well as other such verses that indicate it is in clear Arabic language, in the tongue of the Arabs and not a foreign language or in a foreign tongue. So, whoever desires to understand and comprehend [The Book of Allah] then he will be able to achieve that through Arabic and no other means...[8]

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[7] See *al-Shafiʿī's Risāla* (Khadduri edn. and tr.), p.93.

[8] *al-Muwāfaqāt*, 2:306.

المقصود هنا أن القرآن نزل بلسان العرب على الجملة فطلب فهمه إنما يكون في هذا الطريق خاصة، لأن الله تعالى يقول: إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ قُرْآناً عَرَبِيّاً لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ [يوسف:2]، وقال: بِلِسَانٍ عَرَبِيٍّ مُبِينٍ [الشعراء:195]، وقال تعالى: لِسَانُ الَّذِي يُلْحِدُونَ إِلَيْهِ أَعْجَمِيٌّ وَهَذَا لِسَانٌ عَرَبِيٌّ مُبِينٌ [النحل:103]. إلى غير ذلك... مما يدل على أنه عربي وبلسان العرب لا أنه أعجمي ولا بلسان العجم، فمن أراد فهمه، فمن جهة لسان العرب يفهم، ولا سبيل إلى تطلب فهمه من غير هذه الجهة

Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī (d. 911/1505) remarks:

> There is no doubt that knowledge of the Arabic language is part of the religion. This is because it is one of the obligations of sufficiency (*furūḍ al-kifāyah*). Through it, the words of the Qur'ān and *Sunnah* are understood...[9]

ولا شكَّ أنَّ علم اللغة من الدين؛ لأنه من الفروضِ الكفايات، وبه تُعرفُ معاني ألفاظ القرآن والسنة

ᶜAṭā' b. Khalīl comcnts:

> Not all verses of the Qur'ān are interpreted with other verses or even *ḥadīths*. This is because explanatory verses and *ḥadīths* require knowledge of Arabic in order to attain correct understanding [s: of the Qur'ān]...more importantly, whoever wants to understand the Qur'ān without understanding the very language it was revealed in, has in effect nullified his understanding of the Qur'ān as well as his acting according to it. He would also be committing a grave sin because the Qur'ān was revealed in Arabic and to understand it through any other language would not amount to a sound or safe understanding. This is why the jurists preserved the Arabic language and its disciplines in order for the *mujtahidūn* to be well grounded, to understand the Qur'ān and derive rulings from it. Much error has arisen from weakness in this language that Allah has distinguished His Book with as well as the inability to apply its verses to their

[9] See *al-Mizhar*, 2:302.

> correct and required meanings. The Messenger of Allah said to a man who committed faulty recitation, "guide your brother as he has seriously erred."[10] The Messenger of Allah called 'faulty recitation' (*laḥn*) a 'serious error' (*ḍalāl*) because of the dangers it will lead to, i.e. he mentioned the effect ('serious error') instead of the cause ('faulty recitation'). ᶜUmar once passed by a group of people who were very bad in archery and he rebuked them and they replied [ungrammatically]: 'we are a people who learn'. He turned away saying: 'By Allah! Your poor use of language is worse in my eyes than your poor archery! I heard the Messenger of Allah say: "May Allah have mercy on the one who rectified his tongue"...'[11] Thus, the Qur'ān is in Arabic and cannot be understood except through it. Therefore, whoever desires to have correct belief and understand the Islamic rulings correctly based on knowledge, let him strengthen his knowledge of Arabic...[12]

Without knowledge of Arabic Muslims cannot comprehend the legal injunctions (which means they cannot know what Allah commands them to do). Arabic is thus necessary for Law. In other words, without Arabic, correct deductions of legal rulings from the primary legal sources would not be possible and so the practical objectives for which the rulings came would be obviated. Indeed, one of the factors for internal Muslim decline historically was the gradual neglect and disregard or even distance from Arabic as the medium of law and its interpretation. Neglecting Arabic meant failing to extract the solutions from Islam's primary sources in order to apply it practically to real problems and issues.

Moreover, neglect of Arabic meant the erosion of *ijtihād* as the means by which Islam and its solutions can be relevant and extended into any age. This resulted in loss of confidence in Islam for providing solutions to life issues. Hence alternative thoughts, rulings and solutions were sought. Therefore a strong and sustained reconnection with Arabic is

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[10] Ibn Jinnī, *al-Khaṣā'is*, 2:8.
[11] Yāqūt b. ᶜAbd Allāh, *Irshād al-Arīb*, 2:302.
[12] *al-Taysīr fī Uṣūl al-Tafsīr*, pp.21-22.

essential for resuming an Islamic way of life because Arabic is the medium by which we deduce rulings that are necessary to lead that Islamic way of life.

Finally, although not necessary for theological investigations, the Arabic language is the expressed human medium of Islamic thoughts and concepts to guide and navigate human beings through life.

Chapter 2

What *is* Balāghah:
Importance, Beginnings and Outlines



§1. Introduction

There are linguistic and rhetorical features of the Qur'ān that appears to set it apart from any other Arabic document ever known to exist, i.e. it makes the text *sui generis* in both genre (category of writing) and composition.[13] The Qur'ān also exhibits a highly unusual accommodation of styles, features and characters and therefore calls for deeper analysis.[14] I. J. Boullata remarks:

> The message of the Qur'ān is couched in various literary structures, which are widely considered to be the most perfect example of the Arabic language. Arabic grammars were written based upon the qur'ānic language and, by the general consensus of Muslim rhetoricians, the qur'ānic idiom is considered to be sublime."[15]

The discipline that enables access to the intricate and rich tapestry of the Qur'ānic text is Arabic "Rhetoric" (*al-balāghah* / البلاغة).[16] The word *balāghah* is the verbal noun of the root *b* / *l* / *gh* / and can mean 'reaching an end', e.g. Q.

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[13] H. Abdul-Raof, *Exploring the Qur'an*, p.305.
[14] N. Robinson, *Discovering the Qur'ān*, p.224.
[15] Boullata, "Literary Structures of the Qur'ān" in *The Encyclopaedia of the Qur'ān*, 3:192.
[16] W. Smyth, "Rhetoric and ʿIlm al-Balāgha: Christianity and Islam," *Muslim World* 1992, 82(3-4), pp.242-255 and P. Halldén, "Rhetoric" in *Medieval Islamic Civilization: An Encyclopedia*, ed. by J. Meri et al, pp.678-680.

18:93 '*He reached* (*balagha*) *the two mountains*...'[17] The great rhetorician al-Sakkākī (d. 626/1229) defines the term in its technical sense in *Miftāḥ al-ᶜUlūm* as follows:

We say, "Rhetoric" is the attainment of eloquence in the performance of the speaker in conveying [in full] the meanings especially by rightfully articulating the specific [linguistic] properties and structures that include a range of similes, metaphors and metonyms...[18]

فنقول: البلاغة هي بلوغ المتكلم في تادية المعاني حدا له اختصاص بتوفية خواص التراكيب حقها وايراد أنواع التشبيه والمجاز والكناية على وجهها...

Thus, *balāghah* comprises of the following aspects:

1. Eloquence (*faṣāḥah*).
2. Meaning production.
3. Using language correctly.
4. Using a variety of language features.

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[17] Abdul-Raof, *Arabic Rhetoric*, pp.91-92 and Abubakre, *Bayān in Arabic Rhetoric*, p.2.

[18] al-Sakkākī, *Miftāḥ al-ᶜUlūm*, p.329.

§2. *Balāghah* and *Faṣāḥah*

Balāghah is often equated with 'eloquence' (*faṣāḥah*); in fact, some see them as synonymous. The linguistic root *f / ṣ / ḥ* / holds meanings such as: 'skimming milk', 'linguistic clarity', 'appearance of light/dawn', 'fluency in a language' and 'phonetic smoothness'.[19] al-Sakkākī defines the term in its technical sense in *Miftāḥ al-ᶜUlūm* as follows:

أما الفصاحة فهي قسمان: راجع الى المعنى و هو خلوص الكلام عن تعقيد و راجع الى اللفظ و هو ان تكون الكلمة عربية أصلية و علامة ذلك ان تكون على ألسنة فصحاء من العرب...

As for *faṣāḥah*, it has two aspects: one aspect refers to meaning and that involves elevating speech from any *taᶜqīd* [s: ambiguity due to poor construction of sentences] and the second aspect refers to words and that means the word has to be purely Arabic. What indicates this is that the words are based on how the most eloquent of the Arabs used them...[20]

Thus, when discussed in a technical context, *faṣāḥah* relates to three areas:

The Word/ Lexical Item	**The Structure/ Proposition**	**The Communicator/ Text Producer**
This refers to when a word is employed or selected for a given speech discourse or utterance that is free from at least four defects (*ᶜuyūb*):	This refers to when sentential elements or grammatical elements are used that are free from at least four defects:	See §3 below.
(i) *Phonetic incongruity*: where words cannot be pronounced properly and smoothly because	(i) *Lexical incongruity*: where there is unnecessary	

[19] Abdul-Raof, *Arabic Rhetoric*, p.76.
[20] al-Sakkākī, *Miftāḥ al-ᶜUlūm*, pp.526-527.

the letters of the word are from the same or near articulation points (*makhārij*);

(ii) *Stylistic oddity*: where there is unnecessary ambiguity; or an inappropriate word is used within a given context; or a foreign word unfamiliar to the native speaker is used, etc.

(iii) *Morphological incongruity*: where a word is used in a form of an Arabic word pattern but that form is inappropriate and incorrect for that context;

(iv) *Repugnant sounds*: a word that is aesthetically displeasing and phonetically distasteful.[21]

repetition, bad choice of words, ineffective words, poor style, etc.

(ii) *Grammatical incongruity*: where there is incorrect grammatical usage within sentences;

(iii) *Stylistic incongruity*: where incorrect forms of elevating speech or discourse are used;

(iv) *Semantic incongruity*: where there is ambiguity in meaning that lends itself to no value and leads to poor stylistics.[22]

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[21] Ibid., pp.79-87.
[22] Ibid., pp.87-91.

§3. Arabic Rhetoric – *A Very Basic Outline*

Rhetoric is one of the most difficult and complex areas of linguistics. Rhetoric as a general discipline aims to sharpen and upgrade levels of writing and speaking. Through knowledge of rhetoric, language users can appropriate stylistic mechanisms required for eloquent, expressive and forceful discourse. Arabic rhetoric in this broad sense is not any different from rhetoric in other languages like Greek[23] or Latin. Arabic rhetoric is concerned with speech acts (an utterance) of a language user (speaker) carrying communicative goals (what the speaker intends to convey). It is thus a discipline that regulates the relationship between text producer and the audience. Below is a schema showing the relationship between a text producer and text receiver:

Text Producer
(Interlocutor, speaker or writer…)

Through Arabic rhetoric, speech act knowledge is able to combine with context knowledge in order to produce the desired pragmatic communicative goals.

That which affects the relationship between text producer and text receiver can be such things as:

1. Sense.
2. Context.
3. Psychology of audience.
4. Meaning.
5. Culture…

Text Receiver
(Audience, addressee, listener…)

In summary, the area of Arabic rhetoric involves investigating the following:[24]

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[23] On Greek rhetoric, see *A Companion to Greek Rhetoric*, ed. I. Worthington.
[24] Ibid., pp.8-14.

1.	2.	3.
Aesthetic and stylistic mechanisms of the language user.	Interpersonal communication governed by stylistic, emotional and aesthetic aspects.	The context in which a speech acts is made and the stylistic patterns invoked.
4.	5.	6.
The underlying communicative reason/goals of utterances.	The underlying significance and/or connotation of lexical items (a word or sequence of words that constitute meaning).	The attitude, disposition, context and goal that produced the speech act = the psychology of language and speech production.
	7.	
	The implication of speech acts on text receivers, i.e. reactions and modes of reception by an audience.	

There are said to be at least five aspects to Arabic rhetoric:[25]

[1] Well-formed Propositions;

[2] *Appropriate structure*: with effective beginning and a conclusion without verbosity, inelegance, etc…

[3] *Diction*: Selection of the best lexical items;

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[25] Ibid., pp.93-94.

[4] *Appropriate style*: which is to reflect the needs of the audience as well as circumstance with employment of the relevant and optimal stylistic pattern;

[5] *Psychological impact*: which requires knowledge of: audience attitude, condition, reality, etc. so that the style is *impactive* emotionally and cognitively,

Traditionally, the study of Arabic rhetoric was inspired by the Qur'ānic text and its saturated level of rhetorical features. Examination of this intense rhetorical nature of the Qur'ān then became a basis or context in which the study of Arabic rhetoric was undertaken. Three periods, phases or historical stages can be differentiated regarding the "odyssey" of Arabic rhetoric:

Stage 1	**Stage 2**	**Stage 3**
Pre-Islamic and early 1st Islamic century rhetorical criteria. The rules were unwritten and uncodified. This involved: 1] Poets editing their work. 2] Modifying stylistic patterns. 3] The Prophet's Companions knowing what constituted good or bad speech.	2nd-5th Islamic centuries witnessed the explosive growth and codification of Arabic rhetoric with the interconnection and disciplinary overlap between poets, grammarians and scholastics. This involved: 1] Composition of original treatises. 2] Critical and analytic works. 3] Commentaries.	Post 6th century which simply reflected modifications or elaborations of earlier works consolidating and marginally improving on predecessors. No real extended scope of originality or novel analysis… ↓ This phase continues until now (21st century).[28]

4] The eloquence of the *ḥadīth* utterances.[26]	4] Emerging theories.[27]

Post codification ($7^{th}/14^{th}$ century), Arabic rhetoric is said to have developed three constituent disciplines:

Arabic Rhetoric
(*al-balāghah*)

1.	2.	3.
ᶜilm al-bayān / علم البيان	*ᶜilm al-maᶜānī* / علم المعاني	*ᶜilm al-badīᶜ* / علم البديع
('Figures of speech')	('word-order')	('Embellishments')
Exposing and clarifying the communicator's emotional and attitudinal state.	Speech that agrees with the required context.	"That which beautifies the speech" (*muḥassināt al-lafẓ*).
A single meaning channelled through different styles and forms.[29]	The skill of producing literary speech tailored correctly to the context and situation.[30]	Embellishment of phrases or expressions with decorative exaggeration.[31]

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[28] Ibid., pp.52-74.
[26] Ibid., pp.31-33.
[27] Ibid., pp.33-52.
[29] Abubakre, *Bayān in Arabic Rhetoric*, p.8. al-Sakkākī remarks in *Miftāḥ al-ᶜUlūm*, p.329:

As for the subject 'Figures of speech' (*ᶜilm al-bayān*), it is knowledge of an intended meaning expressed in different ways through different degrees of clearness...

وأما علم البيان فهو معرفة إيراد المعنى الواحد في طرق مختلفة بالزيادة في وضوح الدلالة عليه...

[30] Abubakre, *Bayān in Arabic Rhetoric*, pp.8-9. al-Sakkākī in *Miftāḥ al-ᶜUlūm*, p.163 defines it as:

§4. Rhetorical Features in the Qur'ān

Below is a topology of various *linguistic* features, *rhetorical* features as well as *semantic* features that cumulatively contribute to an unparalleled dimension of language use and meaning production that gives the inimitability quality to the Qur'ān as a document of Divine authorship not able to be matched by anyone.[32] Much of these features will be elaborated in the successive chapters.

§4.1. Proto-typical Features of the Qur'ān

Argument Style	Modification	Co-Text (variation in Q. 43:73 with 23:19)	Pronoun Shifts (Q. 6:99)
Ellipsis (Q. 16:81)	Lexical Cohesion	Indexicals	Repetition (Q. 2:49-58)
Contrast (Q. 98:6-7)	Parallelistic Structures	Tail-Head/Head-Tail Structures (Q. 62:5)	Hysteron & Proteron (Q. 1:5)
Syntactic Chunking (Q. 36:52)	Cryptic Letters (Q. 2, 3, 7)	Structure-Final Epithets (Q. 11:90)	Oaths (Q. 37, 51)

...it is the study of the properties of the structures of speech and the evaluations thereof as well as whatever else relates to it in order to avoid mistakes in the use of language in accordance with the requirements of the situation...

اعلم أن المعاني هو تتبع خواص تراكيب الكلام في الإفادة وما يتصل بها من الاستحسان وغيره ليحترز بالوقوف عليها عن الخطأ في تطبيق الكلام على ما يقتضي الحال ذكره ...

[31] Abubakre, *Bayān in Arabic Rhetoric*, p.9.

[32] See Abdul-Raof, *Exploring the Qur'an*, pp.259-398, idem, *Qur'an Translation*, pp.68-138 and a comprehensive typology of literary devices in "Literary Structures", 3:192-205 (Boullata) and "Literature and the Qur'ān", 3:205-227 (Kadi-Mir) both in *The Encyclopedia of the Qur'ān*.

Advice (Q. 35:5)	Intertextuality (Q. 1:7 explained by 4:69)

§4.2. Rhetorical Features of the Qur'ān

Tense Shifts (Q. 35:9)	Interrogation (Q. 5:116)	Imperatives (Q. 18:29)	Derision (Q. 2:23)
Contempt (Q. 44:49)	Repetition	Linguistic Structure (Q. 2:1-5)	Stylistic Harmony (Q. 50:33)
Word-order variation (Q. 88:25-26)	Co-Text	Double pronoun (Q. 76:23)	Word form
Sarcasm	Double rhetorical function (Q. 42:40)	Inter-sentential cohesion	Prepositions

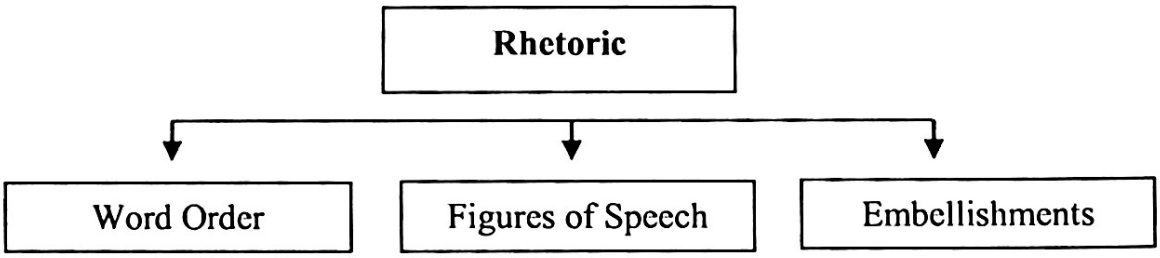
§4.3. Qur'ānic Embellishments & Figures of Speech

Analogy (Q. 88:15-16)	Alliteration (Q. 33:71)	Antiphrasis (Q. 44:49)	Antithesis (Q. 35:7)
Asyndeton (Q. 13:12)	Assonance (Q. 88:25-26)	Cadence (Q. 12)	Chiasmus Q. 3:27)
Epizeuxis (94:5-6)	Equivoque (Q. 24:43)	Homonymy (Q. 2:14-15)	Hyperbole (Q. 33:10)
Imagery (Q. 39-71-72)	Isocolon (Q. 65:7-10)	Metaphor (Q. 19:4)	Metonymy (Q. 54:13)
Onomatopoeia (Q. 80:33)	Oxymoron (Q. 22:4)	Parenthesis (Q. 7:42)	Polyptoton (Q. 80:25-26)
Rhetorical Questions (Q. 55:60)	Simile (Q. 11:42)	Stress (Q. 29:62)	Synecdoche (Q. 90:12)

Chapter 3

Breaking down *Balāghah*: *Surveying Word-Order, Figures of Speech and Embellishments*

Rhetoric (*balāghah*) is one of the most unique and specialized subjects within the medieval Muslim curricula. It developed over a number of centuries finally to become a robust and defined area of study by the close of the 5th / 11th century.[33] *Balāghah* as mentioned eventually came to be identified with three broad disciplines:[34]



§1. Word Order / علم المعاني

Word Order: In classical rhetoric, this is known as *ᶜilm al-maᶜānī*. The areas related to this discipline of rhetoric include:[35]

1. **Reporting** (الخبر): conveying information by the communicator to the audience that can be either true or false or accepted or rejected in order to:

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[33] Refer to Chapter 2.

[34] See P. Larcher, "Rhetoric" in *The Oxford Handbook of Arabic Linguistics*, ed. by J. Owens, pp.188-199 and M. al-Musawi, "Arabic Rhetoric", in *Encyclopaedia of Rhetoric*, ed. by T. O. Sloane, 1:29-33 for short surveys.

[35] Abdul-Raof, *Arabic Rhetoric*, pp.97-195.

(1) confirm something known and

(2) inform of something new.

There are at least 11 context-sensitive communicative aims of reporting information, some of which are given below:

a. To make a plea; to have sympathy and mercy.
b. To admonish; to urge; to warn and advise.
c. To praise, commend and eulogize.
d. To dispraise, attack and blame.
e. To rebuke and censure.
f. To instruct, command and demand.
g. To reproach, castigate and attack.
h. To express remorse, loss and regret.
i. To disapprove, disavow and rebuke.

2. **Informing** (الإنشاء): any information conveyed by the communicator to the audience that can neither be true nor false in its contents. Some context-sensitive communicative aims are:

a. **Interrogative constructions** (الإستفهام): i.e. speech asking for something, i.e. a question which can be for: *knowing something*, *threats*, *sarcasm*, *censure*, *denial*, *challenge* and *rebuke*.

b. **Imperative constructions** (الأمر): i.e. speech indicating a command to do something which can be for: *supplication*, *plea*, *obligation*, *choice*, *challenge*, *threat* and *sarcasm*.

c. **Prohibition constructions** (النهي): i.e. speech indicating not to do something which can be for: *threats*, *supplications*, *sarcasm*, *guidance*, *challenge* and *rebuke*.

d. **Vocative constructions (النداء)**: speech when addressing someone directly or indirectly and is used for: *address*, *communication*, *praise*, *rebuke* and *exclusivity*.

e. **Wish constructions (التمني)**: i.e. those speech acts that express a desire and longing for something (e.g. 'I wish I was dead!', 'I wish I was young again!').

3. **Foregrounding and Backgrounding (التقديم و التأخير)**: placement of grammatical constituents (like subject, object, verbs, nouns or adjectives) either sentence-initially or sentence-finally. The aim here is for rhetorical effect and communicative value of what is put first or put last.[36]

4. **Verbs (الأفعال)**: a word that indicates something done at a specific time. Its rhetorical aims include:

a. To specify an object or time period.
b. To clarify the doer and the event.
c. Brevity.
d. To indicate generality.
e. To indicate continuity.

5. **Restriction (القصر)**: i.e. a speech act to limit and condition something. Some pragmatic aims of restriction include:

(1) specification;
(2) succinctness;
(3) affirmation and
(4) attention.

All this can be achieved through: *negation*, *exclusion* and *foregrounding/backgrounding*.

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[36] See Chapter 6 for details and examples.

6. **Definiteness (التعريف)**: which is to make something clear and to single it out. The aims here include:

(1) to highlight importance;
(2) clarification;
(3) exclusivity
(4) praise;
(5) affirmation;
(6) to define something and
(7) restriction and
(8) differentiation.

7. **Indefiniteness (التنكير)**: which is to make something general and undefined. The aims here include:

(1) to highlight importance;
(2) inclusion;
(3) extension;
(4) exclusivity and
(5) respect.

8. **Succinctness (الإيجاز)**: which is a speech act using minimal lexical items (words) in order to:

(1) be precise;
(2) be eloquent;
(3) relieve boredom and
(4) generate thinking.

All this is mainly achieved through the technique of *ellipsis* (حذف).[37]

9. **Verbosity (الأطناب)**: i.e. a speech act using extended lexical items (words) often aimed at achieving:

(1) more information;

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[37] For examples of *ījāz*, see Chapter 5 below under al-Rummānī's discussion of it.

(2) affirmation;
(3) respect and
(4) clarification.

10. **Disjunction** (الفصل): i.e. a speech act to separate and distinguish something. Some pragmatic aims of conjunction include:

(1) dissimilarity;
(2) disassociation;
(3) affirmation and
(4) difference.

11. **Conjunction** (الوصل): i.e. a speech act to add and join something. Some pragmatic aims of conjunction include:

(1) elaboration;
(2) clarification;
(3) affirmation and
(4) relation.

12. ***Musnad*** (المسند): The 'predicate' in rhetorical studies (= *khabar* [الخبر] in grammar) and has a number of functions for its inclusion in a given speech act:

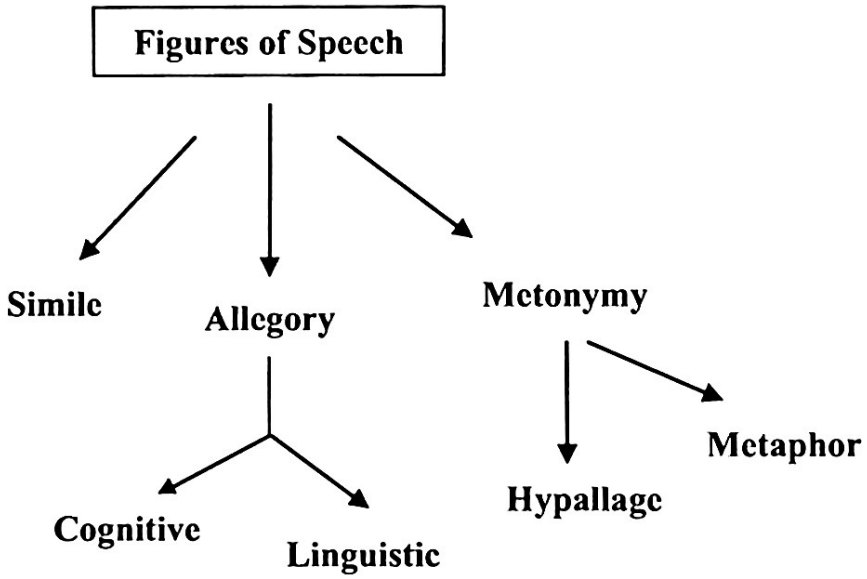
a. To clarify the predicate mentioned.
b. To inform.
c. To emphasise a clause or the *musnad ilayhi*.
d. To confirm and affirm the *musnad ilayhi*.
e. To indicate specification.
f. To qualify the subject.
g. To praise or dispraise the *musnad ilayhi*.

13. ***Musnad Ilayhi*** (المسند إليه): The 'subject' in rhetorical studies (= *mubtada'* [المبتدأ] in grammar) and has a number of functions for its inclusion in a given speech act:

a. To clarify the subject mentioned.
b. To magnify the subject being mentioned.
c. To confirm and affirm the subject.
d. To specify the subject.
e. To define the subject.
f. To generalize the subject.

§2. Figures of Speech / علم البيان

Figures of Speech: In classical rhetoric, this is known as *ʿilm al-bayān*. The Arabic word <*bayān*> from the root *b / y / n* / means 'to make apparent' and 'to make clear'.[38] The areas related to this discipline of rhetoric include:[39]



A dimension of all languages is non-literal, i.e. that which is communicated, with chosen words, without exactly intending the literal meanings the words carry. What this enables language to do is:

1. Be a powerful mode of expression so the information communicated can be poignant, direct, sharp and forceful.

2. Allow for creativity in expression.

3. Allow for emotional engagement so the audience can heed, be alert, wake up and act responsibly.

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[38] See Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, s.v. Bk.I, pp.285-289.

[39] Abdul-Raof, *Arabic Rhetoric*, pp.196-238. Details of each of the aspects related to this discipline of *balāghah* can be found below Chapters 7 and 8 and so will not be outlined or surveyed here.

4. Allow for aesthetic reception of what is communicated so that it creates a feeling of wonder, *nouminosity*, awe, amazement, attachment, submissiveness, humbleness, etc.

5. Enrich discourse and communication.

6. Generate connectivity between the experiences and context of both the communicator and receiver.

7. To help us grasp something and therefore reason and understand the world.

8. To concretize coded information, i.e. making something abstract more real and accessible (so information is better understood).

Examples of 8 include:

1. **Textual**

> **All the world's a stage,**
> **And all the men and women merely players;**
> **They have their exits and their entrances;** — William Shakespeare, *As You Like It* (Act 2, Scene 7, 139-143).

The meaning being that this world is a place where every person will have their time and leave it much like an actor performs on a stage and then leaves the stage piece having made h/her performance. The metaphor of the world being a stage was clichéd by the time Shakespeare had used it, but nevertheless is an effective style of communicating the point about the pattern and stages of life, i.e. birth and death.

2. **Visual**

There are numerous ways that abstract ideas or terms are encapsulated within a visual representation that becomes the associated mental image of that term or idea. This is common within digital and online media (see image below).



innovative



makes a product useful



aesthetic



makes a product understandable



unobtrusive



honest



long-lasting



thorough



environmentally friendly



as little design as possible

§3. Embellishments / علم البديع

Embellishments: In classical rhetoric, this is known as *ʿilm al-badīʿ*. The linguistic meaning of *b / d / ʿ* / is 'to originate' and 'to achieve excellent results'.[40] *Badīʿ* are features that are stylistic, linguistic and rhetorical in order to provide ornamentation to the discourse, i.e. to beautify it. The areas related to this discipline of rhetoric include:[41]

Semantic Embellishments

1. Chiasmus
2. Sarcasm
3. Exordium
4. Hyperbole
5. Litotes
6. Conceit
7. Paranomasia
8. Quotation
9. Apostrophe
10. Rhetorical Question
11. Epanodos
12. Shifts
13. Tapinosis
14. Oxymoron
15. Euphemism
16. Epizeuxis
17. Epitrope
18. Epistrophe
19. Antithesis

Lexical Embellishments

1. Assonance
2. Alliteration
3. Zeugma
4. Onomatopoeia
5. Parallellism
6. Metabole
7. Head-Tail
8. Tail-Head
9. *JināS*

A communicator who uses embellishments seeks to communicate information in order to achieve some of the following:

1. To convince.
2. To persuade.
3. To encourage.
4. To urge.

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[40] Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, s.v. Bk.I, pp.166-168.
[41] Abdul-Raof, *Arabic Rhetoric*, pp.239-270.

5. To transform.
6. To influence.
7. To create awe.
8. To humble.
9. To create euphony in sound.
10. To create rhythm.
11. To create meaning through sound and form.
12. To magnify and exalt.

Finally, correct or effective production of meaning by a communicator is achieved if the following are avoided:

1. **Inkhorn terms**: words borrowed from foreign languages and transliterated without need for it, e.g. *bīrūqrāṭiyyah* [بيروقراطية], *lībrālī* [ليبرالي], *barāghmatiyyah* [براغمتية], etc.

2. **Catachresis**: misusing a word in the context it is supposed to be used, e.g. you are the 'eyes, ears and tongues of the people' where <tongues> is an addition that is not stylistic as it is not commonly used with this expression.

3. **Ungrammaticality**: violating the rules of Arabic grammar, conventions and principles.

4. **No Context**: violating what the context requires leads to stylistic oddity, e.g. if the context is to convince and persuade, the langue and styles should reflect that as well the techniques used to achieve that end.

§4. The Progenitor of *al-Badīᶜ* Studies: Ibn al-Muᶜtazz

The founder of the discipline of *badīᶜ* studies is said to be Ibn al-Muᶜtazz (d. 296/908) who identified 18 features of Arabic rhetorical embellishments in his book *Kitāb al-Badīᶜ* ('Rhetorical Embellishments') written in 274/887 at the age of twenty-six with scholars both contemporaries and successors adding to his number. The book is considered the first complete Arabic work on poetics.[42]

Ibn al-Muᶜtazz belonged to the family of Abbasid Caliphs from the 3rd/9th century; a time where a beleaguered Islamic power was suffering from territory fragmentation, internal Shiᶜite rebellion, uncontrollable bureaucracy and Turkish dominated military. He was born in 248/861, the year his grandfather Caliph al-Mutawakkil (r. 847-861) was assassinated after an evening drinking in his palace by conspirators acting on behalf of his son al-Mustansir. This was followed by the murder of al-Muᶜtazz, his father, in 256/869 after assuming power in 842/866 following a bloody struggle. Ibn al-Muᶜtazz was sheltered in Mecca with his mother and grandmother for several years from the political frenzy and in that time took to studying and composing poetry. He returned to Baghdad under what was a relatively stable rule of his cousin al-Muᶜtaḍid (r. 892-902) and Ibn al-Muᶜtazz clearly relished that political security and comfort composing an ode in praise of al-Muᶜtaḍid. Upon the latter's death, Ibn al-Muᶜtazz retired. Later, he was convinced to undertake a coup against the young and weak ruler al-Muqtadir and Ibn al-Muᶜtazz was initially successful. However, he was ambushed and then strangled to death in 296/908 upon being made Caliph for merely a day. His life was thus played out in the dark and ruthless political and dynastic politics that mirrored the uncertainties and changing centers of power within the Abbasid rule.[43]

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[42] On an analysis of the text, see Bonebakker's article "Ibn al-Muᶜtazz and Kitāb al-Badīᶜ" in *ᶜAbbasid Belles-Lettres*, ed. by Ashtiany et al, pp.388-411.

[43] From E. Cohen, "Formal Structure in the Lyric Poetry of Ibn al-Muᶜtazz", pp.1-5.

His literary legacy covered four main areas: (i) poems about various sensual and evocative themes; (ii) biographies of poets (*shuᶜarā'*); (iii) *ādāb* (literature) works and (iv) analysis of artistic ornamentation (*badīᶜ*).[44] This last method was a defining feature of his poetical output. Ibn Rashīq the Western-Tunisian poet and critic (d. 463/1071) remarked:

> A faction of the debaters said, 'the greatest poets are three: Jāhilī, Islamic, and Modern. The great Jāhilī poet is Imru al-Qays, and the great Islamic poet is Dhū al-Rumma, and the great Modern poet is Ibn al-Muᶜtazz. And this is the opinion of those who prefer *badīᶜ*, especially simile, over all the arts of poetry.[45]

> There is no escaping that every poet have [*sic*] a way which predominates for him, so that his nature is led towards it and taking it up is easy for him, like Abu Nuwās in wine...and Ibn al-Muᶜtazz in simile.[46]

Badīᶜ then was a form he mastered and loved, being a style identified with the "new-age poets" (*muḥdathūn*) of the Abbasid era. Ibn al-Muᶜtazz defended this method and style and marshalled a series of arguments from literary and religious authorities to justify its use where his

> intention was clearly to prove that the whole figurative system was not an invention of the later poets but was already in use in the literary canon: the Qur'ān which is a Prophecy conveyed from Allah to Muḥammad through the Angel Gabriel; the Ḥadīth, which was transmitted by word from the Companions of the Prophet; and ancient poetry.[47]

Thus:

1. The Qur'ān uses the *badīᶜ* style.

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[44] Ibid., ch.1-4, pp.42-351.
[45] Ibid., p.20 citing *al-ᶜUmda*, p.154.
[46] Ibid., p.20 citing *al-ᶜUmda*, p.467.
[47] Y. Tobi, "Kitāb al-Muḥāḍarah wa-al-Mudhākarah" in *Studies in Medieval Jewish Poetry*, ed. by Guett and Itzhaki, p.30.

2. The *ḥadīth* contains *badīᶜ* examples.
3. *badīᶜ* is a natural feature of language and discourse.
4. *badīᶜ* was used by Arab tribes in Pre-Islamic Arabia whose dialects were considered pure and correct standards.
5. *badīᶜ* was used by early Arab poets considered masters and worthy of poetic imitation.

The identification of the decorative features discussed in the *Kitāb al-Badīᶜ* are 18 with nos. 1-5 being discussed in depth but with potentially more that are identifiable:

> Now we will signify some of the ornaments in speech and in poetry. They have many ornaments and the scholar is not obliged to pretend to know all of them perfectly, such that not a single one is beyond his ken. Accordingly, we wanted to increase the benefits of our essay for the scholars. The student should know that we have with clear conscious limited ourselves regarding the *badīᶜ* to five ornaments, not on account of ignoring other ornaments in speech or overlooking them. Who wants to follow us and limit himself regarding the *badīᶜ* to five ornaments; so be it and who wants to add to *badīᶜ* any of these ornaments or others and he is not in accordance with us, it is his free choice.[48]

Rhetorical Ornament	Translation	No
الإستعارة	*Metaphor*	1
التجنيس	*Homonymy*	2
المطابقة	*Antithesis*	3
رد أعجاز الكلام على تقدمها	*Repetition*	4
ملهب كلامي	*Dialectical method* (syllogistic)	5
الإلتفات	*Rhetorical shifts*	6
إعتراض كلام في كلام لم يتمم معناه، ثم يعود إليه فيتممه في بيت واحد	*Insertion of a parenthetical clause*	7

[48] *Kitāb al-Badīᶜ*, pp.57-77 cited with translation in Tobi, "Kitāb al-Muḥāḍarah wa-al-Mudhākarah" p.27.

رجوع	*Regression*	8
حسن الخروج من معنى الى معنى	*Elegance in leaving one subject for another*	9
تأكيد مدح فيما يشبه الذم	*Praise in the guise of a rebuke*	10
تجاهل العارف	*Pretending*	11
الهزل يراد به الجد	*jesting to seriousness*	12
حسن التضمين	*Eloquent inclusion*	13
تعريض و كناية	*Naming and Alluding*	14
إفراط في الصفة	*Hyperbole*	15
حسن التشبيه	*Beautiful similes*	16
أعنات الشاعر نفسه في القوافي وتكلفه في ذلك	*Poet's burden of rhyme*	17
حسن الإبتداعت	*Beautiful beginning*	18

A selection of embellishment examples taken from *Kitāb al-Badīᶜ* include:

sūrah	āyah	*Balāghah* type
2	179	*Muṭābaqah*: [antithesis] 'there is for you in retaliation [saving of] life, o people of understanding' / the most concise and eloquent way of expressing one thing in its opposite place and here how in the law of legal retaliation (*qiṣāṣ*; taking of life) there is deterrent for protecting life.[49]

[49] *Kitāb al-Badīᶜ*, p.48. Boullata notes:

> A further example will highlight another aspect of the quality of qur'ānic literary structures: "*wa-lakum fī l-qiṣāṣi ḥayātun*" (q 2:179), which means "and in retaliation, there is life for you." Muslim rhetoricians have compared this qur'ānic verse with the pre-Islamic Arabian proverb, "*al-qatlu anfā lil-qatli,*" which means "killing is more likely to preclude killing". Although the two statements are not exactly congruent, they both advocate the application of the death penalty in cases of murder, maintaining that such a punishment results in a safer society, as it both deters others and removes the murderer from the

9	82	*Muqābalah*: [contrast] 'so let them laugh a little and weep much for what they used to earn' / a pair of contrasting ideas in a single sentence is used here to highlight the consequences of wrong actions.[50]
17	24	*Istiʿārah*: [metaphor]: '...and lower to them the wings of humility out of mercy' / where humility has been figuratively described as wings.[51]
20	5	*Tawrīyah*: 'the Merciful established Himself on the Throne' / where the word إستوى has two meanings: (i) sitting (*julūs*) or (ii) conquering (*istīlā'*) and the latter is the intended one.[52]

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community. Attention has been drawn to the sound of the words in these two statements; the phonemes of the pre-Islamic proverb are difficult to pronounce in succession, alternating — as they do — between the sounds of *a* and *q* at opposite ends of the laryngeal uttering process, interposed between the repetitive dental cluster *tl,* whereas the phonemes of the qur'ānic verse, in contrast, flow easily on one's tongue. Phonology, therefore, is another important element in literary structures, for it governs and ensures the acoustic and phonic fluidity of the qur'ānic text, helping it to achieve good reception and deliver its meaning effectively. "Literary Structures", *The Encyclopedia of the Qur'ān*, 3:193.

[50] *Kitāb al-Badīʿ*, p.60.
[51] Ibid., p.15.
[52] Ibid., p.106:

> ...the word *istawā* has two meanings: an apparant and immediate meaning – which is not the intended meaning because Allah (Most high) is above such a meaning – and a secondary and subtle meaning which is to dominate and 'conquer' and that is the intended meaning.

فلفظة إستوى لها معنيان قريب ظاهر غير مراد هو الجلوس لأن الله تعالى منزه عن هذا المعنى والثاني بعيد وخفي يعني الملك والإستيلاء و هو المقصود

27 44 *Tajnīs*: [paranomasia] 'I submit to Solomon to Allah, the Lord of the worlds' / where words that sound the same are repeated often for poetic embellishment and euphony. Here the verb *aslamtu* and the noun *sulayman* have alliterative adjacency to create that attractive and rhythmic effect.[53]

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[53] Ibid., p.6. This may take various forms such as *paronomasia*, *homonymy*, *punning* or *alliteration*.

Chapter 4

The Inimitable Book: *Explaining I'jāz*



§1. Introduction

The Qur'ān is generally defined as being:

1. The miraculous word of God (*kalām Allāh ta'ālā al-mu'jiz*).

2. Revealed to the last of the Prophets and Messengers Muḥammad (*al-munazzal 'alā khātim al-anbiyā' wa 'l-mursalīn sayyidinā Muḥammad*).

3. Through the medium of the trustee of the revelation Gabriel (*bi-wāsiṭa amīn al-waḥy Jibrīl*).

4. Transmitted to us [at present] via mass-transmission (*al-manqūl ilaynā bi 'l-tawātur*).

5. Where God is worshipped by its recitation (*al-muta'abbad bi-tilāwatihi*).

6. Opening with the chapter al-Fātiḥa ('The Opening') and ends with the chapter al-Nās ('The People').

7. **With a standing challenge by the smallest of its chapters (*al-mutaḥaddī bi-aqṣar sūra minhu*).**[54]

It is this last part of the definition given above that is of particular importance in that traditional Muslim belief holds the

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[54] Cf. M. al-Qaṭṭān, *Mabāḥith fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān*, pp.15-17 and Drāz, *An Eternal Challenge*, pp.3-7.

Qur'ān to be a unique document.[55] It is also considered to be the product of God hence a work of direct 'Divine Authorship' and not human authorship. Muslims have offered a number of arguments in order to prove this belief but the striking point is that the Qur'ān itself offers the challenge for anyone to disprove that it is God's word.[56] The lack of anyone being able to produce anything equal to the Qur'ān[57] developed into the Muslim theological doctrine known as the "inimitable quality"[58] of the Qur'ān (*al-ʿijāz al-qur'ān*).[59] The doctrine was

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[55] Abdul-Raof, *Exploring the Qur'an*, p.60.

[56] These are known as the 'challenge verses' (*āyāt al-taḥaddī* / آيات التحدي) which are: (1) Q. 2:22-23 'And if you are in doubt concerning what we have sent down to our servant, then produce a chapter similar to it, if you are truthful. But if you do not do it – and of surety you cannot do it – then fear the fire whose fuel is men and stones, prepared for the disbelievers'; (2) 10:38 'Or do they He [i.e. the Prophet] has forged it? Say, bring then a chapter like it and call upon whomever you can besides God, if you are truthful'; (3) 11:13 'Or do they say: He (i.e. the Prophet) has forged it? Say, bring then ten chapters like it and call upon whomever you can besides God, if you are truthful'; (4) 17:88 'Say, if all of humankind and the jinn gathered together to produce the like of the Qur'ān, they could not produce it – even if they helped one another' and (5) 52:33-34 'Or do they say 'he has forged it!' Nay! Let them then produce a recitation similar to it, if indeed they are truthful'.

[57] See for example Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī (in *Fatḥ al-Bārī*) on the inability to as yet meet the challenge as quoted by al-Suyūṭī in *al-Itqān fī ʿUlūm al-Qur'ān*, 2:311:

قال في فتح الباري: ويمكن نظم القولين في كلام واحد فإن محصلهما لا ينافي بعضه بعضا ولا خلاف بين العقلاء أن كتاب الله تعالى معجز لم يقدر واحد على معارضته بعد تحديهم بذلك...

[58] The term even in English has connotations of 'surpassing all else', 'matchless in quality', 'unique, irreproducible', 'unable to be copied', etc.

[59] See F. Esack, *The Qur'an*, pp.102-105; K. Abu Deeb, "Literary Criticism" in A. F. L. Beeston et al (eds.), *The Cambridge History of Arabic Literature*, pp.362-366; D. Brown, *A New Introduction to Islam*, pp.80-81; A. Rippin, *Muslims: Their Religious Beliefs and Practices*, pp.37-40; A. Saeed, *The Qur'an: An Introduction*, pp.52-53 and W. Graham and N. Kermani, "Recitation and Aesthetic

situated within a new genre of literature emerging in the 3rd/9th and 4th/10th century on establishing the evidences of prophethood (*tathbīt dalā'il al-nubuwwah*) which had become popular among the scholastic theologians (*mutakallimūn*) and other religious scholars. Vasalou states:

> The essence of the doctrine of the inimitability of the Qur'ān is that it is a miracle (*muʿjiza*), more specifically a diachronic miracle effective until the Day of Resurrection, according to the consensus of the community, and it is the central proof granted to Muḥammad in authentication of his prophetic status. The basis for this doctrine is indeed provided by the Qur'ān itself, which in six different *loci* invites Muḥammad's antagonists, those who deny his prophethood and declare the Qur'ān a 'fabrication', to produce its like. 'Or do they say "He fabricated (the Message)?" Nay, they have no faith. Let them then produce a recital like it, if (it be) they speak the truth' (Q. 52:33-4). The challenge is subsequently reduced to ten verses, then to a single verse - yet the detractors cannot produce even that minimal amount. Thus men's inability (*ʿajz*) speaks for itself; and it is in the light of a case already won that the doctrine of *iʿjāz* begins to unravel and assume its various expressions. Yet the doctrine of *iʿjāz* had to wait for another two centuries before these verses germinated into the full-fledged form of the creed: it is roughly in the middle of the 9th century that it becomes inappropriate to find fault with the Qur'an's style, while it is only in the late 10th century that the first of the seminal works on *iʿjāz* are composed. The Muʿtazilite Naẓẓām was among the first to broach the topic and ignite the debate, but it is mainly with Rummānī's (d. 994) *al-Nukat fi iʿjāz al-Qur'ān* and Khaṭṭābī's (d. 998) *Bayān iʿjāz al-Qur'ān* that the arguments begin to acquire greater cogency.[60]

Reception" in *The Cambridge Companion to the Qur'ān*, ed. J. M. McAuliffe, pp.128-130.

[60] S. Vasalou, "The Miraculous Eloquence of the Qur'ān", *Journal of Qur'ānic Studies* 4 (2002), p.24. See the next chapter on all three authors.

The contexts that activated the need for an articulated doctrine of the veracity of the Prophet's message is mentioned by Martin and Vahide respectively:

> These three third/ninth century developments - the rise and fall of the Muᶜtazilah as an influence in public life, the growing dissidence of the Shiᶜah with an alternative political theory that had ramifications for the doctrine of prophethood, and the pride of the Arabs in their language and Book in a milieu of scepticism and competing national and literary interests - charged the atmosphere in which prophethoodwas dis cussed.[61]

> It was not till the end of the third/ninth century that *i'jāz* came to be used as the technical term for the Qur'an's inimitability. Doctrinal challenges to the new religion of Islam from various quarters in the centuries previous to this, together with contacts with members of the old religions in the conquered lands and intellectual developments arising from the translation into Arabic of philosophical works have been posited as reasons for the growth of the doctrine. Following the establishment of the 'Abbasid dynasty in the mid-second/eighth centuries, faced with Christian polemics and persistent interrogation concerning Islamic teaching on such questions as prophethood, revelation, and miracles, Muslim thinkers were constrained to produce works proving the authenticity of their religion. The polemical treatise *Ḥujjat al-Nubuwwa* by the Arab literary genius al-Jāḥiẓ (d. 255/868-9) may be cited as an example [...] The controversies and polemics concerning the subject of prophethood between Muslims and the People of the Book on the one hand, and between Muslim schools of thought on the other, led in this same period to its being formulated within the science of *kalām*, with the miraculous nature of the Qur'an as its basis. Indeed, it was firstly Mu'tazilite and then Ash'arite

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[61] Martin, "The Role of the Basran Muᶜtazilah", *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 39 (1980), p.179.

> *mutakallimūn* that produced works expounding the superior literary merits of the Qur'an. For it was from the third/ninth century that the idea of the Qur'an's inimitability became increasingly associated with its eloquence.[62]

The linguistic meaning is from the verb *ᶜajaza* / عجز meaning 'to render incapable', 'to make helpless'. The verbal noun is *iᶜjāz* / إعجاز meaning 'miraculous' (= the concept) and the active participle of the verb is *muᶜjiz* / معجز (= the act).[63] A "miracle" (*muᶜjizah*) in the classical Islamic science of the Qur'ān, is technically defined as follows:

"Know that a *muᶜjizah* is a matter that breaks the normal state of affairs linked to a challenge and immune from being met and can be either empirical or rational..."[64]

اعلم أن المعجزة أمر خارق للعادة مقرون بالتحدي سالم عن المعارضة وهي إما حسية وإما عقلية...

al-Qāḍī ᶜIyāḍ (d. 544/1149) states the meaning of a miracle as follows:

> Know that the reason we call what the Prophets have brought a "miracle" is that creatures are incapable of doing the like of it. There are two sorts of miracles. One sort is something that human beings are potentially able to do, but which they prevented from doing by an act of Allah in order that the truthfulness of His Prophet should be confirmed. These included such things as their turning away from seeking death (when they were asked to do so) and their incapacity to bring the like of the Qur'an and similar things. The other sort is things beyond their power and which they cannot do – such as bringing the dead to life, turning a

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[62] Ş. Vahide, "Universal Aspects of the Qur'ān's Inimitability and Proofs of Prophethood", pp.2-3 at http://www.iikv.org.

[63] For more, see "*ᶜajaza*" in Lane's *English-Arabic Lexicon*, Bk.1, pp.1959-1961.

[64] See al-Suyūṭī, *al-Itqān fī ᶜUlūm al-Qur'ān*, 2:311.

> staff into a snake, bringing the she-camel out of the rock, the tree speaking, water flowing from between the fingers, and splitting the moon. Only Allah can do these things. They are things Allah does at the hand of one of His Prophets. The Prophet's challenge to those who denied him to produce something similar was in order to show their incapacity.[65]

These definitions establish that the Qur'ānic miracle of the Prophet is amenable to rational investigation and human verification at any time unlike the miracles reported about earlier Prophets because they are only accessible through reports. The Qur'ān and its claim of divine authorship therefore presents itself as a *fact* to be explained and not a recorded hearsay.[66]

The traditional Muslim historical account describes the Qur'ānic challenge to the Arab experts, men of letters, grammarians, rhetoricians, poets and orators in stages:

...when the Prophet brought [the challenge] to them, they were the most eloquent rhetoricians so he challenged them to produce the [entire] likes [of the Qur'ān] and many years passed and they were unable to do so as Allah says, 'Let them then produce a recitation similar to it, if indeed they are truthful'.[67] Then, [the Prophet] challenged them to produce 10 chapters like it where Allah says, 'Say, bring then ten chapters like it and call upon whomever you can besides God, if you are truthful'.[68] Then, he challenged them to produce a single chapter where

ولما جاء به النبي إليهم وكانوا أفصح الفصحاء ومصاقع الخطباء وتحداهم على أن يأتوا بمثله وأمهلهم طول السنين فلم يقدروا كما قال تعالى فليأتوا بحديث مثله إن كانوا صادقين ثم تحداهم بعشر سور منه في قوله تعالى أم يقولون افتراه قل فأتوا بعشر سور مثله مفتريات وادعوا من استطعتم من دون الله إن كنتم صادقين فإن لم يستجيبوا لكم فاعلموا أنما أنزل بعلم الله ثم تحداهم بسورة في قوله أم يقولون افتراه قل فأتوا بسورة مثله . . الآية ثم كرر في قوله وإن كنتم في ريب مما نزلنا على عبدنا فأتوا بسورة من مثله . . الآية فلما عجزوا عن معارضته والإتيان بسورة تشبهه على كثرة

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[65] *Muhammad, Messenger of Allah*, pp.137-138 (tr. by A. Bewley).
[66] See al-Nabhānī, *al-Shakhṣiyyah al-Islāmiyyah*, 1:38-42 and 168-177.
[67] Q. 52:33-34.
[68] Q. 11:13.

الخطباء فيهم والبلغاء نادى عليهم بإظهار العجز وإعجاز القرآن فقال قل لئن اجتمعت الإنس والجن على أن يأتوا بمثل هذا القرآن لا يأتون بمثله ولو كان بعضهم لبعض ظهيرا...

Allah says, 'Or do they He [i.e. the Prophet] has forged it? Say, bring then a chapter like it and call upon whomever you can besides God, if you are truthful'[69] with the additional verse, 'And if you are in doubt concerning what we have sent down to our servant, then produce a chapter similar to it, if you are truthful. But if you do not do it – and of surety you cannot do it – then fear the fire whose fuel is men and stones, prepared for the disbelievers'.[70] When the [Arabs] were unable to produce a single chapter like [the Qur'ān] despite there being the most eloquent rhetoricians amongst them, [the Prophet] openly announced the failure and inability [to meet the challenge] and declared the inimitability of the Qur'ān. Then Allah said, 'Say, if all of humankind and the jinn gathered together to produce the like of the Qur'ān, they could not produce it – even if they helped one another'...[71]

Thus,

> against this background, the Challenge Verses (*āyāt al-taḥaddī*) referred to above become the cornerstone of the doctrine of *i'jāz al-Qur'ān*. Muḥammad challenged those who mocked the Qur'ān and who opposed him to produce speech as good as that of the Qur'ān. In q 52:33-4, cited earlier, a series of rhetorical counterpoints are hurled at his accusers. He answers those who accuse him of fabricating the

[69] Q. 10:38.
[70] Q. 2:22-23.
[71] Q. 17:88. The quotation is from al-Suyūṭī, *al-Itqān fī ᶜUlūm al-Qur'ān*, 2:311-312.

speech of the Qur'ān (*taqawwalahu*) by challenging them to bring a discourse like it (*bi-ḥadīthin mithlihi*) if they speak truly. In q 11:13, in response to those who accused Muḥammad of forging the Qur'ān (*iftarāhu*): "Say, then bring ten sūras like it if you are truthful." q 10:37 addresses directly the accusation that the Qur'ān is a forgery: "This Qur'ān could not have been forged apart from God, but it is a confirmation (*taṣdīq*) of what is before it and a detailing (*tafṣīl*) of the book, wherein there is no doubt, from the lord of the worlds." Thereupon follows a more taunting challenge than q 11:13 above: "Or do they say he has forged it? Say: then produce a sūra like it, and call upon whomever you can apart from God if you speak truly" (q 10:38). Following the theme of inviting critics of the Qur'ān even to seek help in imitating the Qur'ān, the most frequently cited verse puts the challenge as follows: "Truly, if humankind and the jinn assembled to produce the like of this Qur'ān they could not produce the like of it, even if some of them helped others" (q 17:88). That no one can ever match the speech of the Qur'ān, and that there are eschatological consequences for those who try and fail is asserted in q 2:23-4: "If you are in doubt concerning what we sent down to our servant [Muhammad], then produce a sūra the like of it, and call upon your witnesses apart from God, if you are truthful. And if you do not [produce one] — and you never will — then fear the hell fire, whose fuel is humans and stones, prepared for unbelievers." [72]

According to classical Islamic theology, of all the miracles granted to the Prophet, the Qur'ān is his greatest miracle. Ibn Khaldūn (d. 808/1406) says about this:

Know that the greatest, most noble and manifest miracle is the evidence of the Exalted Qur'ān revealed to our Prophet Muhammad. All other miracles

فاعلم أن أعظم المعجزات وأشرفها وأوضحها دلالة القرآن الكريم المنزل على نبينا محمد فإن الخوارق في الغالب تقع مغايرة للوحي الذي

[72] R. C. Martin, "Inimitability", *Encyclopedia of the Qur'ān*, 2:528.

(*al-khawāriq*)[73] in general were produced from the revelation which the Prophet received as a means of proving his truth and veracity. As for the Qur'ān, it is in itself the self-proclaimed revelation that is an extraordinary miracle attesting to its own veracity and not dependent upon external evidence to prove itself like other miracles...[74]

يتلقاه النبي ويأتي بالمعجزة شاهدة بصدقه والقرآن هو بنفسه الوحي المدعى وهو الخارق المعجز فشاهده في عينه ولا يفتقر إلى دليل مغاير له كسائر المعجزات مع الوحي فهو أوضح دلالة لاتحاد الدليل والمدلول ...

The pre-Islamic context for the Qur'ānic challenge (*muᶜāraḍah*) is described by Boullata as follows:

> Literary composition attempting to imitate the language and style of the Qur'ān. Parodies of the Qur'ān (sing. *Mu'āraḍat al-Qur'ān*) have been known in Islamic history, but no authentic and complete texts of them have come down to us. What Islamic sources have recorded of them in snippets shows imitation that is obviously weak, grossly ludicrous and vastly inferior to the Qur'ān in language, style and content making the parodies themselves the object of ridicule [...] In Muḥammad's lifetime, the most famous parodist of the Qur'ān was Musaylima. Known in Muslim writings as "the liar" (*al-kadhdhāb*), he claimed prophecy in Yamāma and held authority in eastern Arabia until he was killed in 11/633 in the war against apostates waged by the first caliph, Abū Bakr. As recorded in al-Ṭabarī (d. 310/923) and other Muslim sources, Musaylima's parody consisted of rhyming prose verses of unequal lengths, in which oaths were often made, reference was made to the wonders of life and nature, a God called Allāh and al-Raḥmān was invoked and very few regulations were posited. The parody has a hollow ring to it, even when echoing a qur'ānic turn of phrase, because it lacks a sublime subject.[75]

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[73] Literally, 'extraordinary contraventions of the natural order'.
[74] Ibn Khaldūn, *al-Muqaddimah*, p.21.
[75] Boullata, "Parody" in *Encyclopedia of the Qur'ān*, 4:22.

§2. Linguistic Features for the Qur'ān's Inimitability

The general argument that the Qur'ān is inimitable may be formalized into a syllogism as follows:

[P1] If the Qur'ān is inimitable, then it is the word of Allah.
[P2] The Qur'ān is inimitable.

[C1] *Therefore*, The Qur'ān is the word of Allah.

In order to prove premise two above ('The Qur'ān is inimitable'), Muslims have advanced a number of different arguments establishing its soundness. These are taken cumulatively to indicate the miraculous or inimitable aspects of the book (known as *wujūh al-iʿjāz* ['inimitable features']). These include:

1. Historically plausible or rational causes for the composition of the Qur'ān.

1 = the explanatory argument.

2. The Qur'ān's matchless eloquence.

3. The Qur'ān's creation of its own unique genre.

4. The Qur'ān's saturated use of rhetorical devices.

5. The Qur'ān's unprecedented literary form.

2-5 = the linguistic arguments.[76]

6. The Qur'ān's anticipation of future events.

7. The Qur'ān's anticipation of scientific discoveries.

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[76] Cf. G. Gelder, *Beyond the Line: Classical Arabic Literary Critics on the Coherence and Unity of the Qur'ān*, pp.5-14.

8. The Qur'ān's holistic program of guidance.[77]

6-8 = non-linguistic arguments.

It is, however, the linguistic dimension that has been emphasized as especially constituting the miraculous nature of the Qur'ān.[78] al-Suyūṭī gives a long and convenient list of major opinions by expert theologians as to what linguistic component (*wajh*) constitutes the Qur'ānic inimitability:[79]

Imam Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī said that the inimitable aspect is the *faṣāḥah* (sublime eloquence) and the unique style free of any imperfection...[80]

وقال الإمام فخر الدين وجه الإعجاز الفصاحة وغرابة الأسلواب والسلامة من جميع العيوب...

al-Qāḍī Abū Bakr said that the inimitable aspect [of the Qur'ān] is its *naẓm*, *ta'līf* and *tarṣīf* ('writing'/'composition') breaking all previously known Arab word-order and utterly differing from all their oratory styles...[81]

وقال القاضي أبو بكر وجه إعجازه ما فيه من النظم والتأليف والترصيف وأنه خارج عن جميع وجوه النظم المعتاد في كلام العرب ومباين لأساليب خطاباتهم...

al-Khaṭṭābī said that most scholars hold to the position that the aspect of Qur'ānic inimitability is its

وقال الخطابي ذهب الأكثرون من علماء النظر إلى أن وجه الإعجاز فيه من جهة

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[77] Meaning that the Qur'ān's inimitability is grounded in the quality of its guidance (*hidāyah* / هداية) based on Q. 28:49. See A. Von Denffer for this view in *ᶜUlūm al-Qur'ān*, p.154. Other arguments include the power of the Qur'ān to effect and move its listeners (i.e. its aesthetic quality and reception) as well as it being amenable to easy memorisation. See Y. Qadhi, *An Introduction to the Sciences of the Qur'aan*, p.266.

[78] It is also argued that the Qur'ān is 'cumulatively inimitable', i.e. combining all its unique aspects (*wujūh*) together. Cf. al-Zarkashī, *al-Burhān fī ᶜUlūm al-Qur'ān*, 2:106 cited below.

[79] al-Suyūṭī, *al-Itqān fī ᶜUlūm al-Qur'ān*, 2:315-322. See also Abdul-Raof, *Arabic Rhetoric*, pp.57-60 and Qadhi, *An Introduction to the Sciences of the Qur'aan*, pp.265-267.

[80] al-Suyūṭī, *al-Itqān fī ᶜUlūm al-Qur'ān*, 2:315.

[81] Ibid., 2:315.

balāghah...[82]

البلاغة...

Ibn Surāqah said: the people of knowledge have differed regarding the aspects of the Qur'ānic inimitability. They have mentioned many of these aspects all of which carry deep wisdom and truth. They have only discussed one part out of ten on the Qur'ānic inimitability.

وقال ابن سراقة إختلف أهل العلم في وجه إعجاز القرآن فذكروا في ذلك وجوها كثيرة كلها حكمة وصواب وما بلغوا في وجوه إعجازه جزءا واحدا من عشر معشاره

[A]. Some hold the position that it is *ījāz* ('terseness'/'succinctness') and conciseness with *balāghah* (rhetoric).

فقال قوم هو الإيجاز مع البلاغة

[B]. Some say it is *bayān* (exposition) with *faṣāḥah*.

وقال آخرون هو البيان والفصاحة

[C] Some say that it is *raṣf* ('writing style') with *naẓm*.

وقال آخرون هو الرصف والنظم

[D]. Others say that the Qur'ān is beyond any kind of Arabic speech whether of *naẓm*, *nathr* (prose) *balāghah*, or *shi'r* (poetry) despite it being Arabic letters, meanings and words [...]

وقال آخرون هو كونه خارجا عن جنس كلام العرب من النظم والنثر والخطب والشعر مع كون حروفه في كلامهم ومعانيه في خطابهم وألفاظه من جنس كلماتهم وهو بذاته قبيل غير قبيل كلامهم وجنس آخر متميز عن أجناس خطابهم حتى إن من اقتصر على معانيه وغير حروفه أذهب رونقه ومن إقتصر على حروفه وغير معانيه أبطل فائدته فكان في ذلك أبلغ دلالة على إعجازه

[E]. Some hold it to be the fact of the reciter never becoming weary of reciting it and the listener's inexhaustible listening [of the recitation] even if the recitation is repeated over and over.

وقال آخرون هو كون قارئه لا يكل وسامعه لا يمل وإن تكررت عليه تلاوته

[F]. Some deem the inimitable aspect to be the reports about past affairs in detail.

وقال آخرون هو ما فيه من الإخبار عن الأمور الماضية وقال آخرون هو ما فيه من علم الغيب والحكم على الأمور بالقطع

[G]. Others say it is because of the reports about the unseen and the judgments on matters with certainty.

وقال آخرون هو كونه جامعا لعلوم يطول

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[82] Ibid., 2:319.

شرحها ويشق حصرها
إنتهى

[H]. Yet others believe it to be because it combines all types of knowledge with unending commentaries and unsurpassable in its conciseness.[83]

وقال الزركشي في البرهان أجمع أهل التحقيق على أن الإعجاز وقع بجميع ما سبق من الأقوال لا بكل واحد على إنفراده فإنه جمع ذلك كله فلا معنى لنسبته إلى واحد منها بمفرده مع إشتماله على الجميع بل وغير ذلك...

al-Zarkashī in his *al-Burhān* states that the people of deep knowledge who have investigated this issue claim that the inimitability (*iᶜjāz*) occurs through all the opinions and investigations previously mentioned and not one by itself alone...[84]

As gleaned from the above brief topology, the *linguistic* inimitability thus divides into the following areas argued to be the inimitable quality constituting the inimitability of the Qur'ān:

The *iᶜjāz* Feature

Naẓm / النظم /	*Ta'līf* / التأليف /	*Faṣāḥah* / الفصاحة /
Form/arrangement	Composition	Eloquence
Uslūb / الأسلوب /	*Maᶜānī* / المعاني /	*Balāghah* / البلاغة /
Unique style	Word-order	Rhetoric
Bayān / البيان /	*Nathr* / النثر /	*Raṣf* / الرصف /
Figures of speech	Prose	Writing

What exactly constitutes the minimal element for the miraculous or inimitable nature of the Qur'ān to be exhibited?

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[83] Ibid., 2:320-321.

[84] Ibid., 2:321. See al-Zarkashī, *al-Burhān fī ᶜUlūm al-Qur'ān*, 2:106 and Ibn Juzayy al-Kalbī's list of 10 aspects of Qur'ānic *iᶜjāz* as summarized in Qadhi, *An Introduction to the Sciences of the Qur'aan*, pp.266-267.

This question has given rise to three differing views amongst Muslim scholars. They are:

View 1	View 2	View 3
The inimitability feature of the Qur'ān is dependent upon the entire Qur'ān, i.e. taken in its entirety and not just a chapter, passage or verse.	The inimitable quality is manifest in any complete chapter of the Qur'ān, i.e. the miraculous quality is not dependent on the entire book but only the smallest chapter (= 3 lines/verses).	The inimitable property is established from any part, portion, verse, chapter, etc. of the Qur'ān (even a phrase – as long as it can be meaningfully called the 'Qur'ān').[85]

Thus, the following possibilities arise:

1. The entire Qur'ān manifests all aspects of inimitability (*iʿjāz*).

2. The entire Qur'ān manifests some aspects of inimitability.

3. At least some of the Qur'ān manifests all aspects of inimitability.

4. At least some of the Qur'ān manifests some aspects of inimitability

Below will be a survey of only some of the various arguments presented by Muslims in order to establish the inimitability of the Qur'ān followed by an analytical exposition of three classical theories of *iʿjāz* as articulated by al-Khaṭṭābī, al-Rummānī and al-Jurjānī with specific linguistic examples of Qur'ānic inimitability reserved for later chapters.

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[85] See Qadhi, *An Introduction to the Sciences of the Qur'aan*, pp.287-288.

§3. The Argument from Enduring Eloquence

Abū Bakr al-Jaṣṣāṣ, the Ḥanafī theologian, jurist, exegete and linguist (d. 370/981)[86] comments regarding the challenge of the Qur'ān:

> His words (Most High), 'Say: 'If mankind and the jinn were together to produce the like of this Qur'an, they could not produce the like thereof, even if they helped one another'[87] indicate the inimitable nature of the Qur'ān.[88] Some people say that its inimitable quality is in the wording or construction (*naẓm*)[89] on the one hand and in the meanings (*maʿānī*) and the arrangement in which ideas are presented, on the other hand. They use as evidence the fact that in this verse [just mentioned] the Qur'ān challenges the Arabs and the non-Arabs, the jinn and humans. It is well-known that the non-Arabs could not be challenged on the aspect of the wording and its construction, therefore the challenge for them must be to do with the meanings and the arrangement in which ideas are presented.[90]

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[86] For an account of his life, thought and works, refer to Ibn al-Nadīm, *al-Fihrist*, p.208; al-Ṣaymarī, *Akhbār Abī Ḥanīfah*, pp.166-167; al-Dhahabī, *Siyar al-Aʿlām al-Nubalā'*, 14:340-341 and al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Ta'rīkh Baghdād*, 4:314. See also M. Bedir, "al-Jaṣṣāṣ", in *Islamic Legal Thought: A Compendium of Muslim Jurists*, ed. O. Arabi et al, pp.147-168.

[87] Q. 17:88.

[88] Cf. al-Baqillānī's *Iʿjāz al-Qur'ān*, pp.57-72 and al-Jurjānī's *Dalā'il al-Iʿjāz* in K. Abu Deeb's *al-Jurjāni's Theory of Poetic Imagery*, pp.24-64 and R. M. Allen, *An Introduction to Arabic Literature*, pp.225-229 for further details and references.

[89] Sometimes translated as 'composition', 'syntax' and 'form'.

[90] al-Jaṣṣāṣ, *Aḥkām al-Qur'ān*, 5:34:

قوله تعالى (قل لئن اجتمعت الإنس والجن على أن يأتوا بمثل هذا القرآن) الآية فيه الدلالة على إعجاز القرآن، فمن الناس من يقول: إعجازه في النظم على حياله، وفي المعاني وترتيبها على حياله، ويستدل على ذلك: بتحديه في هذه الآية العرب والعجم، والجن والإنس، ومعلوم أن العجم لا يُتحدون من طريق النظم، فوجب أن يكون التحدي لهم من جهة المعاني وترتيبها على هذا النظام، دون نظم الألفاظ

He then continues saying:

> Some of the scholars insist that its inimitable quality is limited to composition of its words as well as rhetorical eloquence of expression. They say: The inimitable quality of the Qur'ān has many aspects such as its beautiful composition, its rhetorically eloquent and concise wording, combining many levels of meanings in very few words, being completely free of any word that sounds incloquent or any ideas or meanings that are out of place as well as being free of any contradictions. All of it, from beginning to end, is consistent. The words of people (*al-ʿibād*), on the other hand, especially if they speak at length, cannot be free of cheap words, corrupt meanings and contradictions. What we have mentioned of the flaws in people's speech is present in the speech of people of all languages and not just Arabic. Thus, it is possible that the challenge of the Qur'ān applies to the non-Arabs in that way, namely: challenging them to bring something that is free of the faults and flaws referred to above, because saying things in an eloquent manner is not something that is limited only to Arabic, to the exclusion of other languages, even though the Arabic language is the most eloquent. We know that the Qur'ān is the most sublime level of eloquence, so it is possible that the challenge to the non-Arabs is by way of challenging them to produce words at the highest level of eloquence in their own languages.[91]

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[91] Ibid., 5:34-35:

ومنهم من يأبى أن يكون إعجازه إلا من جهة نظم الألفاظ، والبلاغة في العبارة، فإنه يقول: إن إعجاز القرآن من وجوه كثيرة منها: حسن النظم، وجودة البلاغة في اللفظ والاختصار، وجمع المعاني الكثيرة في الألفاظ اليسيرة، مع تعريه من أن يكون فيه لفظ مسخوط ومعنى مدخول، ولا تناقض ولا اختلاف تضاد، وجميعه في هذه الوجوه جار على منهاج واحد، وكلام العباد لا يخلو إذا طال من أن يكون فيه الألفاظ الساقطة، والمعاني الفاسدة والتناقض في المعاني، وهذه المعاني التي ذكرنا من عيوب الكلام : موجودة في كلام الناس من أهل سائر اللغات، لا يختص باللغة العربية دون غيرها، فجائز أن يكون التحدي واقعاً للعجم بمثل هذه المعاني: في الإتيان بها عارية مما يعيبها ويهجنها من الوجوه التي ذكرناها، ومن جهة أن الفصاحة لا تختص بها لغة العرب دون سائر اللغات وإن كانت لغة العرب أفصحها

al-Jaṣṣāṣ quotes some scholars grounding the inimitable aspect of the Qur'ān in a set of qualities that are beyond the productive capacity of human beings to imitate. These include:

1. the production of speech free of flaws;
2. speech that maintains consistent eloquence;
3. speech that has optimally produced meanings and
4. speech produced without any contradiction.

The above criteria to produce speech that fulfils 1-4 are applicable to peoples of all languages and so in this way, the Qur'ānic challenge quite interestingly becomes an extendable challenge beyond the parameters of Arabic. The challenge then would be to: *produce a composition that is free from flaws, consistent, meaningful and contains no contradiction in any language*. In other words, if a person can produce a consistent level of optimal eloquence, free of flaws and contradictions in any language, that would be something miraculous because human beings simply cannot do that. This argument is a species of the argument from "enduring eloquence",[92] which is something like this:

(1) Any speech discourse with enduring eloquence is beyond the human productive capacity to imitate.
(2) Anything beyond the human productive capacity to imitate is a *muᶜjizah*.
(3) The Qur'ān is a speech discourse with complete enduring eloquence.
Therefore,

وقد علمنا أن القرآن في أعلى طبقات البلاغة فجائز أن يكون التحدي للعجم واقعا بأن يأتوا بكلام في أعلى طبقات البلاغة بلغتهم التي يتكلمون بها

[92] By "enduring eloquence" I mean the speech of a person – whatever the subject matter – that maintains and sustains, as required by the context, audience, communicative goals and outcome, an optimal level of eloquence without diminishing in any way so as to impair that eloquence.

(4) The Qur'ān is beyond the human productive capacity to imitate.

Given (4), it follows that:

(5) The Qur'ān is a *muᶜjizah*.

Muslim theologians have argued that human beings simply cannot sustain a length of speech or discourse with optimal eloquence *consistently* over a period of time. One of the early architects of Ashᶜarite theology Abū 'l-Maᶜālī al-Juwaynī (d. 478/1086) alludes to this in his *Kitāb al-Irshād* where he says:

> Another type of eloquent speech consists in telling a story without losing the elements of eloquence. Most masters of eloquence use an elevated style when they compose amorous praises of a beloved. But, if they are giving an intimate account of internal states, they employ threadbare language and scrawny words. If they were to try to use eloquent speech, one will be unable to perceive in it what they want to say in such a case.[93]

He then mentions the example of the epic Qur'ānic *sūra* on Yūsuf and how the most eloquent, expressively dramatic, rich and amazing word configuration is consistently maintained throughout generating thereby beautiful rhythm, deep meaning and an aesthetic appeal – something not possible through ordinary language production over a sustained duration.[94]

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[93] al-Juwaynī, *Kitāb al-Irshād* (tr. by P. Walker as *Conclusive Proofs*), p.190.

[94] Ibid., p.191.

§4. The Explanatory Argument

One of the common arguments employed to establish the direct 'authorship' of the Qur'ān is that based on a type of explanatory argument that employs a final inference after a process of elimination of 'causal' possibilities. In other words, four possible historical causes are presented whereby each unlikely cause is eliminated to leave the most plausible cause of authorship of the Qur'ān. The historical causes are said to be four in number:

1. A non-Arab authored the Qur'ān.

2. An Arab authored the Qur'ān.

3. Muḥammad authored the Qur'ān.

4. Allah authored the Qur'ān.

It is not conceivable that a non-Arab compose Arabic, let alone eloquent Arabic so (1) above is not plausible at all.

Secondly, the most learned Arabs (including poets) as historically attested could not produce anything like the Qur'ān; thus (2) is also ruled out. Martin says:

> Some support exists for the belief that qur'ānic speech was unique among the linguistic productions of seventh-century Arabs. In Ibn Isḥāq's (d. 151/767) biography (*sīra*) of the Prophet (as edited by Ibn Hishām [d. 218/833]), al-Walīd b. al-Mughīra, a famous opponent of the Prophet, tells his fellow opponents of Muḥammad that "... his speech is sweet, his root is a palm tree whose branches are fruitful, and everything you have said [in criticism of the Prophet's recitations] would be known to be false" (Ibn Isḥāq, *Sīra*, i, 243 f.; Ibn Isḥāq-Guillaume, 121; see 'Abd al-Jabbār, *Mughnī*, xvi, 268-9). A similar story is told about 'Umar b. al-Khattāb before his conversion to Islam (Ibn Isḥāq, *Sīra*, i, 294 f.; Ibn Ishāq-Guillaume, 156). The weight of opinion among Muslim scholars in early and medieval Islam, however, was that much of the speech in the Qur'ān was like *saj'* (the rhymed

> prose speech pattern of the *kāhin*, see rhymed prose), which was characterized by assonance at the end of the verses.[95]

Thirdly, Muḥammad being "unlettered" (*al-nabī al-ummī* / النبي الأمي) could not have conjured up anything resembling Qur'ānic speech as he did not have mastery over the necessary literary categories in order to compose poetry or even eloquent prose-speech departing from the norms of the Arabic language – although his speech did possess the highest eloquence. Moreover, the gulf between the Prophetic speech and the Qur'ān is inexplicable. ᶜAbd Allāh Drāz explains:

> ...we say that Muḥammad was certainly the most eloquent of all Arabs [...] but the question should be asked here is about the degree of his superiority: is it of the type that is usually seen between human beings in different areas? Or is it totally supernatural? [...] when we consider Qur'ānic style we find it the same throughout, while the Prophet's own style is totally different [...] you may read a piece of the Prophet's own words and you may feel tempted to imitate it [...] the Qur'ānic style, on the other hand, has its own distinctive features which make it unlike any other style. No one ever tries to come near it. People may wonder how they can produce something similar to it, but they will soon give up any such attempt. Any one in full possession of his senses and is endowed with a literary sense and a critical linguistic taste needs only to listen with one ear to the Qur'ānic style of the Prophet's statements [i.e. the *ḥadīth*] and to other people's styles.[96]

Therefore, ruling this third possibility out leaves only the fourth – Allah.[97]

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[95] Martin, "Inimitability", *Encyclopedia of the Qur'ān*, 2:528.
[96] *An Eternal Challenge*, pp.81-84.
[97] Cf. S. Wild, "Inimitability" and O. Leaman, "Miraculousness of the Qur'ān" in *The Qur'ān: An Encyclopedia*, pp.295-296 and pp.403-406 respectively.

§5. The Argument from 'Deflection' (*ṣarfah*)

One classical argument advanced by theologians of the Muslim rationalist school (*al-muᶜtazilah*)[98] anchored the inimitability not in the Qur'ān itself, but God's intervention in preventing it being directly imitated. This was advanced by a leading Muᶜtazilite theologian al-Naẓẓām (d. ca. 230/845), whose view is summarized as follows:

> Know that al-Naẓẓām took the position that the Qur'ān is a miracle only with respect to *ṣarfah*. The meaning of *ṣarfah* is that the Arabs were able to utter the speech like that of the Qur'ān with respect to linguistic proof and eloquence (*al-fasāḥah wa 'l-balāghah*) until the Prophet was sent. When the Prophet was sent, the [characteristic] eloquence was taken away from them and they were deprived of their knowledge of it and thus they [sic. were] unable to produce speech like the Qur'ān...[99]

The motivation for the argument may seem paradoxical given that, ultimately, Divine power prevents humans from freely exercising their agency to parodying the Qur'ān, as Harvey explains:

> The major question to be answered about this doctrine of is why a member of the Mu'tazilī school of thought would have proposed such an

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[98] For more on the Muᶜtazilite school, see Martin, *Defenders of Reason in Islam*, pp.1-24; W. M. Watt, *The Formative Period of Islamic Thought*, pp.209-250; D. Waines, *An Introduction to Islam*, pp.114-120; J. Peters, *God's Created Speech*, pp.3-6; A. El-Effendi, "Islamic Theology" §2 in E. Craig (ed.), *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, 5:27-31 and D. Gimaret, "al-Muᶜtazila" in *EI²*, 7:127-128.

[99] See the manuscript on a later commentary on Abū Rashīd al-Nīsābūrī's *Ziyādāt al-Sharḥ*, Br. Mus. Or. no. 8613, fols.17b-18a cited in Martin, "Inimitability", *The Encyclopaedia of the Qur'ān*, 2:526-536. See also idem, "The Role of the Basrah Muᶜtazilah in Formulating the Doctrine of the Apologetic Miracle", *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 39 (1980), pp.175-189.

> interpretation, which seems to involve divine compulsion, given their understanding of *al-qadar*, individual free will. The best answer to this seems to be two-fold: firstly, that in the thinking of al-Naẓẓām, the traditional understanding of the *taḥaddī* verses would provide an even greater contradiction with the foundational Mu'tazilī understanding of God as *al-'adl*. The reasoning here was that it would not befit God's Justice to set a challenge that cannot be completed, ergo the *mu'āraḍa* of the Qur'ān must be possible in principle and the *mu'jiza* was manifested in the divine intervention required to mitigate against it. Secondly, there appears to be some evidence in the polemical writings of al-Jāḥiẓ (d. 255/868-869) that *ṣarfa* may have originated as an argument by which his teacher, al-Naẓẓām, was able to reconcile certain inconsistencies in the Qur'ān, which were claimed by his opponents, the *dahriyya*, or Materialists. This explanation, that *ṣarfa* may not have been originally intended to elucidate Qur'ānic *i'jāz*, goes some way to account for the doctrine's awkwardness when applied to the idea of inimitability, something that later scholars did not hesitate to point out.[100]

al-Naẓẓām's argument would go something like this:

1. The Qur'ān is not an inimitable literary document in itself.

2. Nevertheless, the Meccans were unable to meet the Prophet's challenge (*taḥaddī*) to produce and match (*muᶜāraḍah*)[101] something like the Qur'ān.

To explain 2 above, al-Naẓẓām argued that:

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[100] R. Harvey, "The Inimitability of the Noble Qur'ān" at https://ibrahimharvey.wordpress.com.

[101] See A. Schippers, art. "Muᶜāraḍa", in *EI*², 7:261.

(1) If the Meccans were prevented from and 'deterred from' (*ṣurifū ᶜan*) matching the Qur'ānic speech, then the challenge was not met because of Divine intervention.
(2) the challenge was not met because of Divine intervention.
Therefore,
(3) the Meccans were 'deterred from' matching the Qur'ānic speech.
If (1)-(3), then:
(4) the speech or eloquence of the Qur'ān can potentially be matched by any fluent and skilled Arab.
It follows from (4) that:
(5) the Qur'ān is not intrinsically an inimitable literary document.[102]

Rahman comments on the implications of this argument as follows:

> al-Naẓẓām's student ᶜAbd al-Jabbār rejected this doctrine of *ṣarfa* for two main reasons. Firstly, because it contradicts the verse of the Qur'ān stating that neither *jinn* nor humans can rival the Qur'ān,[103] and secondly because it makes a miracle of something other than the Qur'ān, i.e. the *ṣarfa*, the prohibition from production, and not the Qur'ān itself.[104] In

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[102] See Abū Rāshid al-Naysabūrī, *Ziyādāt al-Sharḥ*, MS. *Br. Mus.* no. 8613, fol.18a. Cf. also Abū 'l-Ḥusayn al-Khayyāṭ, *Kitāb al-Intiṣār* (Arabic) p.28 and (trans.), p.25 and see al-Ashᶜarī, *Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyīn*, pp.225 and 7-13.

[103] See Q. 17:88 'Say, if all of humankind and the jinn gathered together to produce the like of the Qur'ān, they could not produce it – even if they helped one another'.

[104] Cf. for example, al-Bāqillānī, *Iᶜjāz al-Qur'ān*, fol.17b:

> what refutes the opinion of *ṣarfah* is that if it is possible to meet the challenge and it is only the *ṣarfah* that prevents it, then it does not make the words themselves miraculous or inimitable but the actual prevention becomes the inimitable factor...

addition to this, according to ᶜAbd al-Jabbār, the doctrine of *ṣarfa* displays four major weaknesses:

1. It ignores the well-known fact that the Arabs of Muḥammad's time had acknowledged the superior quality of speech of the Qur'ān.

2. It is in direct conflict with the meaning of the Qur'ānic verses that propose the Challenge.[105]

3. It implies that the Qur'ān is not a miracle.

4. It asserts that the Arabs were out of their minds (*khurūj ᶜan al-ᶜaql*).

This doctrine, in fact, implies that the Arabs could have produced a rival to the Qur'ān, but simply decided against doing so. It effectively calls into question either their motives or their sanity. Therefore, according to ᶜAbd al-Jabbār, the correct interpretation of *ṣarfa* is that the motives to rival the Qur'ān 'disappeared' (*inṣarafa* / إنصرف) because of the recognition of the impossibility of doing so.[106]

ومما يبطل القول بالصرفة أنه لو كانت المعارضة ممكنة وإنما منع منها الصرفة لم يكن الكلام معجزا وإنما يكون بالمنع معجزا فلا يتضمن الكلام فضيلة على غيره في نفسه... قال وليس هذا بأعجب من قول فريق منهم إن الكل قادرون على الإتيان بمثله وإنما تأخروا عنه لعدم العلم بوجه ترتيب لو تعلموه لوصلوا إليه به ولا بأعجب من قول آخرين إن العجز وقع منهم وأما من بعدهم ففي قدرته الإتيان بمثله وكل هذا لا يعتد به

[105] Namely, Q. 17:88 'Say, if all of humankind and the jinn gathered together to produce the like of the Qur'ān, they could not produce it – even if they helped one another' because this verse clearly establishes the actual inability to produce anything like the Qur'ān.

[106] Taken from Y. Rahman's "The Miraculous Nature of Muslim Scripture: A Study of ᶜAbd al-Jabbār's Iᶜjāz al-Qur'ān" in *Islamic Studies* 35 (4), p.409. See also al-Khayyāṭ, *Kitāb al-Intiṣār*, (Arabic), p.28 and (translation), p.25 and A. M. Gade, *The Qur'an: An Introduction*, pp.166-167.

§6. The Argument from Anticipating Future Events

A particular feature of the Qur'ān is its representation of accurate historical descriptions or its revelation of events many years before they actually happened as well as its futuristic predictions.[107] Two examples include:

1. *The victory of the Romans over the Persians*:

'The Byzantines have been defeated on the nearest front! Following their defeat, they shall conquer a few years later. With God is the decision, both in the past and the future. On that day believers will be glad of God's support. He supports anyone He wishes and He is the powerful, the Merciful'.[108]

In just under nine years, the futuristic information of the verse proved accurate. The Byzantines conquered the Persians at the battle of Issus in 622 regaining the lands they had lost.[109]

2. *The Muslim march of victory into 'the sacred precinct' in Mecca*:

'Indeed, God shall fulfil the true vision, which He showed to His Messenger in full truth. Certainly, you shall enter the Sacred Mosque, God willing, [some] having your heads shaved and [some] having their hair cut short with no fear. He knew what you did not know and He granted besides that a near victory'.[110]

This is the eventual conquest of Mecca where the Prophet and his followers where engaged in a long and bitter struggle with the Meccan pagans and God assured them of a

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[107] Cf. also A. M. Soliman, *Scientific Trends in the Qur'an*, pp.53-78.
[108] See Q. 30:2-5.
[109] See al-Biqā'ī, *Naẓm al-Durar fī Tanāsub al-Āyāt wa 'l-Suwar*, 5:583-586. See also, P. Sykes, *History of Persia*, 1:483-484 and Abdul-Raof, *Exploring the Qur'an*, pp.79-80.
[110] See Q. 48:27 and Soliman, *Scientific Trends in the Qur'an*, pp.53-56.

safety and victory where they could fulfil the pilgrimage they were prevented from doing.[111]

Other aspects of futuristic predictions include:

1. Cosmic events like the destruction of the world.
2. Afterlife events like the Day of Judgment.
3. The fact that its challenge will never be met.
4. The prediction of its own self-preservation.[112]

The argument suggests that the Prophet Muḥammad could not have knowledge of future events and their outcomes in any detail. That would only be possible through being informed by an Omniscient mind. This would mean prophesies were an indication of his status as a true Prophet of God.[113]

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[111] A. B. Philips, *Usool al-Tafseer*, pp.100-101.
[112] Qadhi, *An Introduction to the Sciences of the Qur'aan*, pp.274-275.
[113] Drāz, *An Eternal Challenge*, pp.23-41.

§7. The Argument from Scientific Facts

A more popularly invoked argument for the inimitable quality of the Qur'ān is its allusion to information only feasibly elucidated by modern scientific explanations. Some of these include:

1. Sperm is referred to as 'a mixture of liquids'.[114]
2. The womb is referred to as a 'safe lodge'.[115]
3. The developmental stages of an embryo.[116]
4. The easy birth passage.[117]
5. The formation of milk.[118]
6. The orbit and trajectories of the Planets.[119]

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[114] See Q. 76:2 'Verily We created Man from a drop of mingled sperm, in order to try him: So We gave him [the gifts], of Hearing and Sight' and 75:37 'Was he not a drop of sperm emitted [in lowly form]?' Yusuf Ali's translation.

[115] See Q. 23:13 'Verily We created man from a product of wet earth; Then placed him as a drop [of seed] in a safe lodging; Then fashioned We the drop a clot, then fashioned We the clot a little lump, then fashioned We the little lump bones, then clothed the bones with flesh, and then produced it as another creation. So blessed be Allah, the Best of creators!' Pickthall's translation.

[116] See Q. 39:6; 23:14 and 22:5. Cf. B. M. Carlson, *Human Embryology and Developmental Biology*, St. Louis: Mosby, 1999.

[117] See Q. 80:20 'Then doth He make His path smooth for him'. Yusuf Ali's translation.

[118] See Q. 16:66 'And verily in cattle [too] will ye find an instructive sign. From what is within their bodies between excretions and blood, We produce, for your drink, milk, pure and agreeable to those who drink it'. Yusuf Ali's translation.

[119] See Q. 21:33 'And He it is Who created the night and the day and the sun and the moon; all [orbs] travel along swiftly in their celestial spheres' and 36:40 'It is not for the sun to overtake the moon, nor doth the night outstrip the day. They float each in an orbit'. Shakir and Pickthall respectively.

7. The Water cycle.[120]

8. The expansion of the Universe.[121]

9. The seas and wave patterns.[122]

10. Cloud behaviour and formation.[123]

11. Mountains as stabilisers of the earth.[124]

Below is an example of the Qur'ān alluding to sub-atomic structures of the Universe and thus a feature of its inimitability. Allah states in 81:17: 'And by the night, as it closes in…'

وَاللَّيْلِ إِذَا عَسْعَسَ

The verb عسعس means 'to- advance', 'to approach', 'to retreat', 'to move to and fro' and 'to close in'.[125] Early Muslim

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[120] See Q. 15:22 'And We send the winds fertilising, and cause water to descend from the sky, and give it you to drink. It is not ye who are the holders of the store thereof'. Pickthall's translation.

[121] See Q. 51:47 'We have built the heaven with might, and We it is Who make the vast extent [thereof]'.

[122] See Q. 24:40 'Or like utter darkness in the deep sea: there covers it a wave above which is another wave, above which is a cloud, [layers of] utter darkness one above another; when he holds out his hand, he is almost unable to see it; and to whomsoever Allah does not give light, he has no light'. Shakir's translation.

[123] See Q. 24:43 'Hast thou not seen how Allah wafteth the clouds, then gathereth them, then maketh them layers, and thou seest the rain come forth from between them; He sendeth down from the heaven mountains wherein is hail, and smiteth therewith whom He will, and averteth it from whom He will. The flashing of His lightning all but snatcheth away the sight'. Pickthall's translation.

[124] See Q. 21:31. See also Z. R. El-Naggar, *Sources of Scientific Knowledge: The Geographical Concepts of Mountains in the Qur'ān*, Herndon: VA, 1991.

commentators interpreted it to mean when the night expands and contracts or moves back and forth.[126] Modern Muslim physicists however describe this modular movement back and forth of darkness as mimicking a *sinusoidal phenomenon* – a smooth regular or repetitive oscillation. Thus, indicating that night has a density, mass and temperature. Such subtle knowledge would not have been possible for the Prophet over 1400 years ago.[127]

Allah states in three places the following: 4:40: 'And indeed Allah does not wrong by even an atom's weight...'; 4:124: '...and they will not be wronged as much as even a knocking' and 17:71: '...and no injustice will be done to them even as much as a thread...'

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَظْلِمُ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ وَإِنْ تَكُ حَسَنَةً يُضَاعِفْهَا وَيُؤْتِ مِنْ لَدُنْهُ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا

وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِنَ الصَّالِحَاتِ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنْثَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَأُولَٰئِكَ يَدْخُلُونَ الْجَنَّةَ وَلَا يُظْلَمُونَ نَقِيرًا

يَوْمَ نَدْعُو كُلَّ أُنَاسٍ بِإِمَامِهِمْ فَمَنْ أُوتِيَ كِتَابَهُ بِيَمِينِهِ فَأُولَٰئِكَ يَقْرَءُونَ كِتَابَهُمْ وَلَا يُظْلَمُونَ فَتِيلًا

In the first instance, the word ذرة is used meaning 'atom', 'particle' and 'seed'.[128] In the second verse, the word نقير is used meaning, 'hollowed out', 'knocking' and 'vibration'.[129] Finally, in the third verse, the word فتيلاً is used meaning 'thread', 'wick' and 'string'.[130] Modern Muslim

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[125] Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, s.v., Bk.1, pp.2039-2040 and J. Penrice, *A Dictionary and Glossary of the Koran*, s.v., p.97.

[126] See Ibn al-Jawzī, *Zād al-Masīr*, p.1521:

قوله تعالى: { والليل إذا عسعس } فيه قولان .أحدهما: ولّى، قاله ابن عباس، وابن زيد، والفراء .والثاني: أقبل، قاله ابن جبير، وقتادة. قال الزجاج: يقال: عسعس الليل: إذا أقبل. وعسعس: إذا أدبر

[127] See for example M. Kayyali, "The End of the World", part 1 at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PENvFZW-7bI

[128] Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, s.v. Bk.1, p.957.

[129] Ibid., Bk.1, pp.2838-2839.

[130] Ibid., Bk.1, pp.2333-2334.

physicists argue that these subtle linguistic variations or scales are actually a reference to the atomic and sub-atomic structural paradigm of the universe. The first refers to the atom, the second refers to the vibrating "quarks" and the third suggests the innumerable elementary energy strings that constitute the fabric of the quarks. Thus, these subtle and nuanced realities could not have been known by the Prophet unless Allah inspired it in him to know because studies in particle physics have only recently brought such information to light.[131]

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[131] Kayyali, "The End of the World" and as well http://www.miraclesofthequran.com/scientific_36.html.

The maneuver to establish Qur'ānic inimitability through science is highly problematic for several reasons such as: (a) if the inimitability is defined primarily through scientific facts, this would not have been a reality available to the Arabs to verify as no such means would have existed to falsify the claims. It would thus be a redundant inimitable feature for the immediate Qur'ānic audience. We would have to wait to 19th and 20th century science to fully appreciate the inimitability – something untenable to hold; (b) the Qur'ān's own challenge to the Arabs to imitate a chapter like it is linguistic and not scientific. Therefore, suggesting science is the defining feature of inimitability is undermining the Qur'ān's own basis for its challenge; (c) if the scientific data is what grounds the Qur'ān's inimitable feature, then alternative data disproving a discovery would undermine the veracity of the Qur'ān. But the Qur'ān is inimitable independent of any external body of knowledge to verify its claims; (d) often, the Qur'ānic verses are stretched with considerable interpretive imagination to conform to the prevailing scientific information and so the scientific exegesis (*tafsīr ʿilmī*) appears tenuous and convoluted. This makes it vulnerable to attack and criticism from the scientific and atheist communities and (e) the global challenge of the Qur'ān to produce something like it is independent of whether we know any scientific facts at all. Defining inimitability in terms of scientific discoveries would mean the need to know the relevant and accurate scientific discoveries every time and in every age as the inimitable feature requires it. This is problematic as one implication would be lack of scientific discoveries entails the inability to establish the Qur'ānic miracle. This is clearly false.

§8. An Example of Qur'ānic Inimitability: *Diction*

The Qur'ān is claimed to have an extraordinary eloquence and purity of style in both its word-order (*naẓm*) and composition (*ta'līf*).[132] Each word within a verse, or indeed the entire text, is considered miraculous in its style.[133] Unmatched eloquence and style is also extended to unrivalled meanings generated by Qur'ānic verses through a subtle word selection.[134] An example of this is given below:

Allah states in 21:46: 'If but a breath from the torment of your Lord touches them'.

وَلَئِنْ مَسَّتْهُمْ نَفْحَةٌ مِنْ عَذَابِ رَبِّكَ لَيَقُولُنَّ يَا وَيْلَنَا إِنَّا كُنَّا ظَالِمِينَ

The basic meaning of the verse from a classical commentary reads:

> "'And if but it touches them' meaning afflicts them. '*a breath*' regarding which Ibn ᶜAbbās said: 'a part' and al-Zajjāj said: it means the smallest part of the torment. '*they will indeed say, 'woe unto us!*". A wail is that which is cried out when one is in ruins..."[135]

{ ولئن مسّتهم } اي: اصابتهم { نَفْحَةٌ } قال ابن عباس: طرف. وقال الزجاج: المراد أدنى شيء من العذاب، { ليقولُنَّ ياويلنا } والويل ينادي به كلُّ من وقع في هلَكة...

The whole verse "points to the smallest amount of that torment. That is, the clause emphasizes this slightness, so the whole phrase establishes that meaning".[136] How does it do this? A small analysis of the verse will demonstrate how each syntactical/grammatical component of the verse serves with

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[132] See O. Leaman, "Miraculousness of the Qur'ān" in *The Qur'ān: An Encyclopedia*, p.403.
[133] Ibid., p.403.
[134] Ibid., p.404.
[135] Ibn al-Jawzī, *Zād al-Masīr*, 5:353-354.
[136] Leaman, "Miraculousness of the Qur'ān", p.403.

precision the function of establishing the Qur'ānic meaning of 'slight torment'.[137]

[1] The particle "*la'in*" / لئن ('if but') suggests uncertainty and hence implies lightness or lack of sternness of the punishment.

[2] The verb "*massa*" / مسّ ('to touch') means 'to touch lightly', 'to brush', etc. and also suggest slightness and lack of severity or sustained physical contact.

[3] The word "*nafḥat*" / نَفْحَةٌ ('breath') suggests a puff of air, a 'whiff' – momentary, inconsequential and harmless. The –*un* vowel ending on the noun is known as *tanwīn* and here suggests singularity and indefiniteness, again reinforcing the idea of slightness and something hardly effective at all.

[4] The particle "*min*" / من ('from', 'of') here is in the *partitive* sense and implies a part or piece and so the punishment is not even of an ordinary size.

[5] The word "*ᶜadhāb*" / عذاب ('punishment') is less severe compared to the Arabic word *nakal* ('torment' and 'chastisement') and *ᶜiqāb* ('heavy penalty') and so suggests lesser punishment.

The objective of the verse therefore is to alert the reader to pondering over a serious point: if so slight a breath of torment has this effect on the recipient then one ought to reflect on the more severe punishment of God.[138] Each clause has a word carefully selected with skill and perfection.[139] Thus, Qur'ānic diction serves to establish Qur'ānic inimitability. Drāz in this regards notes:

> What is new in the language of the Qur'ān is that in every purpose the Qur'ān tackles, it selects the best

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[137] Ibid., p.403.
[138] Ibid., p.403.
[139] Ibid., p.403.

material and the closest to the meaning intended, bringing together all required shades that can readily be mixed together. It puts every little element in its most suitable and fitting place. Its meaning is reflected superbly in its words, as if the words return a mirror image depicting its complete and true picture. To a word, its meaning is its secure home where it is permanently settled. The home does not look for a different dweller and the resident does not aspire for a better home. The Qur'ānic style gives you this perfect example of literary excellence.[140]

[140] Drāz, *An Eternal Challenge*, p.77.

§9. The Argument from Testimony

The Qur'ānic challenge although primarily linguistic does not mean non-Arabs or Arab non-specialists cannot accept the veracity of its claim. Muslim scholars past and present have explained how several factors constitute a firm epistemological foundation for one's belief in the Qur'ānic inimitability even if one has not been able to assess and examine its inimitable linguistic features directly for one's self. The explanatory argument has already been mentioned as one form of non-linguistic argument non-Arabs can use. Another argument is that from historical and mass testimony. This argument asserts that the inability of anyone in any age after the Qur'ān to meet its challenge has been transmitted and received in all known forms. There are no known or reliably established claims or historical sources that record someone who has actually met the Qur'ānic challenge. This failure and the successive testimony to such failure is a firm basis on which to establish one's belief in the Qur'ān's inimitability. The argument is something like:

(1) There is the *fact* of the Qur'ān, i.e. it exists to be explained.
(2) It is established through recurrent reports that the Qur'ān has presented a provocative challenge for all to try and imitate it.
(3) If the Qur'ānic challenge was met, it would have been known and documented in history as that would have undermined the very religion of Islam.
(4) It is established through recurrent reports that this provocative Qur'ānic challenge has not been met.
Therefore, because of (3) and the fact of (4):
(5) belief that the Qur'ān is inimitable is epistemically justified.

al-Nabhānī states regarding this:

> Thus we say that the Qur'ān is the *muʿjizah* of the Prophet Muḥammad with which his Messengership was established from the time it was revealed to him until the Day of Judgment. The Qur'ān has rendered the Arabs incapable of producing anything like it

having challenged them to do so [...] thus, those who were addressed by the Qur'ān to bring something like it were unable to and this total inability on their part has been established via concurrent reports (*thābit bi-ṭarīq al-tawātur*). Nothing in history has been reported regarding anyone having met the challenge in producing something like it.[141]

[141] al-Nabhānī, *al-Shakhṣiyyah al-Islāmiyyah*, 1:168-169.

§10. Quotes by Orientalists on the Qur'ānic Inimitability

Some Orientalist scholars have commented on the matchless and inimitable nature of the Qur'ān as a literary document. Below are a few quotes:

The 18th century Arabist and Qur'ān translator E. H. Palmer remarked:

> That the best of Arab writers has never succeeded in producing anything equal in merit to the Qur'an itself is not surprising. In the first place, they have agreed before-hand that it is unapproachable, and they have adopted its style as the perfect standard; any deviation from it therefore must of necessity be a defect. Again, with them this style is not spontaneous as with Muhammad and his contemporaries, but is as artificial as though Englishmen should still continue to follow Chaucer as their model, in spite of the changes which their language has undergone. With the Prophet, the style was natural, and the words were those in every-day ordinary life, while with the later Arabic authors the style is imitative and the ancient words are introduced as a literary embellishment. The natural consequence is that their attempts look laboured and unreal by the side of his impromptu and forcible eloquence...[142]

R. Bosworth Smith in his lecture delivered at the Royal Institution of Great Britain remarked:

> Illiterate himself, scarcely able to read and write, yet he was the author of a book which is a poem, a code of laws, a Boo of Common Prayers and a bible in one, and is reverenced to this day by a sixth of the whole human race as a miracle of purity of style, of wisdom and of truth. It was the one miracle claimed by

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[142] E. H. Palmer, *The Qur'an*, Part I, p.lv.

> Mohammed – his standing miracle; and a miracle indeed it is.[143]

Leading Islamicist Hamilton Gibb said:

> ...the Meccans still demanded of him a miracle, and with remarkable boldness and self-confidence Mohammad appealed as a supreme confirmation of his mission to the Koran itself. Like all Arabs they were the connoisseurs of language and rhetoric. Well, then if the Koran were his own composition other men could rival it. Let them produce ten verses like it. If they could not (and it is obvious that they could not), then let them accept the Koran as an outstanding evident miracle [...] Though, to be sure, the question of the literary merit is one not to be judged on *a priori* grounds but in relation to the genius of Arabic language; and no man in fifteen hundred years has ever played on that deep-toned instrument with such power, such boldness, and such range of emotional effect as Mohammad did [...] As a literary monument the Koran thus stands by itself, a production unique to the Arabic literature, having neither forerunners nor successors in its own idiom. Muslims of all ages are united in proclaiming the inimitability not only of its contents but also of its style... and in forcing the High Arabic idiom into the expression of new ranges of thought the Koran develops a bold and strikingly effective rhetorical prose in which all the resources of syntactical modulation are exploited with great freedom and originality...[144]

The eminent orientalist Alfred Guillaume remarked:

> The Qur'an is one of the world's classics which cannot be translated without grave loss. It has a rhythm of peculiar beauty and a cadence that charms the ear. Many Christian Arabs speak of its style with

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[143] Bosworth Smith, *Mohammed and Mohammedanism*, p.340.

[144] H. A. R. Gibb, *Islam - A Historical Survey*, pp.28, 25 and 36 respectively.

warm admiration, and most Arabists acknowledge its excellence. When it is read aloud or recited it has an almost hypnotic effect that makes the listener indifferent to its sometimes strange syntax and it's sometimes, to us, repellent content. It is this quality it possesses of silencing criticism by the sweet music of its language that has given birth to the dogma of its inimitability; indeed it may be affirmed that within the literature of the Arabs, wide and fecund as it is both in poetry and in elevated prose, there is nothing to compare with it...[145]

[145] A. Guillaume, *Islam*, pp.73-74

Chapter 5

Pioneers of *Iʿjāz* Studies: al-Khaṭṭābī, al-Rummānī and al-Jurjānī



Three scholars have shaped the way the doctrine of *iʿjāz* was understood throughout the successive centuries after they had composed their respective treatises.[146] By the time of our three authors, the linguistic approach to the Qur'ān had taken on a highly technical and sophisticated nomenclature informed by developments and standardizations in various Islamic disciplines and shaped by a combination of external social, political and theological factors. This enabled a deeper theological and theoretical engagement with the Qur'ān as a text that may seem removed from the first century austere and intuitive (but no less exacting) appreciation by the Muslim community. The next three sections will survey the basic ideas of *iʿjāz* as expounded by the three authors with a focus on analytical presentations of their key arguments and the implications arising from them.

1. al-Khaṭṭābī

Abū Sulaymān Ḥamad b. Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm al-Khaṭṭābī (d. 388/988), originally from the far eastern town of Bust, Khurasan (in present day Afghanistan), was an adherent of the Shāfiʿite legal School and *ḥadīth* specialist. He studied with numerous luminaries of the 4th/10th century such as Abū Saʿīd al-Aʿrābī (Arabic), Abū Bakr al-Qaffāl al-Shāshī (jurisprudence) and Abū Bakr al-Aṣamm (*ḥadīth*). He held the post of provincial judge but largely remained a withdrawn

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[146] See *Thalāth Rasā'il fī Iʿjāz al-Qur'ān* (ed. by Khalaf-Allāh and Sallām) and the translation by Boullata as *Three Treatises on the Iʿjāz of the Qur'ān*. See as well the postscript for a very helpful catalogue of quotes regarding Arabic rhetorical terms as well as comments of various classical scholars related to the technical vocabulary in the discipline.

person. He was also a specialist in the Arabic language and all his works were a solid reference for later jurists, philologists and *ḥadīth* commentators.[147]

al-Khaṭṭābī begins his treatise offering a straightforward argument for the fact of the Qur'ān's inimitability and it is a form of the Argument from Abundant Motives. Put simply, the argument is as follows:

(1) The Arabs had all the reasons to undermine the veracity of the Prophet's claims.
(2) Proving the Qur'ān as an inferior linguistic discourse would undermine the veracity of the Prophet's claims.
(3) The Arabs did not prove the Qur'ān was an inferior linguistic discourse.
(Instead, they resorted to:
[a] denial,
[b] subterfuge,
[c] persecution,
[d] boycott,
[e] propaganda and
[f] war).
Proposition (3) is best explained by:
(4) The inability of the Arabs to actually imitate the Qur'ān.[148]

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[147] See al-Subkī, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfiʿiyyat al-Kubrā*, 3:282-290 (no.182) and "al-Khaṭṭābī", *EI*^{2}, 4:131-132.

[148] al-Khaṭṭābī, *Bayān iʿjāz al-Qur'ān*, pp.21-22. M. Radscheit notes:

> The core argument is that an imitation (*muʿāraḍa*) of the Qur'ān has never actually appeared, although every good reason existed to create one. In this respect the *taḥaddī*-verses are of paramount importance. The heathen Arabs were a people described as defining themselves by their eloquence and rhetorical ability on the one hand, and by their pride and belligerent character on the other. It is inconceivable that such a people never tried to imitate the Qur'ān, although Muḥammad provoked them time and again with the *taḥaddī*-verses, goading them to the utmost degree, foretelling their inability to meet the challenge and threatening them with physical annihilation. It was the

By way of analogy, al-Khaṭṭābī states:

> It is known that if a rational person is extremely thirsty and fears dying of thirst and if there is water near him that he can drink and does not drink it and then dies as a result of the thirst, [we would say that] he was unable to drink [the water] and had no power to do so.[149]

We also find this argument with an identical analogy in al-Rummānī's treatise *al-Nukat fi I'jāz al-Qur'ān.*[150]

The inability of the Arabs to imitate the Qur'ān is explained by several factors but two are particularly criticised for being inadequate: (i) the Argument from *Ṣarfah* and (ii) the Argument from Future Prophesies. In the case of the former argument, al-Khaṭṭābī rebuts it with Q.17:88: 'Say, if all of humankind and the jinn gathered together to produce the like of the Qur'ān, they could not produce it – even if they helped one another'. He reasons that this verse appears to contradict the doctrine of *ṣarfah* because human and jinn collaboration in attempting to meet the Qur'ānic challenge would require diligent preparation and intent. However, this would not make sense if the intention and will to imitate the Qur'ān passed away, which is what the *ṣarfah* doctrine strongly implies.[151] The latter argument is dismissed because

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> ingenious Iraqi scholar Abū 'Uthmān al-Jāḥiẓ (d. 255/869) of the Mu'tazila, who, in his treatise *ḥujaj al-nubuwwa,* "Arguments for the prophecy [of Muḥammad]," expressed this idea so convincingly that most subsequent theologians have followed him. And since — according to al-Jāḥiẓ — Muḥammad intended to provoke the Arabs and since they, as a result, became angry, the qur'ānic challenge must be considered a successful provocation. "Provocation", *The Encyclopaedia of the Qur'ān*, 4:313.

[149] al-Khaṭṭābī, *Bayān I'jāz al-Qur'ān*, p.22.
[150] See §2 below for more on al-Rummānī's arguments.
[151] al-Khaṭṭābī, *Bayān I'jāz al-Qur'ān*, p.22.

> ...there is no doubt that this and similar reports of the Qur'ān are one of the types that manifest its inimitability but it is not a common matter that exists in every chapter of the Qur'ān because Allah has assigned inimitability as an intrinsic property to every chapter so that no one in creation can imitate it...[152]

In other words, because correct future predictions are not an intrinsic feature of every part of the Qur'ān, it cannot constitute the basis for its inimitability. From this point, al-Khaṭṭābī then defines what he takes to be the *iʿjāz* feature of the Qur'ān after critiquing earlier failures to exactly explicate the inimitability and instead taking it merely on "uncritical acceptance" (*taqlīd*) and lack of "verification" (*taḥqīq*) as well as a subjective and intuitive ability to recognize eloquent speech from ineloquent speech without a tangible or objective standard. He remarks:

> That is why if they are asked to specify this rhetorical feature that is unique to the Qur'ān, as well as the sense in which it surpasses all other eloquent discourse and types of speech, they say: 'we cannot describe it nor can we define it in a way that clearly shows the difference of the Qur'ān from all other speech. The specialists just know when they hear it as a kind of inexplicable and unidentifiable knowledge...'[153]

On this view, inimitability is inexplicable and does not admit of a clear, defined and testable standard amenable to the external assessment of others. The inimitability therefore is reduced to a subjective mystery, an enigmatic and inexplicable effect on the soul of the listener that requires either an intuitive familiarity or professional mastery of the standards of Arabic linguistic excellence in order to differentiate between good and bad speech.[154] The example he quotes used by proponents of the above argument is that of the famous Umayyad satirical

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[152] Ibid., p.22.
[153] Ibid., p.24.
[154] Ibid., pp.24-25.

poet al-Farazdaq (d. 110/728)[155] who was able to identify verses added by the famous poet Jarīr (d.110/728)[156] to a poem composed by Dhū 'l-Rummā (d. 117/735).[157] This identification was possible only through "his natural disposition and subtle intellect."[158]

For al-Khaṭṭābī, this is not acceptable as an explanation. Exactitude is required. He then presents what he considers to be the defining inimitable feature of the Qur'ān:

> Indeed, speech consists of three things: (*a*) words that carry a meaning; (*b*) a meaning that inheres in the word and (*c*) an organizing principle that binds both together. If you ponder on the Qur'ān, you will find all [three] matters with the utmost degree of excellence such that you will not find a word more

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[155] See "Dhū'l-Rummā", *EI*^{2}, 2:252-253 (Blachère).
[156] See "Djarīr", *EI*^{2}, 2:479-480 (Schaade-Gaetje).
[157] See "al-Farazdaḳ", *EI*^{2}, 2:788-789 (Blachère).
[158] al-Khaṭṭābī, *Bayān Iʿjāz al-Qur'ān*, p.25. The original verses by Dhū 'l-Rummā were:

نبت عيناك عن طلل بحزوى / محته الريح وامتنح القطارا

Your eyes were distant from
the remains of an encampment in Ḥuzwā;
Blown far away by the wind
on the caravan's rendezvous.

Jarīr then added the following lines to the original:

يعدّ الناسبون إلى تميمٍ / بيوت المجدِ أربعةً كبارا
يعدّون الربابَ وآل تيم / وسعدا ثمّ حنظلةَ الخيارا
ويذهب بينها المرئي لغواً /كما ألغيت في الدية الحوارا

Genealogists regard the tribe of Tamīm to be
four great houses of glory.
They regard al-Rabāb, the house of Taym
as well as Saʿd and the great Ḥanẓalah.
They hold, among others, those who are trivial,
like worthless talk over blood money.

> eloquent, copious or harmonious and a composition more beautiful, appropriate and congruent [...] hence, understand and know that that the Qur'ān is inimitable because it has come with the most eloquent words in the most beautiful composition and form containing the most authentic ideas [...] it is known that to imitate such matters and combine their diverse dimensions such that they are organized and harmonious is something beyond human capacity. So, people gave up trying to imitate it in its meaning as well as oppose it in its form...[159]

This is one of the earliest accounts of the *naẓm* doctrine which would be developed to sophistication by al-Jurjānī a century after him. Mir summarises al-Khaṭṭābī's idea of *naẓm* as follows:

> *Balāgha* is thus constituted of three elements: words, meanings and *naẓm* [...] what does Khaṭṭābī mean by *naẓm*? A study of the many Qur'anic examples he cites in explanation of his view would lead one to conclude that *nazm* in Khaṭṭābī stands for the particular ways in which words are arranged in order to put across the desired meaning. When he says that *naẓm* is more important than words and meanings, Khaṭṭābī implies that a poor arrangement of otherwise appropriate words would impede the conveying of the meaning, no matter how clearly the meaning was conceived mentally. The Qur'ān is inimitable, he argues, because in addition to employing words that are perfectly suited to the meaning it wants to impart, it generates ideal *naẓm* or structure [...] it may be accordingly said that *naẓm* in Khaṭṭābī is *naẓm* of individual words, phrases, or sentences; that he does not, for example, aim to show that a series of sentences taken together, or an extended passage, might be informed by *naẓm*.[160]

The inimitable feature then is *naẓm* – the fact that there is no other conceivable way any Qur'ānic construction can be stylistically, rhetorically, semantically or syntactically

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[159] Ibid., p.22. Cf. V. Cantarino, *Arabic Poetics in the Golden Age*, pp.41-54.

[160] Mir, *Coherence in the Qur'an*, pp.12-13.

configured. Thus, given any conceivable syntactical configuration {*a, b, c, d...*}, the Qur'ānic configuration is the best possible one. Any other verse construction whether through lexical substitutions, omissions, additions or rearrangements would impair the perfect composition of the Qur'ān either through diminished, style, meaning, effect or beauty:

> Thereafter, know that the essence of this rhetorical eloquence that combines all these properties is to designate every type of word contained in speech in the most specific and suitable place for it such that if this place was to be substituted for another, the result would either be change of meaning – which is corruption of speech – or the loss of beauty (*al-rawnaq*) – which would result in loss of eloquence...[161]

If we take Q to represent the Qur'ānic *naẓm* (arrangement) as it exists, then for al-Khaṭṭābī, it is possible that Q *iff* person *S* has:

> (i) comprehensive knowledge of all Arabic words; (ii) comprehensive knowledge of all syntactical arrangements and their possible effects; (iii) comprehensive knowledge of words and their arrangements such that it is the most suitable for a given context and audience.

However, the above is only possible from an Omniscient mind that would know all configurations and their effects and thus make the optimal selection for every context and consideration for communicative value, impact and relevance.[162]

al-Khaṭṭābī then devotes the longest segment of the treatise to rebutting over a dozen accusations of stylistic flaws and linguistic anomalies in the Qur'ān raised by anonymous objectors. He demonstrates through each rebuttal how the Qur'ānic arrangement in every instance is utterly justified and

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[161] al-Khaṭṭābī, *Bayān I'jāz al-Qur'ān*, p.29.
[162] Ibid., pp.25-29.

any other arrangement would diminish the rhetorical eloquence.[163] Some of the examples will be mentioned in later chapters.

Before the final section of the treatise, he presents a small account on the criterion of *muᶜāraḍah* or "imitation" (outlined in the previous chapter) with examples in the context of the Qur'ānic challenge. For an imitation to be authentic or valid, it must possess the following qualities:

(a) It must be a novel discourse (*kalām jadīd*);
(b) It must have an original meaning (*maᶜnā badīᶜī*);
(c) It must match the level of wording of the opponent (*yujārīh fī'l-lafẓ*) and
(d) It must match the level of meaning (*yubārīh fī'l-maᶜnā*).

This would allow a comparatively fair basis on which to judge the superiority of one poem or oratory segment over another.[164] Mere substitution of a word with another word

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[163] Ibid., pp.35-55.

[164] Ibid., p.58. One example he gives is the famous poetical jousting between Imru' al-Qays and ᶜAlqamah b. ᶜAbdah on describing the movements of a horse. The wife of Imru' al-Qays was appointed as judge and she decided in favour of ᶜAlqamah's lines because of his super rhetorical and poetical descriptions. Imru' al-Qays then divorced her. The *muᶜāraḍah* dual is as follows:

Imru' al-Qays	ᶜAlqamah
فللزجر الهوب وللساق درة /	عفى على آثارهن بحاصب /
وللسوط منه وقع أهوج منعب	وغيبة شؤبوب من السد ملهب
	فأدركهن ثانيا من عنانه /
	يمر كمر الرائح المتحلب

would not in any way constitute a valid imitation and neither would copying the poetical form of a rival if the copy contained no novelty, poor diction, glaring error, lack of eloquence and diminished semantic relevance.[165]

al-Khaṭṭābī concludes the treatise with another argument for the Qur'ān's inimitability – one that he believes "is almost unknown except by a few individuals"[166] – and that is the power of its recitation to move and affect the inner being of a person:

> ...you will hear no speech – whether verse or prose – that causes as much pleasure and sweetness in the heart nor awe and fear than the Qur'ān. As a result [from listening to it], the souls rejoice and the hearts relax until, having had their satisfaction from it, are overcome with palpitation and anxiety and feel fear and dread. The skin gets goose-bumps and the heart is perturbed as it envelopes the soul and its inner conscience and beliefs.[167]

al-Khaṭṭābī's lament that this aspect of the Qur'ān's inimitability was virtually lost maybe due to the more technical and rational discussions that had extensively developed by the close of the 4th/10th century. Perhaps too its subjective nature made it unpopular even though in many instances during the Prophet's life people on hearing the recitation were overpowered into humility, defeat and conversions such as

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It wiped out their traces
  with a storm
with pebbles disappearing from
  a blazing barrage;
And it caught them a second time
  and its reins pulled in;
and passed by like
  fleeting water-filled clouds.
For it is excited by rebuke
  and its legs move fast;
The whip cracks on it
  like a frantic croaking.

[165] Ibid, pp.55-58 and 66-70 for his critique of Musaylima.
[166] Ibid., p.70.
[167] Ibid., p.70.

ᶜUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, ᶜUtba b. Rabīᶜah, Walīd b. Mughīrah and even the jinn (Q. 72:1-2).[168]

[168] Ibid., pp.70-71.

§2. al-Rummānī

Abū 'l-Ḥasan ᶜAlī b. ᶜĪsā al-Rummānī (d. 386/994) was a renown theologian and grammarian. He was also considered an esteemed exegete and jurist although criticized by his contemporaries for his excessive logical analysis and somewhat unorthodox grammatical speculations.[169] A well-known member of the Muᶜtazilite school of Baghdad, he is one of the principle theoreticians of the classical *iᶜjāz* doctrine who articulated it with some precision albeit not always logical. He practically made *ījāz* ('concision'/'brevity') a technical term of Arabic rhetorical studies followed in that by subsequent scholars.[170] He sets out in his short tract *al-Nukat fī iᶜjāz al-Qur'ān* ('Subtleties of the Qur'ān's Inimitability')[171] a summary of the matchless features of the Qur'ān focusing primarily on its linguistic features. He also composed a commentary on the Qur'ān that survives in fragments.[172] Below is a summary analysis of his arguments from *al-Nukat fī iᶜjāz al-Qur'ān*.

In the treatise, he states 7 ways the Qur'ān's inimitability is proven:

#1. "The Abundant Motive" Argument.
#2. The Global Challenge.
#3. The Argument from *Ṣarfah*.
#4. Rhetorical Eloquence.
#5. The Prophesizing of Future Events.
#6. Contravention of Customary Experience.

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[169] Ibn al-Nadīm, *al-Fihrist* (G. Flügel edn.), p.63 and Yāqūt, *Muᶜjam al-Udabā'*, 14:74-75.

[170] G. J. Van Gelder, "Brevity: The Long and the Short of it in Classical Arabic Literary Theory" in *Proceedings of the Ninth Congress of the Union Européenne Des Arabisants Et Islamisants*, pp.83-87.

[171] On his works, see Sezgin, *GAS*, 8:112-114 and 9:111-113.

[172] Entitled *al-Jāmiᶜ li-ᶜIlm al-Qur'ān* for which see B. Fudge, "Taḍmīn: The Notion of 'Implication' According to al-Rummānī" in *Classical Arabic Humanities in their Own Terms*, ed, by B. Gruendler, pp.468-477.

#7. The Comparable Miracle of the Qur'ān.[173]

He then begins with argument #4 and defines 'eloquence' (*balāghah*) somewhat cryptically as: "meaning conveyed to the heart with the most beautiful wording"[174] having outlined three degrees (*ṭabaqāt*) of eloquence which are: (a) *minimal*, (b) *medial* and (c) *maximal* – the latter being that of the Qur'ān. He then sets forth to explain the maximal eloquence of the Qur'ān with what I take to be the following argument:

(1) Whatever discourse uniquely exemplifies the set of rhetorical features *R* is a maximally eloquent discourse.
(2) A maximally eloquent discourse is something inimitable.
(3) The Qur'ān uniquely exemplifies the set of rhetorical features *R*.
Therefore,
(4) The Qur'ān is a maximally eloquent discourse.
From (3) and (4) it follows that:
(5) The Qur'ān is inimitable.

For al-Rummānī, the set of rhetorical features are quantified as 10:[175]

Arabic	Translation	Qur'anic Examples
الإيجاز	*Ījāz*/Concision	2:179; 2:189; 9:1; 12:82
التشبيه	*Tashbīh*/Simile	7:171, 176, 14:18, 54:20
الإستعارة	*Istiʿārah*/Metaphor	15:94, 25:23, 67:8, 69:3, 11
التلاؤم	*Talā'um*/Harmony	
الفواصل	*Fawāṣil*/End Rhyme	1:3-4, 20:1-3, 50:2-3, 52:2-4
التجانس	*Tajānus*/Paranomasia	2:14-15, 194, 276, 3:54, 9:12
التصريف	*Taṣrīf*/Permutations	Q. 7; Q. 20 and Q. 26.

[173] al-Rummānī, *al-Nukat*, p.75
[174] Ibid., pp.75-76
[175] Ibid., pp.75-109.

التضمين	*Taḍmīn*/Implication[176]	
المبالغة	*Mubālaghah*/Hyperbole	7:40, 143, 20:82, 34:24, 89:22
البيان	*Bayān*/Elucidation	36:79-80, 43:5, 44:26, 40, 51

Some of the specific examples cited by al-Rummānī will be mentioned later in the related chapters. He then outlines the remaining arguments. As for #1, the argument goes as follows:[177]

(1) The Arabs had all the reasons to undermine the veracity of the Prophet's claims.
(2) Proving the Qur'ān as an inferior linguistic discourse would undermine the veracity of the Prophet's claims.
(3) The Arabs did not prove the Qur'ān was an inferior linguistic discourse.
Proposition (3) is best explained by:
(4) The inability of the Arabs to actually imitate the Qur'ān.

Argument #2 is a variation of #1 in that the challenge extends to all audiences to produce something like the Qur'ān.[178]

Argument #3 is the doctrine of *Ṣarfah*, one that he unsurprisingly considers valid being an adherent of the Muᶜtazilite theological school and was explained in the previous chapter.[179]

Argument #5 is related to the Prophet's truthful information about future events such as Q. 2:23-24, 94-95, 8:7, 30:2-4, 48:20-21, 27 and 61:9 which can only be best explained with reference to an Omniscient mind as human beings simply cannot do that.[180]

Argument #6 is interestingly stated in a terse proposition as follows:

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[176] On this, see Fudge, "Taḍmīn: The Notion of 'Implication' According to al-Rummānī" pp.473-492.
[177] *al-Nukat*, pp.109-110.
[178] Ibid., pp.75-109.
[179] Ibid., p.110. See chapter 4, §5.
[180] Ibid., pp.110-111.

> Thus, whatever has come without any naturally known meter which [typically] beautifies speech but surpasses metered speech is something inimitable.[181]

al-Rummānī argues that all known categories of Arab speech (*anwāᶜ al-kalām*) such as poetry (*shiᶜr*), rhymed prose (*sajᶜ*), oratory (*khuṭab*), epistles (*rasā'il*) and free prose (*manthūr*) were entirely transcended by the Qur'ān establishing its own unique style and form and thus contravening what was customarily known and experienced but yet produced the most beautiful and powerful discourse. This for him is a feature of its inimitability.

Argument #7 states that the Qur'ānic miracle is no different to other miracles that were spectacular in nature like Mūsa's staff turning into a snake or his feat of parting the sea. In all cases, the normal structure of experience is contravened and it is something beyond the productive capacity of any human being to imitate.[182]

Finally, he too like al-Khaṭṭābī, rejects mere substitution of words as a valid instance of meeting the Qur'ānic challenge, again for the reason that it would merely amount to an inferior parody that takes the Qur'ānic structure and simply replaces its words. Doing that makes a person no more a poet than merely altering the colour of a pre-existing statue does not make a person a sculptor.[183]

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[181] Ibid., p.111.
[182] Ibid.
[183] Ibid., p.112.

§3. al-Jurjānī

ᶜAbd al-Qāhir b. ᶜAbd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad al-Jurjānī (d. 471/1078) was a linguist, theologian and exegete from the Iranian town of Jurjān (Gorgan). Little is known and reported about his life. He was an adherent of the Shāfiᶜite legal School and an Ashᶜarite theologian. Although he is reported to have never left his native town, his works and fame drew attention from all over the major Muslim metropolises.[184] One of the outstanding contributions made by al-Jurjānī is his theory of "naẓm" (variously translated as 'form', 'construction', 'composition').[185] It was a clean departure from the earlier dualistic understanding of Arabic linguistics and its relation to the Qur'ān's overall inimitability where words (*alfāẓ*) and meanings (*maᶜānī*) where considered the only constitutive elements of powerful literary expression. Abu Deeb in this regard comments:

> The duality of word and meaning or form and content continued to dominate the thinking of most theologians and writers on rhetoric alike until the powerful, subtle, amazing sophisticated, and exhaustive arguments developed by al-Jurjānī succeeded in destroying the dualism and establishing the concept of construction as the only valid principle through which it is possible to discover and explain the nature of superiority not only of the Qur'an, but also in the literary process in general.[186]

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[184] See "Djurdjānī", *EI*^{2}, 12:277-278, Brockelmann, *GAL*, 1:114, 287, Sezgin, *GALS*, 1:503 and Abu Deeb, "Jorjānī" at http://www.iranicaonline.org/.

[185] For a brief survey of *naẓm* as an idea, see Mir, *Coherence in the Qur'ān*, pp.10-16. On *naẓm* in al-Jurjānī's thought, see primarily M. Larkin, *The Theology of Meaning*: *ᶜAbd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī's Theory of Discourse*, passim; K. Abu Deeb, *al-Jurjani's Theory of Poetic Imagery*, pp.24-64 and K. Versteegh, *Landmarks in Linguistic Thought III*, pp.115-126. Cf. as well Gould, "Inimitability versus Translatability", pp.86-100 and Heinrich, "Naẓm" in *Encyclopaedia of Arabic Linguistics*, 2:585-586, idem, *EI*^{2}, 12:668-669 and "Naẓm", *EI*^{2}, 12:668 (Gelder).

[186] Abu Deeb, *al-Jurjani's Theory of Poetic Imagery*, p.25.

al-Jurjānī shifts the focus to how eloquent speech is constructed through a process mediated by two things: (i) the grammatical possibilities of the language, what he calls *maʿānī al-nahw* ('grammatical meanings') and (ii) the arrangement of the words that are patterned on a pre-existing form within the mind of the speaker, what he calls *naẓm*. Examining the creative process involved in the construction of literary or poetic speech, al-Jurjānī came to the conclusion that words and meanings alone where not sufficient but how they relate to each other within a context that binds them and is shaped by the intensionality pattern of the author. In *Dalā'il al-Iʿjāz*, al-Jurjānī states:

> Since words are the bearers of meanings, it follows that their order inevitably accords with the order of the meanings, therefore, if a meaning has to be first in the psyche, the word which signifies it will have to be first in the utterance. To imagine that the words are constructed and arranged before the meanings, or that the mental activity involved in the construction is one of constructing words, or that once you have arranged the meanings you still need a process of thinking in order to arrange the words accordingly, is a false and untrue assumption.[187]

In *Asrār al-Balāghah* he reiterates:

> This particular pattern occurs in the words, following the arranged meaning in the psyche which has an order presupposed by the intellect. It is inconceivable that words should follow a certain order, or be assigned special positions or arrangement as mere words.[188]

He further clarifies saying:

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[187] al-Jurjānī, *Dalā'il al-Iʿjāz*, p.43. Translations of al-Jurjānī's citations are taken from H. Al-Harithy, "Architectural Form and Meaning in Light of al-Jurjānī's Literary Theory", MSc diss. submitted to MIT (1987).

[188] al-Jurjānī, *Asrār al-Balāghah*, p.4.

> The meaning of 'constructing words' is not that the signs as sounds occur successively in the utterance. It is that their 'significances' are harmonized, and their meanings arranged to the way which is presupposed by the mind.[189]

Debunking words as a key constituent of eloquent and poetic discourse, he equally dismisses meaning alone as one of the constituents arguing:

> ...and it is known that the nature of discourse (or the method of literary expression) is the same as that of the image-making and silver work, whereas the nature of the content which is being conveyed is that of the material upon which image-making and silver work are carried out, such as silver and gold, when a ring or a bracelet is made of them. As it is absurd for you, if you want to judge the making of a ring and the distinction or badness of the making to consider the silver or gold in which the picture is worked, so it is absurd, if you want to discover where the distinction and high quality of discourse lie, to examine only its meaning.[190]

Abu Deeb, Al-Harithi and Günaydın respectively outline al-Jurjānī's move towards a compositional or structuralist theory:

> Jorjānī's theory of construction represents the climax of three centuries of exploration by Arab writers of the mysteries of artistic superiority, expressiveness, poetic structure, the relationship between form and content, the role of individual words in literary composition, and the nature and function of poetic imagery. Discussions of these issues originated as an inquiry into the nature of the inimitability of the Koran, proclaimed in the Koran itself without, however, any specific mention of those aspects which rendered them inimitable. The thinking of earlier writers, with few

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[189] al-Jurjānī, *Dalā'il al-I'jāz*, p.41.
[190] Ibid., p.197.

exceptions, was dominated by a harmful duality of words (*lafẓ*) and meanings (*maʿānī*); some argued that the inimitability was due to the Koran's words; others, that it was due to its meaning. Jorǰānī developed a current of thought evident in an embryonic form in the writings of Ḵaṭṭābī (388/998) and the Muʿtazilite judge ʿAbd-al-Jabbār b. Aḥmad (415/1025), who, like Jorǰānī, was a Shafeʿite and whose work may have influenced Jorǰānī's. He rejects the duality, advancing the theory that neither words alone nor meanings alone can explain literary expressiveness in general or the inimitability of the Koran in particular, and arguing that beauty and expressive power are functions of the interaction between semantic constituents of a literary composition as they are organized in a specific syntactic pattern, i.e., a specific construction (*naẓm*). The construction embodies the structure of experience underlying the composition, and it consists in "a single act of formulation." It is, therefore, indivisible into meaning and words; it exists and functions as a harmonious totality within which every element interacts with, modifies, and is modified by the total structure. No element is extraneous or superfluous, and any change in the syntactic structure engenders changes in the semantic structure itself. Construction, Jorǰānī argues, is nothing but the fulfillment of the requirements imposed by the grammar of the language. But grammar here does not represent the set of criteria which determine correctness and incorrectness; it is the body of rules which organize the relationships between meanings into a given pattern determined by the structure of experience itself. For Jorǰānī, meaning does not exist outside its own form, and it is a heresy to say that the same meaning can be expressed in two different ways, one being more, or less, eloquent than another. He sees in this heresy the roots of many misconceptions about language, poetry, and literary expression in general.[191]

Al-Jurjānī devoted a large part of his theory to the investigation of the factors that determine the

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[191] Abu Deeb, "Jorǰānī" at http://www.iranicaonline.org/.

> positions of elements in the linguistic formulation of both the "subject-verb-object" and "subject-predicate" relations. The investigation was based on his belief that such relations between the meanings of words are dictated by the psychological setting around which the literary expression was formulated. There are psychological factors related to the speaker on the one hand, such as his inner state, the degree of his emotional involvement and his knowledge about the experience being expressed, on the other hand there are factors concerning the relationship between the speaker and the hearer, such as the speaker's awareness of what the hearer knows, how he would react, and his emotional and moral stand.[192]

> Al-Jurjānī argues that the beauty and expressive power are functions of the interaction between the semantic constituents of a literary composition as they are organized in a specific construction or a specific syntactic pattern, which he calls *naẓm*. The *naẓm*, he say, is nothing but the fulfilment of the requirements imposed by the grammar of the language. However, grammar here does not represent the set of criteria, which determine correctness, and incorrectness of sentences but the body of rules that organizes the relationships between meanings in a given pattern determined by the structure of experience itself. Thus, *naẓm* embodies the structure of experience underlying the composition, and it consists of a single act of formulation. It is, therefore, indivisible into meanings and words. In other words, *naẓm* exists and functions as a harmonious totality within which every element interacts with, modifies, and is modified by the total structure. No element is extraneous or superfluous, and any change in the syntactic structure engenders changes in the semantic structure itself.[193]

al-Jurjānī thus believed that:

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[192] Al-Harithy, "Architectural Form and Meaning", p.15.

[193] M. Günaydin, "The Idea of 'Multiple Meanings' in al-Jurjānī's Theory of Composition", *İstanbul Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi*, vol.17 (2008), p.129.

> ... individual words do not have any communicative or expressive value unless they have entered into a set of relations determined by linguistic and non-linguistic factors. He demonstrated his point when he took a line of poetry, broke its structure into parts, placed them at random, and declared it meaningless. The significance of words, then, is not directly connected to their individual meaning, but to the role their meaning plays in the creation of the expressive image, as they are entered into a context.[194]

In *Dalā'il al-I'jāz*, al-Jurjānī states:

> It is conceivable that with two names which conventionally apply to the same thing one of them is more adequate to express it and to reveal its image than the other...[195]

In *Asrār al-Balāghah* he reiterates:

> We find the word at its highest degree of eloquence in one context and we see this very word in numerous other contexts devoid of any share of eloquence.[196]

Poetic expression then must be the result of a construction that is built on a holistic consideration by the speaker in how parts fit and relate with the whole and not individual words merely configured together. He explains:

> Know that the composer of speech is like a man who takes a number of pieces of gold or silver and melts them one in another until they become one piece. For when you say 'Zaid hit Amran on Friday very hard in order to correct him,' you get from the combination of these words a conceptual complex which is one meaning and not several meanings, as most people imagine.[197]

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[194] Al-Harithy, "Architectural Form and Meaning", p.11.
[195] al-Jurjānī, *Dalā'il al-I'jāz*, p.41.
[196] al-Jurjānī, *Asrār al-Balāghah*, p.21.
[197] al-Jurjānī, *Dalā'il al-I'jāz*, p.316.

Elsewhere he says:

> Individual words, which are conventional elements of language, have not been created in order that what they represent may itself be discovered, but in order that they may be joined one with another, thus expressing, by their interrelations, valuable information.[198]

Given all this, al-Jurjānī's idea of *naẓm* is better understood. Günaydin explains:

> Thus the creative process which begins in the mind of the poet by the rise of a mental image finds its expression in the utterances which are ordered in a certain way. If we change this particular order, the meaning will also change or be completely lost, even if the same words are preserved ... al-Jurjānī shows the importance of the relationship between the order of words, meaning and eloquence in a sentence. If we lose order, we lose everything. According to al-Jurjānī, the very order of the discourse comes from the inner state of the speaker. The order of the speaker's feelings and imaginations determine the structure of the sentence during the creative process. In other words, the "surface structure" of the sentence is determined by the "deep structure" which represents the inner state of the speaker as an implicit relationship and arrangement of the meanings. Al-Jurjānī calls the very order of words and the order of their archetypes *naẓm*. The concept *naẓm* is used to link content and form inseparably.[199]

He continues:

> By using this concept, as well as the concept of *maʿānī al-naḥw* (meanings of the grammar) which he uses as nearly synonymous to *naẓm* (construction), al-Jurjānī rejects the idea of separating a text's elements

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[198] Ibid., p.415.

[199] Günaydin, "The Idea of 'Multiple Meanings' in al-Jurjani's Theory of Composition", p.134.

> into disparate meanings and words and look for its eloquence in either meanings or words. Al-Jurjānī, refusing this dualistic approach, argues that eloquence and expressiveness are functions neither of meaning nor of words but of the construction of linguistic elements into the harmonized syntactic patterns determined by a set of rules which form the grammar of the language. In other words, construction is nothing but *murāʿāt maʿānī al-naḥw*, observing the meanings of grammar.[200]

Based on the above, within a given discourse or speech, there are two levels of meaning: (1) a *direct* and unmediated meaning of a particular word X, i.e. the primary grammatical meaning (= *maʿnā al-naḥw*) from the word itself that is not determined by some external factor; (2) a *mediated* meaning of a word X, what he calls *maʿnā al-maʿnā* ('meaning of the meaning') and it is through this mediation or secondary meaning that the intent of the speaker is understood and fathomed. This secondary meaning is the framework with which to understand the metaphorical and figurative meaning of speech:

> Most of the time it requires not only more subtle reading of the text and a second thinking but also a certain amount of familiarity with the poet's social and cultural background and his environment. For example, the phrase *kathīr ramād al-qidr* '[the one whose] pot has plenty of ash' means little unless we know that in the poet's culture, this image is used to indicate the generosity of a person. However, this meaning is indirectly understood. Among desert Arabs when guests came, the host cooked food by burning wood, leaving ashes on the ground. Consequently, the amount of ash one had in the cooking area indicated how generous one was. I f we do not know these cultural elements we miss this indirect meaning, the real intention of the speaker, in al-Jurjānī's words, *maʿnā al-maʿnā*.[201]

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[200] Ibid., p.135.
[201] Ibid., p.136.

For al-Jurjānī, then, languages stand to express the speaker's experience of the real world, including the inner world of his own consciousness. What is more important for him is the way sentences are configured in order to impart messages. Hence, he insists on the causal relations between words and meanings, the importance of the communicative function of language, the importance of the larger context of the communicative process and the arrangement of discourse elements to form a text. Language then is not a group of words, but a group of *relations* – whether *syntagmatic* (syntax and surface structure) or *paradigmatic* (the peculiarities and frameworks that govern an author's selection of words). Therefore, in al-Jurjānī's view, *naẓm* is a framework – a structure – built on the relations between the overall ordering of words that is governed by the prism of *maʿānī al-naḥw* to represent the mental ideas of a speaker.

al-Jurjani divides his short treatise *al-Risālah al-Shāfiyah* into broadly three parts: the first part deals with the non-linguistic grounds for affirming the Qur'ān's inimitability, the second part deals with counter-arguments from unnamed opponents regarding the fallacy of equating poetical exceptionality to inimitability and the third part is a polemical rebuttal of the *ṣarfah* doctrine.

For non-linguistic grounds for establishing the Qur'ānic inimitability, al-Jurjānī explains the Argument from Abundant Motives as well as The Argument from Corroborative Testimony. These establish beyond doubt, for him, the inability of the Arabs to match the Qur'ānic challenge. If they could have, they would have. They had all the reasons to as they were a competitive community. However, deep down, the Meccan *belles lettres* and tribal leaders knew that the Qur'anic discourse was neither poetry, a soothsayer's speech (*kāhin*) nor mad utterances, prosody and magic. These were mere political propaganda declarations (they did not even believe themselves) in order to galvanize public opinion against the Prophet.[202]

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[202] al-Jurjani, *al-Risalah al-Shafiyah*, pp.117-128.

In the second part, al-Jurjānī then addresses specific points about poetic exceptionality and inimitability. In summary, he reasons that someone possessing the ability to produce unique and non-typical poetry or speech discourse such that he may be considered unrivalled in his time did not preclude others from competing or for matching the poetry in quality. It also did not mean the poet had produced something inimitable because inimitability requires that some feature – whether style, form or composition – is truly recognised by a person challenged to produce its likeness as impossible to imitate. No pre-Islamic Arab poet ever thought that about say Imru' al-Qays. Poets were grouped according to ability and recognition and the differences between higher order poets and lower order poets were vast. However, this did not imply there was only one who was unrivalled.[203]

Finally, part three contains al-Jurjānī's attack on the *ṣarfah* doctrine which is direct and comprehensive. At the core of the *ṣarfah* doctrine, as already outlined, is an interventionist thesis. In other words, Allah directly prevents any ability on the part of the Arabs to meet the challenge of the Qur'ān. al-Jurjānī's major objections against it include:[204]

1. *Ṣarfah* would strongly imply that the Arabs initially – pre-*taḥaddī* – had the power to produce eloquent speech but suddenly lost that ability post-*taḥaddī*. This collective loss of poetic potency would have been registered or recorded or made known to the prophet but no known reports exist about that.

2. For the Qur'ānic challenge to be meaningful and aplicable, it must assume the Arabs had the potential and ability to match the challenge. If not, then this would be nothing but a redundant provocation.

3. *Ṣarfah* in the end grounds Qur'ānic inimitability not in the intrinsic properties of the Qur'ānic *naẓm* but in the

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[203] Ibid., pp.128-138.
[204] Ibid., pp.146-153.

intervention. Thus, the *ṣarfah* is what contains the proof not the Qur'ān.

4. The experience of being prevented in imitating the Qur'ān never registered on the Arabs, i.e. there are no known reliable historical reports, testimonies or documentation of any collective feeling of overpowering resignation and frustration attributed to a mysterious power preventing them. This makes *ṣarfah* difficult to accept as such a reality is implausible.

5. The veracity of the proof of the Qur'ānic inimitability cannot be measured or verified intellectually or perceptibly because *ṣarfah* is an immaterial and inaccessible phenomenon. This would therefore ground a foundational Islamic doctrine on a mere phenomenological claim and not a demonstrable or rational proof.

Chapter 6

More than Just *Ta'khīr*-ing and *Taqdīm*-ing: Exploring Word-Order



Below are two components of *ʿilm al-maʿānī* as well as their functions and effects as found in the classical books of *balāghah* and often discussed in the books of Qur'ānic exegesis.

§1. Affirmative Tools (*adawāt al-tawkīd*)

The Function:

1) To emphasise a proposition or sentence;
2) To confirm the contents of a speech;
3) Employed to clarify and clear ambiguity.
4) To suggest the inevitability of something.

The Effect:

1) It reinforces the meaning in the listener;
2) Impacts stylistics;
3) Impacts how information is conveyed.
4) It creates stress.

Below are four 'tools' for sentence stress and affirmation (*adawāt al-tawkīd*) used effectively in the Qur'ān to achieve some of the rhetorical functions outlined above:

إن	اللام	نّ	قسم
Inna: 'that'.	*Li-*: 'for'	*-nūn al-tawkīd*: ('emphatic *nūn* letter')	*Qasm*: 'oath'

1.

Example of double stress in 3:62 duplicating إن and لَ: 'Indeed, this *is* the narration of the Truth. There is no deity except Allah and indeed Allah is the most Mighty and the Wise…'

إِنَّ هَٰذَا لَهُوَ الْقَصَصُ الْحَقُّ ۚ وَمَا مِنْ إِلَٰهٍ إِلَّا اللَّهُ ۚ وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ

Both إن and لَ are employed to communicate stress and is used to effectively deliver the point that what Allah mentions about the Prophet Jesus is the true account as opposed to those who do not. إن and لَ are also employed immediately after to affirm without ambiguity and hence to stress the reality that Allah alone is Mighty and Wise and none shares in these attributes.

2.

Example of stress using only لَ in 36:16: 'Our Lord knows that we have been sent as messengers to you…'

قَالُوا رَبُّنَا يَعْلَمُ إِنَّا إِلَيْكُمْ لَمُرْسَلُونَ

The verse uses the stress particle لَ prefixed to مُرْسَلُونَ ('messengers') and the context indicates its use. Reading the previous verses (vv.13-15), we can see clearly how the messengers were sent to their people or nation but rejected and rebuked. In order to counter this rejection, the Qur'ān employs the stress particle in order to remove any doubt as to their status and origins.

3.

Example of the double نَّ in 19:46: 'His father said: are you shrinking from my deity o Ibrahim; if you do not retract

from that then I will definitely stone you. So get out of here for a while!'

قَالَ أَرَاغِبٌ أَنْتَ عَنْ آلِهَتِي يَا إِبْرَاهِيمُ ۖ لَئِنْ لَمْ تَنْتَهِ لَأَرْجُمَنَّكَ ۖ وَاهْجُرْنِي مَلِيًّا

This double نَّ here indicates Ibrahim's father (and according to some interpretations his uncle's) determination to drive him away by stoning him and is captured in the double نَّ. This form of the doubling is actually a type of oath. Thus, the verse could be rendered as, 'I swear I will stone you if you do not recant!'

Another example of duplication of double نَّ is in 24:55: 'Allah has promised those among you who believe and do good deeds, that He will certainly grant them succession to [the present rulers] in the earth, just as He granted it to those before them and that He will certainly grant them the authority to practise their religion which He has chosen for them. And He will surely give them in exchange a safe security after their fear [provided] they worship Me and do not associate anything [in worship] with Me. But whoever disbelieved after this, they are the depraved ones.'

وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنْكُمْ وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَيَسْتَخْلِفَنَّهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ كَمَا اسْتَخْلَفَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ وَلَيُمَكِّنَنَّ لَهُمْ دِينَهُمُ الَّذِي ارْتَضَىٰ لَهُمْ وَلَيُبَدِّلَنَّهُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ خَوْفِهِمْ أَمْنًا ۚ يَعْبُدُونَنِي لَا يُشْرِكُونَ بِي شَيْئًا ۚ وَمَنْ كَفَرَ بَعْدَ ذَٰلِكَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ

The three uses of the double نَّ here يَسْتَخْلِفَنَّ, يُمَكِّنَنَّ and يُبَدِّلَنَّ is to generate stress and emphasis. The context is fitting and there is intra-verse congruence because Allah uses the verb وَعَدَ which means 'to promise' in order to reassure the believers at the time that if they remain firm on their requirements of the bargain (having true belief and doing good deeds), Allah will certainly grant them political authority on the earth, establish Islam as a religion and give them security just like He did with Banī Isrā'īl before them. The emphatic tone of the verse also indicates a level of finality and inevitability. Although the

immediate audience of the verse are the Prophet's Companions, the verse is actually general as mentioned by the commentators:

> Likewise the Companions were weak and in fear but then Allah Most High gave them security, established them and made them rulers. It is correct to say that the verse is general to include the Ummah of Muhammad without specification...and the known rule is to adhere to the generality of the text [s: unless otherwise specified]...[205]

وهكذا كان الصحابة مستضعفين خائفين، ثم إن الله تعالى أمّنهم ومكّنهم وملّكهم، فصح أن الآية عامّة لأمة محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم غير مخصوصة؛ إذ التخصيص لا يكون إلا بخبر ممن يجب (له) التسليم، ومن الأصل المعلوم التمسكُ بالعموم.

4.

Oaths are considered part of an elevated style in Arabic discourse and are defined as

> emphasising the predicate within a sentence through the oath (*jumlah yu'akkidu bi-hā al-khabr*)...[206]

Its function includes:

Functions:

1) Solemnising a statement;
2) Emphasising a statement;
3) Highlighting something as being serious;
4) To present a proof or argument;
5) To contrast two things;
6) To exalt the object of oath;

Effects:

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[205] al-Qurṭubī, *al-Jāmiᶜ li-Aḥkām al-Qur'ān*, 12:278-279.
[206] al-Zarkashī, *al-Burhān fī ᶜUlūm al-Qur'ān*, 3:40.

1) Dramatic effect;
2) Creates a sense of seriousness in the listener;
3) Adds to rhythm and tone.

They feature heavily in Meccan *suūrahs* and have two elements: the *muqsam bihi* ('object of the oath') and the *muqsam ᶜalayh* ('complement of the oath') where the former serves to emphasise the point made in the latter.[207] Oath particles include: و / ت / ب and the verb قسم. Example of an oath is in Q. 4:65: 'And never by Your Lord will they have true belief until they make you judge in all that they dispute over…'

فَلَا وَرَبِّكَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ حَتَّىٰ يُحَكِّمُوكَ فِيمَا شَجَرَ بَيْنَهُمْ ثُمَّ لَا يَجِدُوا فِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ حَرَجًا مِمَّا قَضَيْتَ وَيُسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا

Here the letter لا is actually for emphasis, the particle of oath is و and the reply to the oath (*jawāb al-qasm*) is لاَ يُؤْمِنُونَ:

> …in effect, Allah is negating true belief unless the Prophet (saw) is made judge between all disputes and the particle ما here indicates the sense of 'generality' (ᶜ*umūm*) meaning 'all' and 'whatever' disputes there may be' between them.[208]

Two other examples of oaths and their signification are discussed by al-Zamakhsharī in 86:1-3 and 68:1:

Oath Particle	Object of the Oath	Explanation
و	اَلطَّارِقُ/اَلنَّجْمُ اَلثَّاقِبُ	أن يقسم بالنجم الثاقب تعظيماً له، لما عرف فيه من

[207] Refer to al-Rāzī's discussion in *Mafātīḥ al-Ghayb*, 28:113 and 193 and Ibn al-Qayyim, *al-Tibyān fī Aqsām al-Qur'ān*, pp.1-8 and 56-70. Cf. also Fārāhī, *A Study of the Qur'ānic Oaths* (tr. T. Hashimi), pp.7-96.

[208] See "Tafsir Surat al-Nisa' Verse 65" at https://daralnicosia.wordpress.com/2011/07/13/tafsir_surat-al-nisa-verse-65/

"The Bright Star"	عجيب القدرة ولطيف الحكمة	
	He swears an oath by the piercing star out of glorification of it because of the many wondrous powers and wisdom it is known to have...[209]	
"The Pen"	وأقسم بالقلم: تعظيماً له، لما في خلقه وتسويته من الدلالة على الحكمة العظيمة، ولما فيه من المنافع والفوائد التي لا يحيط بها الوصف	و ٱلْقَلَمِ
	Allah takes an oath by the Pen to exalt it because in it being made and formed is evidence of great wisdom as well as the numerous benefits it has that cannot be described...[210]	

[209] al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 4:141.
[210] Ibid., 4:241.

§2. Foregrounding and Backgrounding (*al-taqdīm wa 'l-ta'khīr*)

The Function:

1) To emphasise a particular point;
2) To indicate restriction;
3) To indicate clarity.
4) To highlight something important.

The Effect:

1) Impacts the auditory reception of the text;
2) Impacts stylistics;
3) Impacts how information is conveyed.

1.

Example of *taqdīm al-jār* ('foregrounding the preposition') in 75:23: 'looking at their Lord…'

إِلَىٰ رَبِّهَا نَاظِرَةٌ

Literally, it would translate as 'towards their Lord gazing'. Normally, the verb نظر is joined with its accompanying preposition إلى but here the preposition is fronted in order to indicate specification (*takhṣīṣ*) thus restricting the look or gaze to Allah alone on the Day of Judgment. This *taqdīm* also serves to align the verse in question (v.23) with its preceding verses (vv.17-22) and succeeding ones (vv.24-26) in assonance (*saj*ᶜ) and thus has a stylistic and structural function. al-Zamakhsharī comments:

> 'gazing towards their Lord' meaning only gazing towards their Lord and no other and this is the meaning from fronting the object of the verb…[211]

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[211] Ibid., 4:192.

{ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهَا نَاظِرَةٌ } تنظر إلى ربها خاصة لا تنظر إلى غيره، وهذا معنى تقديم المفعول

2.

Example of *taqdīm al-mafʿūl* ('fronting the object of the verb') in 39:66: 'Rather, it is Allah you should worship and be amongst those who are thankful…'

بَلِ اللَّهَ فَاعْبُدْ وَكُنْ مِنَ الشَّاكِرِينَ

al-Zamakshарī remarks that the verse:

> …is a response to what they ordered him which is to submit to their deities as if to say: 'do not worship what they have ordered you to; rather if you are a rational person then worship Allah'; the condition is elided and the object of the verb is fronted instead…[212]

{بَلِ ٱللَّهَ فَٱعْبُدْ } رد لما أمروه به من استلام بعض آلهتهم، كأنه قال: لا تعبد ما أمروك بعبادته، بل إن كنت عاقلاً فاعبد الله، فحذف الشرط وجعل تقديم المفعول عوضاً منه { وَكُن مِّنَ ٱلشَّٰكِرِينَ } على ما أنعم به عليك، من أن جعلك سيد ولد آدم.

By fronting the object of the verb (here الله), it creates a direct specification (*takhṣīṣ*) and hence gives the meaning of Allah alone should be worshipped, i.e. worship (ʿ*ibādah*) should be directed to Allah only.

3.

Example of *taqdīm al-ism* ('foregrounding the lexical item') in 6:100: 'They made the jinns equal partners with Allah…'

وَجَعَلُوا لِلَّهِ شُرَكَاءَ الْجِنَّ وَخَلَقَهُمْ ۖ وَخَرَقُوا لَهُ بَنِينَ وَبَنَاتٍ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ ۚ سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ عَمَّا يَصِفُونَ

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[212] Ibid., 3:407.

In the verse is a semantically-motivated foregrounding feature where the word الجن has been taken away from its post-verb position and put sentence-finally (at the end) and the word الله has been fronted. The normal sentence order would be:

وَجَعَلُواْ ٱلْجِنَّ شُرَكَآءَ لِلَّهِ

Where the word ٱلْجِنَّ is the first object of the verb and شُرَكَآءَ is the second. al-Zamakhsharī comments on one of the reasons why there is this change in word order:

> [...] the point of this is to seek to exalt Allah from having any partners whether angel, Jinn, human or other creature. For this reason, the noun <Allah> has been foregrounded before the word <partners>...[213]

فائدته استعظام أن يتخذ لله شريك مَن كان ملكاً أو جنياً أو إنسياً أو غير ذلك. ولذلك قدّم اسم الله على الشركاء...

Thus, what lies behind the inverted word order in the verse where لِلَّهِ is fronted before ٱلْجِنَّ, is to:

1) Exalt Allah above the Jinn and any creature by giving the word precedence and relegating <jinn> to the end of the verse;

2) To indicate disapprobation of what the disbelievers say regarding Allah;

3) Condemn polytheism and

4) Affirm Allah's transcendence.

al-Jurjānī comments:

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[213] Ibid., 2:40.

> ...it is clear that the placing of the word 'associates' before 'the jinn', has a fascination, beauty and majesty which cannot be achieved if the 'associates' is placed after 'the jinn'. The reason for this is that the placing of 'the associates' first conveys a majestic meaning and has a noble implication not possible otherwise. Although the general meaning is that they have ascribed to God the jinn as associates, and worship them as they worship Him, and although this can be conveyed by both structures, the one placing the 'associates' before and the other after 'the jinn', the former structure conveys this and another meaning which is that God should not have been ascribed any associates, neither the jinn nor anyone else. The other structure cannot convey this admonition, but only states the fact that they worshipped both God and the jinn... The meaning conveyed by the shift in word order would otherwise have needed an additional expression to convey it, and even then its majesty, nobility, and impact on the psyche would not have been produced.[214]

4.

Example of *al-taqdīm wa 'l-ta'khīr is* 19:1-2: 'a recall of the mercy of your Lord to His servant Zakariyyah...'

كهيعص

ذِكْرُ رَحْمَتِ رَبِّكَ عَبْدَهُ زَكَرِيَّا

> [...] And al-Farrā' said: in this statement is an example of *taqdīm* and *ta'khīr*; the meaning is: 'a mention of your Lord to His servant with mercy' where the word <zakariyyah> is grammatically in the accusative...[215]

قال الفراء: وفي الكلام تقديم وتأخير؛ المعنى: ذِكْر ربِّك عبده بالرحمة، و«زكريا» في موضع نصب

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[214] al-Jurjānī, *Dalā'il al-I'jāz*, pp.222-223.
[215] Ibn al-Jawzī, *Zād al-Masīr*, 5:145.

The word رحمة is mentioned first (fronted) in order to accentuate it and emphasise it in the verse; it is also done in order to single it out thus intrinsically associating it with Allah in the reader's mind. The context of the mercy is to be mentioned later where Allah grants the Prophet Zakariyyah a child in his old age as well as his wife who is unable to bear children (vv.4-5).[216]

[216] Cf. also A. Elimam, *Marked Word Order in the Qur'ān*, pp.112-146.

Chapter 7

When Simile Met Allegory: *Unveiling Figures of Speech*



This chapter will outline four examples related to the area of *ʿilm al-bayān* as discussed in the classical books of rhetoric with their functions and effects. It includes: (1) the simile; (2) metonymy; (3) Allegory and (4) the Metaphor.

§1. The Simile

1.

التشبيه / Simile (*tashbīh*):[217]

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[217] D. Beaumont writes:

> The comparison of two things made explicit — and distinguished from metaphor — by the use of "like" or "as." "Zayd fought like a lion" is a simile. In Arabic rhetoric, "simile" or *tashbīh* has the same general sense, and the same general distinction is made between simile and metaphor (*isti'āra*). The "like" or "as" in the simile is usually made with the particle *ka,* though a locution using the noun *mathal* may substitute. Early works on rhetoric placed great emphasis on simile; al-Marzubānī (d. 384/994) in *al-Muwashsha* made simile one of the "four pillars of poetry" (see van Gelder, *Tashbīh*). Not surprisingly, proponents of the doctrine of the inimitability of the Qur'ān, like al-Rummānī (d. 384/994) and al-Bāqillānī (d. 403/1013), listed its excellent similes among the rhetorical qualities that make it inimitable. Al-Bāqillānī (*I'jāz,* 263-8) compared them favorably with the outstanding similes found in poets like Imru' al-Qays and Bashshār b. Burd. From a rhetorical standpoint, the interest in qur'ānic simile culminates in

This is the art of likening and is a skilful mode of discourse. The Qur'ān employs simile in numerous places. There are a few components of the simile:[218]

The likened-to/*al-mushabbah* المشبه	The likened/*al-mushabbah bihi* المشبه به	The simile feature/*wajh al-tashbīh* وجه التشبيه	The simile element/*ādāt al-tashbīh* آدات التشبيه
That thing which is likened to/compared to another entity.	The original thing to which the new entity is ascribed or attached.	This is the property, attribute, aspect or characteristic that both entities in a simile possess or share.	The particle used to indicate a comparison is being made which include the following: *ka* [ك] / *mathl* [مثل] / *ka-mathl* [كمثل] / *ka-anna* [كان].

↓

طرفي التشبيه / (*ṭarfay al-tashbīh*): 'the two ends of the simile'.

A simple example given in the classical books is: زيد كالأسد

'Zayd is like a lion'

The likened-to/*al-mushabbah*	The simile element/*ādāt al-tashbīh*	The likened/*al-mushabbah bihi*	The simile feature/*wajh al-tashbīh*

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the work of Ibn Nāqiyā (d. 485/1092) entitled *al-Jumān fī tashbīhāt al-Qur'ān.* "Simile", *Encyclopaedia of the Qur'ān*, 5:13.

[218] al-Sakkākī, *Miftāḥ al-ᶜUlūm*, pp.439-477.

زيد ك الأسد (شجاعة)

The semantic feature that links the nouns <Zayd> and <lion> is 'bravery' (*shujāʿah*). A lion is commonly connoted with bravery and that associated property or connotation is then ascribed to Zayd.

Functions of similes:[219]

1. To provide clarification (*li'l-bayān*) of some condition, state or circumstance.
2. To identify a specific feature or characteristic of something.
3. To praise someone/something.
4. To censure and dispraise someone.
5. To create a comparison for literary effect.

Effects:

1. Aesthetic appeal.
2. Emotional appeal.
3. Engagement with the listener/reader.
4. Dramatic effect.
5. Imagery.
6. Generates effective expression.
7. Impact is deeper on audience.

Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 606/1209) summarises the overall purpose and effect of parables, similitudes and comparisons as found in the Qur'ān:

> The aim behind Allah striking similitudes is to stir the heart and affect it with something that would otherwise not stir it by mere description of that thing. This is because the purpose of parables and similitudes is to draw a comparison between something latent and hidden with something manifest and apparent and between something not present with something present...do you not see how

[219] Ibid., pp.448-454.

> encouraging belief (*īmān*) without it being described for example as 'Light' (*nūr*) would be less effective on the heart than if it were to be described as such [...] that is why Allah gives numerous parables in His Manifest Book...'and these are the parables we give to the people'.[220]

إن المقصود من ضرب الأمثال انّها تؤثر في القلوب ما لا يؤثره وصف الشيء في نفسه، وذلك لأنّ الغرض في المثل تشبيه الخفي بالجلي، والغائب بالشاهد، فيتأكد الوقوف على ماهيته، ويصير الحس مطابقاً للعقل، وذلك في نهاية الإيضاح، ألا ترى أنّ الترغيب إذا وقع في الإيمان مجرّداً عن ضرب مثل له لم يتأكد وقوعه في القلب كما يتأكد وقوعه إذا مُثّل بالنور، وإذا زهد في الكفر بمجرّد الذكر لم يتأكد قبحه في العقول، كما يتأكد إذا مثل بالظلمة، وإذا أخبر بضعف أمر من الأمور وضرب مثله بنسج العنكبوت كان ذلك أبلغ في تقرير صورته من الإخبار بضعفه مجرّداً، ولهذا أكثر الله تعالى في كتابه المبين، وفي سائر كتبه أمثاله، قال تعالى : وَتِلْكَ الأمْثال نَضْرِبها لِلنّاس

Beaumont comments on the structural function of the simile in the Qur'ān:

> In addition to their illustrative, semantic role, similes often seem to have a rhetorical, emphatic role in the organization of qur'ānic discourse. Similes not infrequently open or close a subsection of a sūra. For example, the rather ordinary simile in Q 11:24 which compares believers and unbelievers to the seeing and the blind, respectively, is followed immediately by stories of the prophets Noah, Hūd and Ṣāliḥ, and the "vanished peoples" to whom they were sent — the heedless people whom God destroyed. Similarly, the famous or infamous comparison of Torah-bearers just cited, Q 62:5, introduces a discussion of the Jews. The similes in Q 54:20, 57:20, 69:7 and 105:5 offer tart summations of the preceding passages.[221]

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[220] al-Rāzī, *Mafātīḥ al-Ghayb*, 2:72-73.

[221] Beaumont, "Simile", *Encyclopaedia of the Qur'ān*, 5:13-14.

§2. The Simile Types

Types of simile:[222] Below are some of the key types of similes as identified by classical Arabic rhetoricians:

English	Arabic	Example
Single	مفرد	This is when there is only one *wajh al-tashbīh* shared by both the *mushabbah* and the *mushabbah bihi*: e.g. فَإِذَا انشَقَّتِ السَّمَاء فَكَانَتْ وَرْدَةً كَالدِّهَانِ / **Red** / 'Then when the heaven is torn apart and it becomes rosy or red like red-oil, or red hide.' (55:37) كعصف ماكول / **Chewed-up** / 'Like chewed-up stalks' (105:5) in order to conjure in the mind the utter destruction of those who attempted to destroy the Ka'bah and the effects of those stones dropped by the *abābīl* birds.
Multiple	متعدد	This is when the *mushabbah* and *mushabbah bihi* are compared but with several *wajh al-tashbīh* explicitly mentioned: e.g. 'X is like Y in A, B, C and D'.
Compound	مركب	Also known as 'imagery simile' (*tashbīh tamthīlī*). This is a when two imageries are compared creating a compound simile, i.e. the *mushabbah* and *mushabbah bihi* are both imagery phrases: e.g. مَثَلُ كَلِمَةٍ خَبِيثَةٍ كَشَجَرَةٍ خَبِيثَةٍ **/ A bad word / a bad tree /** 'The

[222] al-Sakkākī, *Miftāḥ al-ᶜUlūm*, pp.394-465 and al-Suyūṭī, *al-Itqān fī ᶜUlūm al-Qur'ān*, 2:47-51.

likeness of a bad word is that of a bad tree uprooted from the surface of the earth, not having any stability...' (14:26)

Synoptic مجمل This is when the *wajh al-tashbīh* is ellipted: e.g.

ألائك كالأنعام بل هم أضل

'And We have certainly created for Hell many of the jinn and mankind. They have hearts with which they do not understand, they have eyes with which they do not see, and they have ears with which they do not hear. Those are like livestock; rather, they are more astray. It is they who are the heedless' (7:179)

Detailed مفصل This when the *wajh al-tashbīh* is explicitly mentioned: e.g. 'X is like Y in φ'.

Unrestricted مرسل This when the *ādāt al-tashbīh* is explicitly mentioned: e.g.

مَثَلُهُمْ كَمَثَلِ الَّذِي اسْتَوْقَدَ نَارا

/ ***Ka-mathl*** / 'are like those who kindled a fire....' (2:17)

Confirmed مؤكد This is when the *ādāt al-tashbīh* is elided and a noun is used instead in order to emphasise a comparison: e.g.

وهي تمر مر السحاب

/ **Moving** / 'And the mountains you see firm will be going past like fleeting clouds' (27:88)

The noun مر is mentioned with its verb تمر in order to emphasise the enormity of the world's destruction, i.e. how even the largest physical anchors of

		the earth will crumble like dust and in other instances move like as if they were clouds.
Perceptible	حسي	This is when the both the *mushabbah* and *mushabbah bihi* have referents that are something sensible and tangible entities.
Cognitive	عقلي	This is when the both the *mushabbah* and *mushabbah bihi* have referents that are states, emotions and cognition: e.g. 'X (cognitive state) is like Y (cognitive state)'; 'Life is knowledge'.
Imaginary	وهمي	This is when the both the *mushabbah* and *mushabbah bihi* have referents that are non-existent: e.g. 'X (imaginary entity) is like Y (imaginary entity)'; 'X's is like a fairy'.
Reverse	مقلوب	This is when the normal order of the *mushabbah* and *mushabbah bihi* is reversed.
Effective	بليغ	This is when both the *wajh al-tashbīh* and *ādāt al-tashbīh* are not mentioned: e.g. صُمٌّ بُكْمٌ عُمْيٌ 'They are like the deaf, dumb and the blind' (2:18)

Example:

Qur'an: 62:4: 'The example of those who were entrusted with the Torah and then did not take it on is like that of a donkey who carries volumes [of books]. Wretched is the example of the people who deny the signs of Allah. And Allah does not guide the wrongdoing people.'

مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ حُمِّلُوا التَّوْرَاةَ ثُمَّ لَمْ يَحْمِلُوهَا كَمَثَلِ الْحِمَارِ يَحْمِلُ أَسْفَارًا ۚ بِئْسَ مَثَلُ الْقَوْمِ الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ ۚ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ

The simile breakdown is:

The likened-to/*al-mushabbah*	The simile element/*ādāt al-tashbīh*	The likened/*al-mushabbah bihi*	The simile feature/*wajh al-tashbīh*
اليهود	ك	الحمار	حرمان الإنتفاع،) (جهل

Here in this verse Allah is striking a comparison between the Jews of the past with donkeys that carry tomes on their back. The formula 'the example of X is like Y' indicates it is a simile.[223] The employment of the simile here is for both rebuke and warning. The condition of the Jews who possess the Torah but fail to act on its injunctions were compared very starkly to donkeys that carry books not knowing the value of the objects they are carrying but only the burden of the carry. The rebuke and scorn manifests itself in how they used to pride

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[223] al-Sakkākī, *Miftāḥ al-ᶜUlūm*, pp.457-458. Ibn ᶜĀshūr states:

> The use of the imagery of carrying and whatever else this meaning denotes is a metaphor achieved through likening what was entrusted [to the Jews] to something being carried on the back of a riding beast. And so, by this comparison or simile, the condition of the Jews is likened to donkeys carrying tomes on their back which is a simile that gives a figurative signification through a literal meaning. This is one of the unique subtleties of the Qur'ān. *al-Taḥrīr wa'l-Tanwīr*, 29:214:

وإطلاق الحمل وما تصرف منه على هذا المعنى استعارة، بتشبيه إيكال الأمر بحمل الحمل على ظهر الدابة، وبذلك كان تمثيل حالهم بحال الحمار يحمل أسفارا تمثيلا للمعنى المجازي بالمعنى الحقيقي . وهو من لطائف القرآن

themselves in being described as 'People of the Book' (*ahl al-kitāb*) but Allah highlighted their despicable condition with respect this Book: they know it by name and possessed it but do not act on it or follow its guidance.[224]

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[224] al-Qurṭubī comments:

> Allah strikes a similitude with the Jews who abandoned acting on the Torah and did not believe in Muḥammad. They carried the Torah meaning they were entrusted with it according to Ibn ᶜAbbās. al-Jurjānī said: the word *ḥammālah* means *kaffālah* [...] like donkeys carrying tomes ... which are huge books ... Allah likened them – while the Torah is in their possession and yet they fail to act on it – like donkeys that carry books on its back and have nothing but the burden of carrying them without any benefit whatsoever. *al-Jāmiᶜ li-Aḥkām al-Qur'ān*, 18:86:

ضرب مثلا لليهود لما تركوا العمل بالتوراة ولم يؤمنوا بمحمد صلى الله عليه وسلم . حملوا التوراة أي كلفوا العمل بها عن ابن عباس . وقال الجرجاني : هو من الحمالة بمعنى الكفالة أي ضمنوا أحكام التوراة ... كمثل الحمار يحمل أسفارا هي جمع سفر، وهو الكتاب الكبير لأنه يسفر عن المعنى إذا قرئ ... ثم لم يحملوها أي لم يعملوا بها . شبههم – والتوراة في أيديهم وهم لا يعملون بها – بالحمار يحمل كتبا وليس له إلا ثقل الحمل من غير فائدة ...

Ibn Kathīr writes:

> Allah Most High says in censuring the Jews that they were given the Torah which they had in order to act on it but they did not do that. Their example in doing that is like a donkey that carries a large tome, i.e. the donkey has no idea what books it is carrying and what it contains; it only feels what it carries but does not know what it carries. The same holds for those who carry the Book they were given; they memorise the words but neither have understanding of it nor do they act on what it requires; instead they make false interpretations, change it and alter it. Their condition was worse than the donkey because the donkey does not have understanding whereas they do but did not use it... *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-ᶜAẓīm*, 8:178:

§3. Metonymy

2.

الكناية / Metonymy (*kināyah*):[225]

قول تعالى ذاما لليهود الذين أعطوا التوراة وحملوها للعمل بها، فلم يعملوا بها، مثلهم في ذلك كمثل الحمار يحمل أسفارا، أي كمثل الحمار إذا حمل كتبا لا يدري ما فيها، فهو يحملها حملا حسيا ولا يدري ما عليه . وكذلك هؤلاء في حملهم الكتاب الذي أوتوه، حفظوه لفظا ولم يفهموه ولا عملوا بمقتضاه، بل أولوه وحرفوه وبدلوه، فهم أسوأ حالا من الحمير لأن الحمار لا فهم له، وهؤلاء لهم فهوم لم يستعملوها

[225] J. Dichy explains the meaning of 'metonymy' as follows:

> Lexically, *kināya* is a nominalized infinitive form (*maṣdar*) of the verb *kanā*. Ibn Fāris (d. 385/1005) states that it denotes "the concealed expression (*tawriya*) of a denomination through [the use of] another. One says *kanaytu ʿan kaḏā* 'I avoided mentioning something' upon using another expression from which the first one can be inferred" (*Maqāyīs* V, 139). Such indirect wording may be due to modesty, where overt utterance of the concealed expression is deemed 'abominable, impudent, obscene' (*yustafḥaš;* Ibn Manẓūr [d. 710/1311], *Lisān*, root *k-n-y*). Lexicographers mention a second sense of the verb, with which another nominalized infinitive form, *kunyā* 'surname, agnomen', is connected. The *kunyā* consists of *ʾabū* 'father of' or *ʾumm* 'mother of' followed by the name of the son. It is still used either in order to avoid uttering in public someone's actual name (commonly that of a woman), or as an honorific or friendly term of address. Ibn Manẓūr (*Lisān*, root *k-n-y*) quotes the use of *kunyā* in wartime by competing fighters (*mubārizīn*), whose surnames are thus remembered. Ibn Fāris explicitly relates the second term to the first: "*Kināya* stands in opposition to 'explicit expression' (*muṣāraḥa*). This is why the surname is called *kunyā*, as if it were a 'concealed expression' (*tawriya*) of someone's name" (*Maqāyīs* V, 139). See art. "Kināya" in *Encyclopaedia of Arabic Language and Linguistics*, 2:73f.

This is when something is mentioned indirectly or is alluded to. In other words, it is a form of succinct reference through implication, suggestion and intimation and not direct reference or explicit mention.[226]

Functions of Metonymy:[227]

1. To allude to a specific characteristic of someone or something.
2. To praise someone/something.
3. To censure and dispraise someone.
4. To warn.
5. To create a comparison for literary effect.

Effects:

1. Aesthetic appeal.
2. Emotional appeal.
3. Affinity with the listener/reader context.
4. Imaginative.
5. Generates effective expression.
6. Impact is deeper on audience.
7. Eloquence.

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[226] al-Suyūṭī, *al-Itqān fī ᶜUlūm al-Qur'ān*, 2:412 says:

> A metonymical expression is an indication without explicitly mentioning the words. It is according to the experts of *bayān* when a speaker intends to affirm a meaning without mentioning the wording of the subject-matter itself...

والكناية عن الشيء؛ الدلالة عليه من غير تصريح باسمه . وهي عند أهل البيان أن يريد المتكلم إثبات معنى من المعاني فلا يذكره باللفظ الموضوع له من اللغة

[227] al-Sakkākī, *Miftāḥ al-ᶜUlūm*, pp.512-525.

Examples: The Qur'ān uses metonymy in many contexts of which half a dozen are given below as listed by al-Suyūṭī in his *al-Itqān*:

1. *To indicate the Power* (*qudrah*) *of Allah*, e.g. Q. 7:189:

> ...'He is the one who created you from a single soul' which is a metonymical reference to the Prophet Adam.[228]

كقوله – تعالى : – هو الذي خلقكم من نفس واحدة كناية عن آدم

2. *To appeal to the intellect of those being addressed*, e.g. Q. 2:24:

> 'Fear the fire whose fuel is men and stones' which is a metonymical expression referring to their obstinate rejection of the miracle; as if to say 'so taste this huge fire'...[229]

وقوله – تعالى : – فاتقوا النار التي وقودها الناس والحجارة فإنه كناية عن ألا تعاندوا عند ظهور المعجزة، فتمسكم هذه النار العظيمة.

3. *To indicate eloquent diction*, e.g. Q.38:23:

> ...'This brother of mine has ninety-nine na^{c}jah whereas I have only one' which is a metonymical expression for 'women' based on the custom of the Arabs to give nicknames to their women.[230]

كقوله – تعالى : – إن هذا أخي له تسع وتسعون نعجة ولي نعجة واحدة فكنى بالنعجة عن المرأة، كعادة العرب أنها تكني بها عن المرأة.

4. *To allude to a euphemism*, e.g. Q. 2:187:

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[228] al-Suyūṭī, *al-Itqān fī ^{c}Ulūm al-Qur'ān*, 2:412.
[229] Ibid., 2:412.
[230] Ibid., 2:412-413.

> And His statement Most High is a metonymical reference to wives as 'they are a garment for you and you are a garment for them'; the word *libās* is from *mulābasah* which refers to mixing, intimate contact and sexual relations...[231]

وقوله في الكناية عنهن : هن لباس لكم وأنتم لباس لهن واللباس من الملابسة، وهي الاختلاط والجماع .

5. *To create hyperbole and exaggeration*, e.g. Q: 4:64:

> 'He has two outstretched hands' which is a metonymical expression referring to Allah's unmatchable generosity...[232]

وقوله : بل يداه مبسوطتان كناية عن كرمه، وثنى اليد وإن أفردت في أول الآية، ليكون أبلغ في السخاء والجود .

6. *To beautify speech*, e.g. Q. 37:49:

> ...'as if they were like eggs, safely hidden'. It was the practice of the Arabs to describe delicate, soft and graceful women as being like 'white eggs'. Imru' al-Qays wrote: *And the fair one whose tent is difficult to enter / I fully enjoyed play with her without haste...*[233]

كقوله – تعالى : – بيض مكنون فإن العرب كانت من عادتهم الكناية عن حرائر النساء بالبيض، قال امرؤ القيس:

وبيضة خدر لا يرام خباؤها تمتعت من لهو بها غير معجل

Therefore the use of metonymy enhances and enriches the Qur'ānic texture as well as the communicative effectiveness of the text producer (speaker) to the text-receiver (audience). It

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[231] Ibid., 2:414.
[232] Ibid., 2:419.
[233] Ibid., 2:419.

also offers the Qur'ān a "pictorial element",[234] i.e. a visual dimension that makes the contents vivid and stark and moves its reader/listener on a cognitive level.[235]

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[234] M. Mir, "The Qur'ān as Literature", *Religion and Literature* 20, no. 1 (1988), pp.49-64 and reproduced online at http://www.islamic-awareness.org/Quran/Q_Studies/Mirliter.html

[235] Other examples of *kināyah* can be found at:

1. https://daralnicosia.wordpress.com/2014/03/30/remember-me-and-i-will-remember-you-a-tafsir-of-baqara-verse-152/
2. https://daralnicosia.wordpress.com/2013/12/16/lord-of-the-east-and-west-a-tafsir-of-baqara-verse-115/

§4. Allegory

Below is the example of *majāz* ('Allegory') related to the area of *ᶜilm al-bayān* as discussed in the classical books of rhetoric with its functions and effects.

The word "*majāz*" is from the Arabic root / *j* / *w* / *z* / meaning 'to pierce something' 'to exceed something' and 'to go beyond'. Allegory is a form of licensed transgression from speech, i.e. transferring the meaning of a word to give it another meaning (*naql*). It is also a counterpart to words that are 'literal' (*ḥaqīqī*). al-Sakkākī defines what word is *majāzī* (allegorical) and what word is *ḥaqīqī* (literal) as follows:

الكلمة المستعملة فيما هي موضوعة له من غير تأويل في الوضع...

> [a literal word] is one that is used in the sense it was originally given without any further interpretation of it...[236]

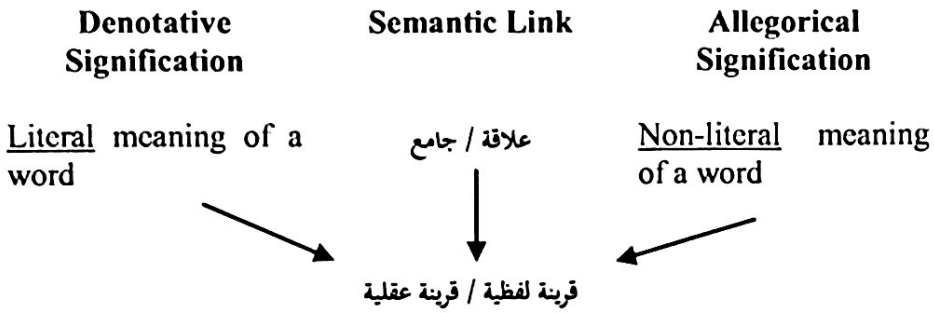
الكلمة المستعملة في غير ما هي موضوعة له بالتحقيق إستعمالا في الغير بنسبة إلى نوع حقيقتها مع قرينة مانعة عن إرادة معناها في ذلك النوع ...

> [an allegorical word] is that which is used for other than what it was designated although both are of the same mode of expression but a contextual indication prevents the literal meaning from being intended.[237]

Thus, in allegory, a word is taken from it *denotative* (intrinsic) meaning and given a non-intrinsic *allegorical* but related meaning. However, there must be some link (*ᶜalāqah/jāmiᶜ*) between both meanings established by a *clue* (*qarīnah*) which can be either (1) *lexical / lafẓiyyah* (i.e. a word in the text gives us the clue) or (2) *cognitive / ᶜaqliyyah* (i.e. the mind, common sense and reason gives us the clue):

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[236] al-Sakkākī, *Miftāḥ al-ᶜUlūm*, p.358.
[237] Ibid., p.358.



Functions of Allegory:[238]

1. To be succinct in speech.
2. To be effective and expressive in speech.
3. To be allusive.
4. To be ambiguous.
5. To provoke thinking.

Effects:

1. Aesthetic appeal.
2. Emotional appeal.
3. Engagement with the listener/reader.
4. Dramatic effect.
5. Imagery.
6. Generates effective expression.
7. Impact is deeper on audience.

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[238] Abdul-Raof, *Arabic Rhetoric*, pp.216-225.

§5. Allegory and its Types

Allegory (*majāz*) is of two types: (1) *cognitive* and (2) *linguistic* and is outlined in the table below:

Cognitive Allegory
(مجاز عقلي)

This is when two grammatical elements (subject/predicate) or two rhetorical elements (*al-musnad/al-musnad ilayhi*) are related to each other in a *non-literal way*. In other words, the meaning of a verb is attributed to the subject/*musnad ilayh* without actually intending that meaning of the verb. The 'clue' (*qarīnah*) to tell us that it is not literal would be our minds, common-sense and reason. The types of cognitive allegory are:

[1] ***Cause relationships***: 'X causes Y' where X is an abstract entity that made something else happen, e.g. 'While we were in power, we built many hospitals'. Governments do not actually build anything; rather it is the builders and workers who do. Thus, the attribution is non-literal.

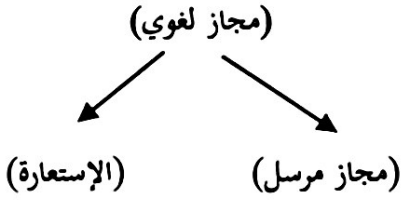
[2] ***Time relationships***: 'X does Y' where X refers to time, days, months, years; e.g. 'Time will reveal what they have done'. Time is not a real and living entity to reveal anything. Hence, the ascription is non-literal.

[3] ***Place relationships***: 'X does Y' where X is a place, location, area, region, etc., e.g. 'The streets

Linguistic Allegory
(مجاز لغوي)

This is when a word's intrinsic and literal meaning is transferred to another non-intrinsic and metaphorical (figurative) meaning based on some indication (*qarīnah*).

This divides further into: (1) *metaphor* (الإستعارة) and (2) *hypallage* (مجاز مرسل) and each division is discussed briefly below.



swelled with crowds of people'. Streets do not literally swell or heave like a human chest so the suggestion is non-literal.

§6. Metaphor and its Types

Linguistically, the word 'metaphor' is from the verb أعار meaning 'to borrow', i.e. a feature from someone and something and applying that feature to someone or something else. Peter Heath writes:

> al-Suyūṭī (d.911/1505) mentions several definitions of metaphor in his *Itqān*. He settles on the following: "The essence of metaphor is when a word is borrowed from something for which it is known and applied to something for which it is not known." In other words, metaphor occurs when a concept is borrowed from its customary semantic domain and applied to a semantic domain in which it is not usually employed. For example, in the qur'ānic verse cited above, "wing" is "borrowed" from its usual determination as the limb of a bird that enables it to fly and then applied to prescribe one aspect of children's respect for their parents. The power of this metaphor is enhanced by its denotation that, as a sign of humility, the respectful child "lowers his wing," a symbol of independence. "The purpose of metaphor," al-Suyūṭī (*Itqān,* ii, 780-1) continues, "is to reveal an aspect that is hidden, to emphasize something that is not sufficiently clear, to exaggerate, or to achieve the joining or overlap (of concepts)."[239]

Metaphor in Arabic rhetoric is one of the aspects that give the Arabic language its power, eloquence and force.[240]

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[239] Heath, art. "Metaphor", *Encyclopaedia of the Qur'ān*, 3:385.

[240] Simon comments:

> Given the overall relevance of poetry and language as a source of cultural pride and the construction of Arabic identity, metaphor as a creative mode of expression has always played an important role in the linguistic habit of the Arabs. While in pre-Islamic times a preponderance of similes and genitive metaphors are stated, in the Abbasid period poetry, influenced by urban milieus and the influx of Persian cultural elements, started to change. A higher degree

This is one of the most celebrated features within the discipline of figures of speech (*ʿilm al-bayān*) and is a form of compressed analogy.[241] The metaphor components as outlined in the classical books of rhetoric are as follows:

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of rhetorization came into fashion, with metaphors becoming keener and sometimes far-fetched. In the discussion on literary standards, a line was drawn between modern (*muḥdaṯūn*), and more traditionally orientated poets (*mutaqaddimūn*). Muslim ibn al-Walīd (d. 208/823) is said to have been the first to cultivate the new style, *badīʿ*, of which ʾAbū Tammām (d. 230/846) is another master. In the 10th century an often manieristic style was established, characterized by the anthropomorphization of nature and the construction of highly imaginative worlds where a poetic image provides the background for another ('the cheek of a rose is glowing with shame'). The role of panegyric, especially in poetic production, was another factor that stimulated hyperbolic metaphorical speech and the construction of fantastic etiologies. Even official writings were expected to meet literary standards. In the milieu of learned secretaries, often closely connected with literary circles, the ideal of *ʾadab* was held up, and artistic prose, including verses, assonances, tropes, and rhetorical figures, was of common usage. A rhetorically highly elaborated genre of Arabic literature was the *maqāma,* represented in classical form in the works of al-Ḥarīrī (d. 516/1122). Due to the unrivalled artificiality and enigmatic character of later *maqāmāt*, even the well-educated reader of that time was not easily able to get along without commentaries on metaphors, allusions, and the like. Here, verbal art tends to become an end in itself. Literary virtuosity in all genres of writing, down to the most prosaic ones, has been an ideal throughout Islamic history, or at the least, a learned person was supposed to have knowledge of grammar and rhetoric. See art. "Istiʿāra" in *Encyclopaedia of Arabic Language and Linguistics*, 2:34.

[241] Simon writes summarising Arabic metaphor:

The Borrowed-to/*al-mustaᶜār lahu*	**The Borrowed-from/*al-mustaᶜār min-hu***	**The Borrowed/ *al-mustaᶜār***
المستعار له	المستعار منه	المستعار
The thing that is compared to another entity	The original thing to which the new thing is ascribed	The word/semantic concept that links both the borrowed-from and transferred to the borrowed-to.

A simple example given in the classical books is: زيد أسد

'Zayd is a lion'

The *balāġiyyūn*, or theorists of eloquence, use a set of terms in order to describe the mechanism and functioning of *isti'āra*. The *musta'ār minhu* is the thing or notion the metaphorical meaning is borrowed from, while the thing or notion the metaphorically used word is given to is called *musta'ār lahu*. The transferred or borrowed word itself is referred to as *musta'ār*. One might draw a parallel between *musta'ār lahū* and 'tenor'. For both *musta'ār minhu* and *musta'ār*, however, 'vehicle' is the only equivalent. In a simple word metaphor like *ra'aytu 'asadan* 'I saw a lion', the *musta'ār* is simply regarded as the noun that represents the *musta'ār minhu*; thus, the difference in descriptive approach might not be obvious at first sight. Another standard example, *wa-šta'ala r-ra'su šayban* 'The head flared up in white hair' (Q. 19/4), makes it clearer. Here, the *musta'ār minhu* is 'fire', the *musta'ār lahū* is 'white hair', and the *musta'ār* borrowed from 'fire' is 'flared up'. The ground or aspect of similarity is called *wajh aš-šibh* or *jāmi'*. There must be an indication in the situation, *qarīna ḥāliyya*, or the speech sequence itself, *qarīna maqāliyya*, that blocks the conventional meaning of the word, e.g. *ra'aytu 'asadan yarmī* 'I saw a lion throwing'. The adjunct *yarmī* indicates a nonliteral usage of *'asad*. See Simon, "Istiᶜāra", 2:34f. cf. also, S. A. Bonebakker, art. "Istiᶜāra", *EI*^{2}, 4:248-252.

The Borrowed-to/*al-mustaᶜār lahu*	The Borrowed-from/*al-mustaᶜār min-hu*	The Borrowed/ *al-mustaᶜār*
المستعار له	المستعار منه	المستعار
'Zayd' (زيد)	'Lion' (أسد)	'bravery' (شجاعة)
He is the one compared to a lion	This is that which is applied to Zayd	This is the semantic concept that links Zayd to a Lion

Below are the six common types of metaphor mentioned in the books of *balāghah* and can be found in the Qur'ān:

1. **Explicit Metaphor** (الإستعارة التصريحية): this is where the *al-mustaᶜār min-hu* is mentioned but the *al-mustaᶜār lahu* is ellipted:

Example: 14:1: '*Alif, Lam, Ra.* [This is] a Book which We have revealed to you, [O Muḥammad], that you might bring mankind out of darknesses into the Light by permission of their Lord – to the path of the Exalted in Might, the Praiseworthy'.

الر ۚ كِتَابٌ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ إِلَيْكَ لِتُخْرِجَ النَّاسَ مِنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِمْ إِلَىٰ صِرَاطِ الْعَزِيزِ الْحَمِيدِ

There are actually two metaphors at play here. In both cases, the *al-mustaᶜār min-hu* is mentioned and they are الظلمات and النور but the *al-mustaᶜār lahu*, which are الضلال and الهدى in both cases, are not mentioned; they are ellipted:

The Borrowed-to/ *al-mustaᶜār lahu* (ellipted)	**The Borrowed-from/** *al-mustaᶜār min-hu*
المستعار له	المستعار منه
الضلال and الهدى	الظلمات and النور

The result is a highly effectively metaphor used to establish the purpose of this Qur'ān or this religion: which is to bring people out of the darkness of polytheism, their whims and desires and disbelief and bring them into the One True universal Guidance of Islam. As an additional point, the word الظلمات is in the plural form suggesting the plethora of misguidance out there whereas the word النور is in the singular suggesting that there is only One truth from Allah.

2. **Implicit Metaphor** (الإستعارة المكنية): this is where the *al-musta^{c}ār lahu* is mentioned but the *al-musta^{c}ār min-hu* is not mentioned, i.e. it is ellipted:

Example: 81:18: 'And by dawn when it breathes'.

وَالصُّبْحِ إِذَا تَنَفَّسَ

Here, the original entity with which the dawn is metaphorically described is الإنسان ('human beings') who actually breathe and heave. Thus, the semantic concept (المستعار) that links both the dawn and human beings is 'movement out': just like the breath or soul of human beings leave the body, in the same way light breaks or emerges at dawn.[242]

The Borrowed-to/ *al-musta^{c}ār lahu*	The Borrowed-from/ *al-musta^{c}ār min-hu* (ellipted)

[242] Ibn ^{c}Āshūr:

> And the word *tanaffas*: its reality is the exiting of breath or the soul from living creatures. The emergence of light while darkness remains is likened to the exhalation of breath which is an example of explicit metaphor... *al-Taḥrīr wa 'l-Tanwīr*, 31:154.

والتنفس: حقيقته خروج النَفس من الحيوان، استعير لظهور الضياء مع بقايا الظلام على تشبيه خروج الضياء بخروج النَفَس على طريقة الاستعارة المصرحة، أو لأنه إذا بدا الصباح أقبل معه نسيم فجُعل ذلك كالتنفس له على طريقة المكنية بتشبيه الصبح بذي نفس مع تشبيه النسيم بالأنفاس.

المستعار له	المستعار منه
الصبح	الإنسان

The result is a highly effective metaphor – embedded in an oath – that is rich and compact in its description of the natural phenomenon urging the reader to ponder on them and their benefits and draw their attention to the absolute veracity of the Prophet as well as his integrity and his dedication.

3. **Proverbial Metaphor** (الإستعارة التمثيلية): this is where the *al-mustaᶜār* is ellipted while other metaphor components are maintained. It often is an entire proposition rather than a lexical item and there is no lexical clue (*qarīnah lughwiyyah*) in the metaphor because the clue is cognitive (*ᶜaqliyyah*):

Example: 17:29: 'And do not make your hand [as] chained to your neck or extend it completely and [thereby] become blamed and insolvent':

وَلَا تَجْعَلْ يَدَكَ مَغْلُولَةً إِلَىٰ عُنُقِكَ وَلَا تَبْسُطْهَا كُلَّ الْبَسْطِ فَتَقْعُدَ مَلُومًا مَحْسُورًا

The phrase وَلاَ تَجْعَلْ يَدَكَ مَغْلُولَةً إِلَىٰ عُنُقِكَ is vivid in how miserliness is metaphorically compared to one's hand chained to one's neck suggesting the lack or inability to do anything beneficial or positive. The result is an effective metaphor indicating moderation. It is undesirable to be both miserly and extravagant as neither puts one in a healthy position and neither trait benefits others. This is because miserliness prevents generosity and leads to withholding when giving may be necessary and required and extravagance may create the impression of ostentation as well as pointless waste or exhaustion of resources or lack of restraint.

4. **Enhanced Metaphor** (الإستعارة المرشحة): this when the communicator presents additional information about the *al-mustaᶜār min-hu* that has a semantical relation or connection with the *al-mustaᶜār lahu*:

Example: 2:16: 'Those are the ones who have purchased error [in exchange] for guidance, so their transaction has brought no profit, nor were they guided.'

أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ اشْتَرَوُا الضَّلَالَةَ بِالْهُدَىٰ فَمَا رَبِحَتْ تِجَارَتُهُمْ وَمَا كَانُوا مُهْتَدِينَ

Allah mentions here that the misguided ones would sell their hereafter for gains in this world drawing on the language of commerce and trade. The *al-musta^{c}ār min-hu* is explicit in اشْتَرَوُا الضَّلَالَةَ بِالْهُدَى where the word اشْتَرَوُا ('they purchased') is a metaphor for اختاروا ('they chose'). The additional information that acts as an extension to the metaphor that makes this an example of an enhanced metaphor is the phrase فما ربحت تجارتهم ('their transaction has brought no profit'). The words تجارت ('transaction'/'trade'/'commerce') and ربح ('profit') have a semantic correlation with the word اشْتَرَوُا ('they purchased').

5. **Naked Metaphor** (الإستعارة المجردة): this is when the communicator presents information that is suitable and relevant (*mulā'im*) with the *al-musta^{c}ār lahu*:

Example: 16:112: 'And Allah presents an example: a city which was safe and secure, its provision coming to it in abundance from every location, but it denied the favors of Allah. So Allah made it taste the raiment of hunger and fear for what they had been doing'.

وَضَرَبَ اللَّهُ مَثَلًا قَرْيَةً كَانَتْ آمِنَةً مُطْمَئِنَّةً يَأْتِيهَا رِزْقُهَا رَغَدًا مِنْ كُلِّ مَكَانٍ فَكَفَرَتْ بِأَنْعُمِ اللَّهِ فَأَذَاقَهَا اللَّهُ لِبَاسَ الْجُوعِ وَالْخَوْفِ بِمَا كَانُوا يَصْنَعُونَ

Here, words like الجوع/'hunger' and الخوف/'fear' are suitable descriptions for the village inhabitants who will be made to taste Allah's punishment of hunger and fear. The analogy is piercing and its purpose is to clarify and enhance the

matter being described.[243] The use of the word اللباس/'raiment/garment/envelope' is metaphorical because the clothing is something that indicates the manifestation of the hunger and fear, i.e. the physical evidence of it.

6. **Absolute Metaphor** (الإستعارة المطلقة): this is either: 1) when the communicator does not introduce any information regarding the *al-mustaᶜār lahu* and the *al-mustaᶜār minhu* or 2) when the communicator does introduce any information regarding the *al-mustaᶜār lahu* and the *al-mustaᶜār minhu*:

Example of (1): 69:11: 'And indeed when the water overflowed, We carried your ancestors to the sailing Ship'.

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[243] See al-Shinqīṭī's comments in *Aḍwā' al-Bayān*, 2:460-461:

وقد اختلف أهل البيان في هذه الآية، فبعضهم يقول : فيها استعارة مجردة ; يعنون أنها جيء فيها بما يلائم المستعار له . وذلك في زعمهم أنه استعار اللباس لما غشيهم من بعض الحوادث كالجوع والخوف، بجامع اشتماله عليهم كاشتمال اللباس على اللابس على سبيل الاستعارة التصريحية الأصلية التحقيقية، ثم ذكر الوصف الذي هو الإذاقة ملائما للمستعار له الذي هو الجوع والخوف لأن إطلاق الذوق على وجدان الجوع والخوف جرى عندهم مجرى الحقيقة لكثرة الاستعمال .

فيقولون : ذاق البؤس والضر، وأذاقه غيره إياهما; فكانت الاستعارة مجردة لذكر ما يلائم المستعار له، الذي هو المشبه في الأصل في التشبيه الذي هو أصل الاستعارة. ولو أريد ترشيح هذه الاستعارة في زعمهم لقيل: فكساها لأن الإتيان بما يلائم المستعار منه الذي هو المشبه به في التشبيه الذي هو أصل الاستعارة يسمى "ترشيحا"، والكسوة تلائم اللباس، فذكرها ترشيح للاستعارة . قالوا : وإن كانت الاستعارة المرشحة أبلغ من المجردة، فتجريد الاستعارة في الآية أبلغ من حيث إنه روعي المستعار له الذي هو الخوف والجوع، وبذكر الإذاقة المناسبة لذلك ليزداد الكلام وضوحا .

وقال بعضهم: هي استعارة مبنية على استعارة; فإنه أولا استعار لما يظهر على أبدانهم من الاصفرار والذبول والنحول اسم اللباس، بجامع الإحاطة بالشيء والاشتمال عليه، فصار اسم اللباس مستعارا لآثار الجوع والخوف على أبدانهم، ثم استعار اسم الإذاقة لما يجدونه من ألم ذلك الجوع والخوف المعبر عنه باللباس، بجامع التعرف والاختبار في كل من الذوق بالفم، ووجود الألم من الجوع والخوف; وعليه ففي اللباس :استعارة أصلية كما ذكرنا . وفي الإذاقة المستعارة لمس ألم الجوع والخوف استعارة تبعية.

إِنَّا لَمَّا طَغَى الْمَاءُ حَمَلْنَاكُمْ فِي الْجَارِيَةِ

Here the word طغى means 'to transgress' and 'to exceed the bounds' reserved for tyrants rulers and sovereigns who have gone beyond all limits in their transgression (cf. Q. 20:43 / طغى). It is here used to describe the water as overflowing and flooding. The *al-mustaᶜār minhu* is elipted (i.e. it is not mentioned).

§7. Hypallage

Below are examples of *majāz mursal* ('Hypallage') related to the area of *ʿilm al-bayān* as discussed in the classical books of rhetoric with its functions and effects:

Functions of Hypallage:[244]

1. To be succinct in speech.
2. To be effective and expressive in speech.
3. To be allusive.
4. To be ambiguous.
5. To provoke thinking.

Effects:

1. Aesthetic appeal.
2. Emotional appeal.
3. Engagement with the listener/reader.
4. Dramatic effect.
5. Imagery.
6. Generates effective expression.
7. Impact is deeper on audience.

The main types of hypallage are the following:

[1] The cause is mentioned but the effect is intended (علاقة السببية**):**

Example: 40:13: 'It is He who shows you His signs and sends down to you from the sky, provision. But none will remember except he who turns back [in repentance].'

هُوَ الَّذِي يُرِيكُمْ آيَاتِهِ وَيُنَزِّلُ لَكُمْ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ رِزْقًا ۚ وَمَا يَتَذَكَّرُ إِلَّا مَنْ يُنِيبُ

Here in the verse, Allah mentions how He sends down the 'provision' (*rizq*) of all creatures. It is no doubt clear that

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[244] Abdul-Raof, *Arabic Rhetoric*, pp.225-232.

one's provisions and sustenance does not literally descend from the sky like rain does What is actually intended is the effect, result or outcome of the rain (the natural cause) falling from the sky but instead effect (the provisions) is mentioned.

[2] The whole is mentioned but only the part is intended (العلاقة الكلية):

Example: 2:19: 'Or [it is] like a rainstorm from the sky within which is darkness, thunder and lightning. They put their fingers in their ears against the thunderclaps in dread of death. But Allah is encompassing of the disbelievers'.

أَوْ كَصَيِّبٍ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ فِيهِ ظُلُمَاتٌ وَرَعْدٌ وَبَرْقٌ يَجْعَلُونَ أَصَابِعَهُمْ فِي آذَانِهِمْ مِنَ الصَّوَاعِقِ حَذَرَ الْمَوْتِ ۚ وَاللَّهُ مُحِيطٌ بِالْكَافِرِينَ

Here is an example of an entire entity mentioned but what is intended is only a part. Allah mentions that the disbelievers put 'their fingers'/أَصَابِعَهُمْ in their ears which is impossible. What is actually meant is they put their *fingertips* into their ears (part of the finger).

[3] A part is mentioned but the whole is intended (العلاقة الجزئية):

Example: 55:27: 'Everything will perish except the Face of your Lord; the Most Splendid, Grand and Generous.'

وَيَبْقَىٰ وَجْهُ رَبِّكَ ذُو الْجَلَالِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ

Here, the word وجه/'face' is mentioned but actually what is intended is Allah Himself (the essence of Allah). The reason why the face is mentioned is because in Arabic parlance it is the defining feature of something, i.e. the attribute that indicates the thing itself. Hence, Allah is not described here as literally having a face, but metaphorically it is a reference to His Essence.

Example: 4:92: '...and free the <u>believing neck</u>...'

وَمَا كَانَ لِمُؤْمِنٍ أَنْ يَقْتُلَ مُؤْمِنًا إِلَّا خَطَأً ۚ وَمَنْ قَتَلَ مُؤْمِنًا خَطَأً فَتَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ مُؤْمِنَةٍ وَدِيَةٌ مُسَلَّمَةٌ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهِ إِلَّا أَنْ يَصَّدَّقُوا ۚ فَإِنْ كَانَ مِنْ قَوْمٍ عَدُوٍّ لَكُمْ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَتَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ مُؤْمِنَةٍ ۖ وَإِنْ كَانَ مِنْ قَوْمٍ بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَهُمْ مِيثَاقٌ فَدِيَةٌ مُسَلَّمَةٌ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهِ وَتَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ مُؤْمِنَةٍ ۖ فَمَنْ لَمْ يَجِدْ فَصِيَامُ شَهْرَيْنِ مُتَتَابِعَيْنِ تَوْبَةً مِنَ اللَّهِ ۗ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا

Here, the word رقبة/'neck' refers to the entire person. The neck is a defining semantic feature of emancipating a slave – whether believer or non-believer – and so is used here metaphorically in place of the entire person.

[4] A state is mentioned but what is intended is the place (علاقة المحلية):

Example: 3:107: 'But as for those whose faces will turn white, [they will be] within the <u>mercy</u> of Allah. They will abide therein eternally'.

وَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ ابْيَضَّتْ وُجُوهُهُمْ فَفِي رَحْمَةِ اللَّهِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ

Here in the verse, the word رحمة/'mercy' is mentioned which is a state or quality but what is intended here is the location or place of that mercy, i.e. Paradise (*jannah*). This is where the believers will be residing forever – Allah's mercy, i.e. Paradise.

[5] A condition of the past relationship is mentioned (إعتبار ما كان):

Example: 20:74: 'Indeed, whoever comes to his Lord [on the Day of Judgment] as a criminal – indeed, for him is Hell; he will neither die therein nor live'.

إِنَّهُ مَنْ يَأْتِ رَبَّهُ مُجْرِمًا فَإِنَّ لَهُ جَهَنَّمَ لَا يَمُوتُ فِيهَا وَلَا يَحْيَىٰ

Here, mention is made of the state or condition of being a criminal *while in the temporal world* not the condition of criminality on the Day of Judgment. This is because on that day no-one can be a criminal nor will there be a chance to become one as there are no temporal applications of the Shariah.

Chapter 8

From Paranomasia to Hyperbole: *Embellishments*

§1. Semantical Embellishment

Below are three examples of semantic embellishment (*al-badīᶜ al-maᶜnawī*) and as well as their stated functions and effects as found in the Qur'ān.

1 — المطابقة / *muṭābaqah* / antithesis

This is when two or more linguistic items are contrasted or deliberately juxtaposed in adjacent clauses or phrases.

Function:

1) To differentiate one thing form another thing;
2) To highlight a point of difference;
3) To bring attention to the listener/reader;

Effect:

1) Contrast of ideas, beliefs and realities in the mind of the listener/reader.
2) Generates rhythm in a text;
3) Maintains the listener's attention;

Example 35:19-20: 'Not equal are the blind and the seeing / Nor are the darknesses and the Light.'

وَمَا يَسْتَوِي الْأَعْمَىٰ وَالْبَصِيرُ

وَلَا الظُّلُمَاتُ وَلَا النُّورُ

The words الأعمى and البصير are opposites and so too are الظلمات and النور. The antithesis is generated to highlight:

1) The huge difference between those who are blind (intellectually and spiritually = disbelievers and idolaters) with those who have clear vision and have been guided by Allah (= believers);

2) The huge difference between many 'darknesses' (polytheism, misguidance, falsehood) with the One Truth from Allah.

Example 3:26: 'O Allah, Owner of Sovereignty, You give sovereignty to whom You will and You take sovereignty away from whom You will. You honour whom You will and You humble whom You will. In Your hand is [all] good. Indeed, You are competent over all things.'

قُلِ اللَّهُمَّ مَالِكَ الْمُلْكِ تُؤْتِي الْمُلْكَ مَنْ تَشَاءُ وَتَنْزِعُ الْمُلْكَ مِمَّنْ تَشَاءُ وَتُعِزُّ مَنْ تَشَاءُ وَتُذِلُّ مَنْ تَشَاءُ ۖ بِيَدِكَ الْخَيْرُ ۖ إِنَّكَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

The words تؤتي and وتنزع as well as تعزُّ and تذل are opposites and so the verse uses antithesis to highlight Allah's absolute dominion and sovereignty. It is He alone who can grant الملك (*mulk*; authority, power, wealth, Prophethood) and take it away to whomever, wherever and whenever. It is He too Who alone can raise, elevate and exalt as well as debase, humiliate and lower whomever, wherever and whenever. Some commentators have interpreted this antithesis to indicate Allah's political favour to Islam and Muslims:

> And Muqātil said: 'He gives authority to whomever He wants' means to Muḥammad and His Ummah and 'He takes away authority from whomever He wants' means from the Persians and Romans; 'He honours whomever He wants' meaning Muḥammad and his Ummah and 'He debases whomever He wants' meaning the Persians and the Romans'. So what then

> is this is عز and ذل? This has three opinions: one of them is that by عز it refers to victory and by ذل it refers to defeat; the second is that عز means riches and ذل means poverty; the third is that عز means worship and obedience and ذل means disobedience...[245]

وقال مقاتل: تؤتي الملك من تشاء، يعني: محمداً وأمته، وتنزع الملك ممن تشاء، يعني فارس والروم. { وتعزُّ من تشاء } محمداً وأمته { وتذل من تشاء } فارس والروم. وبماذا يكون هذا العز والذل؟ فيه ثلاثة أقوال. أحدها: العز بالنصر، والذل بالقهر. والثاني: العز بالغنى، والذل بالفقر، والثالث: العز بالطاعة، والذل بالمعصية.

2 — التورية / *tawrīyah* / paranomasia

Function:

1) To generate purposeful ambiguity;
2) To invite further investigation;
3) To bring attention to the listener/reader;

Effect:

1) Generates rhythm in a text;
2) Enriches the meaning of the text;

This refers to the technique of employing a polysemous lexical item within a given speech act, i.e. to use a word with similar meanings in order to create rhetorical effect (a pun). One meaning is evident and another is not so evident.

Example: 6:60: 'And it is He who takes your souls by night and knows what you have committed by day. Then He revives you therein that a specified term may be fulfilled. Then to Him will be your return; then He will inform you about what you used to do...'

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[245] Ibn al-Jawzī, *Zād al-Masīr*, 1:315.

وَهُوَ الَّذِي يَتَوَفَّاكُمْ بِاللَّيْلِ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا جَرَحْتُمْ بِالنَّهَارِ ثُمَّ يَبْعَثُكُمْ فِيهِ لِيُقْضَىٰ أَجَلٌ مُسَمًّى ۖ ثُمَّ إِلَيْهِ مَرْجِعُكُمْ ثُمَّ يُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ

The use of the verb جرحتم is polysemic and thus presents a layered meaning of either 'wounding' or 'committing sins'. However, the context clearly refers to the wrongs committed by human beings but the paranomasia creates a play on words to add to the stylistic effect.

Example: 55:6: 'And the herbs and trees prostrate…'

وَالنَّجْمُ وَالشَّجَرُ يَسْجُدَانِ

The use of the lexical item اَلنَّجْمُ is polysemic and thus presents a layered meaning of either 'stars' or 'plants that have no stalk'. However, the latter meaning is clearly intended and given the preceding verse (v.5) indicates how heavenly bodies like the Sun and the Moon as well as terrestrial foliage, both ubiquitous and beautiful, are subservient to Allah and indications of His Majesty and Power.[246]

3 — الإلتفات / *iltifāt* / shifts

This is one of the unique features of Arabic stylistics and is used with utmost subtlety and nuance in the Qur'ān. Literally, *iltifāt* means 'to turn' or 'change direction' but technically it came to refer to a change of speech from one mode to another to maintain freshness and renewed interest. Often, the changes or shifts are evident in the following:

1. Person (1st, 2nd or 3rd, etc.).
2. Number.

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[246] For a basic *tafsīr* of the *sūrah*, refer to "Tafsir of Surah Rahman" parts 1 and 2 at http://daralnicosia.wordpress.com/2011/05/22/tafsir-of-surah-al-rahman-part-1/ and http://daralnicosia.wordpress.com/2011/05/22/tafsir-surah-al-rahman-part-2/

3. Verb tense.
4. Case marker.
5. Pronoun.[247]

Function:

1) To change emphasis;
2) To alert the reader to a particular matter;
3) To form a stylistic part of the contents;

Effect:

1) Creates variation and difference in a text.
2) Generates rhythm and flow in a text;
3) Maintains the listener's attention with dramatic effect

Example: Shift in Person 16:51: 'And Allah has said, "Do not take for yourselves two deities. He is but one God, so fear only Me"…'

وَقَالَ اللَّهُ لَا تَتَّخِذُوا إِلَٰهَيْنِ اثْنَيْنِ ۖ إِنَّمَا هُوَ إِلَٰهٌ وَاحِدٌ ۖ فَإِيَّايَ فَارْهَبُونِ

Here the shift takes place from the third person <Allah> to 'me' in فَإِيَّيَ which is more effective than leaving it in the third person. Generally, an imperative is emphatic when issued directly to the recipient. The outcome is one of warning. al-Ālūsī comments on this verse and one of the effects behind the shift:

> Because striking fear by someone in the present is rhetorically more emphatic than striking fear by a third person especially after Allah describing Himself

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[247] See M. A. S. Abdel Haleem, "Grammatical Shift For The Rhetorical Purposes: *Iltifāt* And Related Features In The Qur'ān", *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, 1992, Volume LV, Part 3 reproduced at http://www.islamic-awareness.org/Quran/Text/Grammar/iltifaat.html

> with unity and divinity which comprises of greatness and perfect Power to avenge...[248]

لأن تخويف الحاضر مواجهة أبلغ من تخويف الغائب سيما بعد وصفه بالوحدة والألوهية المتضمنة للعظمة والقدرة التامة على الانتقام...

Example: Shift in Person 6:99: 'And it is He who sends down rain from the sky and We produce thereby the growth of all things. We produce from it greenery from which We produce grains arranged in layers. And from the palm trees - of its emerging fruit are clusters hanging low. And [We produce] gardens of grapevines and olives and pomegranates, similar yet varied. Look at [each of] its fruit when it yields and [at] its ripening. Indeed in that are signs for a people who believe...'

وَهُوَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَأَخْرَجْنَا بِهِ نَبَاتَ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ فَأَخْرَجْنَا مِنْهُ خَضِرًا نُخْرِجُ مِنْهُ حَبًّا مُتَرَاكِبًا وَمِنَ النَّخْلِ مِنْ طَلْعِهَا قِنْوَانٌ دَانِيَةٌ وَجَنَّاتٍ مِنْ أَعْنَابٍ وَالزَّيْتُونَ وَالرُّمَّانَ مُشْتَبِهًا وَغَيْرَ مُتَشَابِهٍ ۗ انْظُرُوا إِلَىٰ ثَمَرِهِ إِذَا أَثْمَرَ وَيَنْعِهِ ۚ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكُمْ لَآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ

Here in the verse, there is a clear shift from the third person in هو ('He') to the first person in فَأَخْرَجْنَا ('we brought forth') and نُخْرِجُ ('we produce') which links the action to Allah himself thus suggesting care, supervision and personal Lordship of Allah over His creation. al-Shawkānī mentions this effect generated by the shift:

> And in 'and we produce from it' is *iltifāt* from the third person to the first person to manifest Allah's care of His creation and whatever follows from that...[249]

وفي ﴿فَأَخْرَجْنَا بِهِ﴾ التفات من الغيبة إلى التكلم إظهاراً للعناية بشأن هذا المخلوق وما ترتب عليه

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[248] See al-Ālūsī, *Rūḥ al-Maʿānī*, 14:163.
[249] See al-Shawkānī, *Fatḥ al-Qadīr*, 2:208.

Example Shift in Person 35:6: 'And it is Allah who sends the winds so that they stir up the clouds and We drive them to a dead land and revive therewith the earth after its death. Such will be the resurrection…'

وَاللَّهُ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ الرِّيَاحَ فَتُثِيرُ سَحَابًا فَسُقْنَاهُ إِلَىٰ بَلَدٍ مَيِّتٍ فَأَحْيَيْنَا بِهِ الْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ النُّشُورُ

The initial third person form in the word <Allah> who sends the wind shifts immediately to the first person plural ('We') and the reason for it is because Allah's reviving the dead land by sending down life-giving water is evidence of His power to enable the resurrection.

4. — الغلو / *al-ghuluw* / extreme hyperbole

Hyperbole is a deliberate exaggeration of a person, thing, quality or event to emphasize a point external to the object of exaggeration, i.e. intentional exaggeration for rhetorical effect. In Arabic rhetoric, *al-ghuluw* is a variety of general hyperbole (*al-mubālaghah* / المبالغة) and is used – as Abū Bakr al-Baqillānī states – for emphasis (*ta'kīd* / التأكيد).[250] A hyperbole is a type of figurative language. It is often confused with a simile or a metaphor because in most cases two objects are compared. The difference is that a hyperbole is an exaggeration.

Function:

1) To emphasise a particular point.
2) To address and highlight a matter of importance;
3) To evoke strong feelings and impressions on the listener/reader;

Effect:

1) Rhetorical effect.

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[250] al-Bāqillānī, *I'jāz al-Qur'ān*, pp.84-85.

2) Emphasis;
3) Maintains the listener's attention with dramatic effect.

Example: Abū Tammām:

لو يعلمِ الركنُ من قد جاء يلثمُه
لخرَّ يلثمُ منه موطِئَ القَدَمِ...

Had the pillar known who had come to kiss it / [the pillar itself] would have collapsed in order to kiss the place where its [visitor's] foot had trodden.[251]

It is not actually the case that a pillar can helplessly fall into prostration and kiss a particular place. It is used by Abū Tammām for effect through employment of exaggeration.

Example of hyperbole in 7:40: 'Heaven's gate will not swing open for those who reject Our signs nor will they enter the Garden until a camel can be led through the eye of a needle; that is how we recompense the wrongdoers'.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا وَاسْتَكْبَرُوا عَنْهَا لَا تُفَتَّحُ لَهُمْ أَبْوَابُ السَّمَاءِ وَلَا يَدْخُلُونَ الْجَنَّةَ حَتَّىٰ يَلِجَ الْجَمَلُ فِي سَمِّ الْخِيَاطِ ۚ وَكَذَٰلِكَ نَجْزِي الْمُجْرِمِينَ

The declaration that those who reject Allah's signs will not enter Paradise <until a camel can be led through the eye of a needle> is extreme hyperbole and is not intended to be taken literally but figuratively. The purpose is to finalise in the mind of the reader or listener that rejection of Allah's signs closes for definite the doors to Heaven. Thus it is emphatic in its effect.

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[251] al-Bāqillānī, *I'jāz al-Qur'ān*, p.77 and A. Von Grunebaum, *A Tenth-Century Arabic Document of Literary Theory and Criticism*, p.15.

§2. Lexical Embellishment

Lexical embellishments are those features of language that beautify speech or composition, and in the case of the Qur'ān, is one of the most unique contributing factors to its inimitability. The Qur'ān is saturated with both semantic and lexical embellishments and Muslim scholars have studied them extensively in seminal works. Below are two tropes of lexical embellishment (*al-badīᶜ al-lughwīyyah*) as well as their stated functions and effects as found in the Qur'ān: *sajᶜ* and *jināS*.

§2.1. Rhymed Prose

— السجع / *Sajᶜ* / Rhythmical Prose/Accented Rhyme/Assonance:

Function:

1. To generate internal rhythm.
2. To generate melody.
3. To energise the content.
4. To facilitate memorisation.

Effects:

1. Beauty.
2. Rhythm.
3. Psychological and aesthetic impact.
4. Force of expression.
5. Elevated style.
6. Poetic.

Sajᶜ is also known as 'rhymed prose'. When looking at Qur'ānic *sajᶜ* forms, there are certain aspects to be aware of:

1] —— *cola*, i.e. that which separates one verse from another.

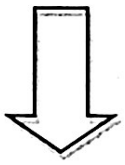
2] —— *rhyme*, i.e. correspondence of sound between words or ending of words;

3] —— *accent*, i.e. the stress of the syllable in a particular word;

4] —— *meter*, i.e. a unit or length of feet in a line.

The evident aspects of *saj*ᶜ are:

WORDS	RHYTHMIC PARALLELS	HARMONY OF PATTERN	COLA
كلمة | لفظة	معتدل	موازنة	آية



In *saj*ᶜ, there is a concentrated use of syntactic and semantic parallelism, alliteration, paronomasia and other rhetorical features. Qur'ānic *saj*ᶜ exhibits certain structural patterns and can be reduced to approximately five broad patterns:[252]

[1] In the first pattern, parallel *saj*ᶜ*ah* within a *saj*ᶜ unit are of equal length, e.g. 93:9-10:

Saj*ᶜ*ah **(rhyme unit)**	**Q. 93:9-10**
4	فَأَمَّا ٱلْيَتِيمَ فَلَا تَقْهَرْ
4	وَأَمَّا ٱلسَّآئِلَ فَلَا تَنْهَرْ

This is the most common form of *saj*ᶜ that evidently exhibits direct rhythmical parallelism, which medieval Muslim critics termed *iᶜtidāl*, "balance".[253]

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[252] According to D. J. Stewart, "*Saj*ᶜ in the *Qur'ān:* Prosody and Structure", *Journal of Arabic Literature*, pp.21.101–139 and idem, "Rhymed Prose" in *Encyclopaedia of the Qur'ān*, 4:476-484.

[253] Stewart, "Rhymed Prose", 4:477.

[2] The second pattern has a unit of roughly parallel *saj^{c}ah*, with following *saj^{c}ah* slightly longer than the preceding ones but there is no absolute rhythmical parallelism.[254]

Saj^{c}ah **(rhyme unit)**	**Q. 25:11-13**
8	بَلْ كَذَّبُواْ بِٱلسَّاعَةِ وَأَعْتَدْنَا لِمَن كَذَّبَ بِٱلسَّاعَةِ سَعِيراً
9	إِذَا رَأَتْهُمْ مِّن مَّكَانٍ بَعِيدٍ سَمِعُواْ لَهَا تَغَيُّظاً وَزَفِيراً
9	وَإِذَآ أُلْقُواْ مِنْهَا مَكَاناً ضَيِّقاً مُّقَرَّنِينَ دَعَوْاْ هُنَالِكَ ثُبُوراً
8	لاَّ تَدْعُواْ ٱلْيَوْمَ ثُبُوراً وَاحِداً وَٱدْعُواْ ثُبُوراً كَثِيراً

[3] A third type has a final *saj^{c}ah* in a group of parallel *saj^{c}ah* that is slightly shorter than the preceding ones thus giving a kind of descending scale. Medieval Muslim critics considered this type of *saj^{c}* structure least ideal but it nevertheless appears in the Qur'ān occasionally:[255]

Saj^{c}ah **(rhyme unit)**	**Q. 114:4-6**
4	مِن شَرِّ ٱلْوَسْوَاسِ ٱلْخَنَّاسِ
5	ٱلَّذِى يُوَسْوِسُ فِي صُدُورِ ٱلنَّاسِ
3	مِنَ ٱلْجِنَّةِ وَٱلنَّاسِ

[4] A fourth pattern has two *saj^{c}ah* of equal length followed by a third roughly equal in length to the previous pair combined:[256]

Saj^{c}ah **(rhyme unit)**	**Q. 69:30-32**
2	خُذُوهُ فَغُلُّوهُ
3	ثُمَّ ٱلْجَحِيمَ صَلُّوهُ
6	ثُمَّ فِي سِلْسِلَةٍ ذَرْعُهَا سَبْعُونَ ذِرَاعاً فَاسْلُكُوهُ

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[254] Ibid., 4:477-478.
[255] Ibid., 4:478-479.
[256] Ibid., 4:478.

[5] The fifth pattern is a "pyramidal form", where length in successive *saj'ah* within a *saj'* unit increases steadily in ascending transition:

Saj'ah **(rhyme unit)**	**Q. 93:1-3**
1	وَٱلضُّحَىٰ
3	وَٱلَّيْلِ إِذَا سَجَىٰ
4	مَا وَدَّعَكَ رَبُّكَ وَمَا قَلَىٰ

An Example: Chapter 113

Saj'ah **(rhyme unit)**	**Q. 113:1-4**
-ahad	أَحَدٌ
-samad	ٱلصَّمَدُ
-yulad	يُولَدْ
-ahad	أَحَدٌ

The above is an instance of *saj'* ('rhymed prose/rhythmical prose/assonance/accent rhyme/cadenced prose') where the final consonant (letter/radical) – in this case – *d*/د – is largely the same within a regular and rhythmic composition.[257] The *saj'* composition gives a regularity, beauty, succinctness and effectiveness to the chapter generating a resonance within the listener.[258]

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[257] Devin J. Stewart, "*Saj'* in the Qur'ān: Prosody and Structure" in *Journal of Arabic Literature*, 21 (1990), pp.101-139 and R. Drory, *Models and Contacts: Arabic Literature and its Impact on Medieval Jewish Culture*, pp.105-111.

[258] There was some controversy over the notion of *saj'* among early Muslim literary specialists. Many scholars denied the Qur'ān contained *saj'* because they wanted to disassociate it from any mundane discourse or literature. Also, *saj'* was the form of the pre-

Islamic soothsayers that subordinated meaning to mere rhyme and so the suggestion that the Qur'ān parodied a faulty form was unthinkable. Furthermore, the Qur'ān neither exhibits complete rhyme and poetry nor complete blank verse and prose but a fusion of both. See Boullata, *Literary Structures of Religious Meaning*, pp.246-247, n.4.

§2.2 Paranomasia/Polyptoton

— الجناس / *jināṣ* / Paranomasia/Polyptoton

This is a stylistic scheme where words derived from the same root are either completely repeated or partially repeated, i.e. with morphological and orthographical variation.

Function:

1. To generate internal rhythm.
2. To generate melody.
3. To generate rhyme structures.
4. To facilitate memorisation.

Effects:

1. Beauty.
2. Rhythm.
3. Psychological and aesthetic impact.
4. Force of expression.
5. Elevated style.
6. Poetic effect.

There are many types of *jināṣ* discussed by Muslim scholars. Below are three types, amongst others, found in the Qur'ān:

Incomplete *jināṣ*	**Morphological *jināṣ***	**Complete *jināṣ***
In the case of the *incomplete jināṣ*, it is where two lexical items are different in one letter and gives an effect of rhythm and movement to the verse.	This is a scheme of stylistic emphasis where words derived from the same root are repeated within the textual environment (also known as *polyptoton*).	This is where two lexical items are distributed in a given sentence but with semantically divergent meanings (also known as a 'pun').

Q.107:6 '*...wa yamnaᶜūna 'l-māᶜūn*': here is an instance of *incomplete jinās* with يمنعون and ماعون.

The variation in the above example is in the replacement of one letter ا and ن and is used to highlight the miserliness and stinginess of the Quraysh.

Q.109:2 '*wa lā antum ᶜābidūna mā aᶜbud* ...': here there is morphological *jinās* in عَابِدُونَ and أَعْبُد

The variation serves to reinforce the overall message of utter distinction between belief and disbelief.[259]

Q.53:1&3 '*wa 'l-najm idhā hawā...wa mā yanṭiqu ᶜan al-hawā*': here *jinās* occurs on the word هوى

The first occurrence refers to 'setting' or 'disappearing' whereas the second occurrence refers to 'desires' and 'whims'.

Q.111:1&3 '*abī lahab...dhāt lahab...*': The *jinās* here occurs through repetition of لَهَبٍ

The first occurrence is of the agnomen suggesting scorn and belittling and the second occurrence is a description of his ultimate state in the Hereafter which is Hellfire. Thus through *jinās*, the Qur'ān makes doubly clear the fate of Abū Lahab.

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259 For a small *tafsīr* of this *sūrah*, see http://daralnicosia.wordpress.com/2012/06/07/a-tafsir-of-surat-al-ikhlas/

Chapter 9

Further Embellishments: *Delving Deeper...*



The Qur'ān is unmatched in its semantic and lexical embellishments. In what follows, more embellishments will be examined and analysed in order to further build appreciation of the Qur'ānic inimitability and to evaluate the relevance they have in meaning-production as well as effectively conveying the communicator's intent.

Examples:

1.

—— تجريد / Extraction / *tajrīd*

This is a process of extracting from someone or something an essential quality or property related to it and then emphasising that property or quality in order to mock and create a form of exaggeration.

Example: Allah states in the Qur'ān 41:28:

ذَٰلِكَ جَزَاءُ أَعْدَاءِ اللَّهِ النَّارُ ۖ لَهُمْ فِيهَا دَارُ الْخُلْدِ ۖ جَزَاءً بِمَا كَانُوا بِآيَاتِنَا يَجْحَدُونَ

'That is a recompense for the enemies of Allah – Hellfire; in it will be for them an everlasting abode as a recompense for deliberately rejecting Our signs'

The exegete Muḥī al-Dīn al-Darwīsh writes:

> In the verse where its states 'in it will be for them an everlasting abode' is an example of *tajrīd* which is to make one thing consist of another thing like it in that quality as a form of exaggeration for completely

possessing it. The word دارْ has been extracted (منتزع) or made to consist as part of the Hellfire from which the extraction has been made (منتزع منه) and has been given the name دارُ الْخُلْدِ ('the everlasting abode')...[260]

وفي قوله 'لهم فيها دار الخلد' تجريد، وهو أن ينتزع من أمر ذي بال صفة أمر آخر مثله في تلك الصفة مبالغة لكماله فيها، فقد انتزع من النار دارا أخرى سماها دار الخلد.

What is the purpose of informing the reader here in the verse that the inhabitants of Hell – which is itself the place of no end and everlasting torment and separation from Allah – will be in 'an everlasting abode of torment' (*dār al-khuld*)? Allah has abstracted from Hellfire another abode of everlasting punishment and continual torment in order to indicate the utter confusion, turmoil, danger, inexplicable pain, sheer immeasurable and chaotic torture in the place. It is used for exaggeration and heightened sense of appreciating the severity of the place as well as to frighten and scare.

2.

—— مراعاة النظير / Pairing / *murāᶜāt al-naẓīr*

و هي عبارة عن الجمع بين المتشابهات

al-Sakkākī defines this trope as: "that which expresses a pairing of two ambiguous terms..."[261] This is when two lexical items within a sentence are paired although on the surface there appears to be no semantic correlation but deeper investigation reveals there is.

Example: Allah states in the Qur'ān 6:103: 'Vision perceives Him not, but He perceives [all] vision; and He is the Subtle, the Acquainted.'

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[260] See al-Darwīsh, *Maᶜānī al-Qur'ān wa Iᶜrābuhu* taken from the definition in Saᶜd al-Dīn al-Taftāzānī's *Mukhtaṣar al-Maᶜānī*, 1:260.
[261] al-Sakkākī, *Miftāḥ al-ᶜUlūm*, p.534.

لَا تُدْرِكُهُ الْأَبْصَارُ وَهُوَ يُدْرِكُ الْأَبْصَارَ ۖ وَهُوَ اللَّطِيفُ الْخَبِيرُ

Allah explicitly negates any possibility of either actually seeing Him or being able to encompass Him, fathom Him or comprehend Him. Allah then immediately affirms that He comprehends and sees all visions and sights. And then two Divine epithets are mention ٱللَّطِيفُ ('the subtle') and ٱلْخَبِيرُ ('all aware', 'all knowing'). How this is an example of semantic pairing is as follows:[262]

لاَ تُدْرِكُهُ ٱلأَبْصَٰرُ

ٱللَّطِيفُ

Allah cannot be comprehended or perceived; He is unfathomable; this indicates His uniqueness and distinctness. This connects with the divine epithet ٱللَّطِيفُ because one of the connotations of the word is to be 'subtle', 'special', 'delicately complex' and 'fine'. Thus eyes or intellects cannot comprehend Him because He is so Unique and Special and Subtle. Thus there is a semantic relation between both segments of the verse.

وَهُوَ يُدْرِكُ ٱلأَبْصَٰرَ

ٱلْخَبِيرُ

Allah comprehends all visions, sight and perceptions. How this connects with the divine epithet ٱلْخَبِيرُ is that Allah being all aware, all seeing and knowing – i.e. His Omniscience – means or involves being able to perceive everything. Thus there is a semantic relation between both segments of the verse.

3.

—— تشخيص / Personification / *tashkhīṣ*

This is when abstract entities or ideas are given human qualities or abilities often to create dramatic effect and to emphasise and magnify a point.

Example 33:72: 'Indeed, we offered the Trust to the heavens and the earth and the mountains, and they declined to bear it

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[262] See al-Maydānī, *Balāghat al-ᶜArabiyyah*, 1:756.

and feared it; but human beings [undertook to] bear it. Indeed, he was unjust and ignorant.'

إِنَّا عَرَضْنَا الْأَمَانَةَ عَلَى السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَالْجِبَالِ فَأَبَيْنَ أَنْ يَحْمِلْنَهَا وَأَشْفَقْنَ مِنْهَا وَحَمَلَهَا الْإِنْسَانُ ۖ إِنَّهُ كَانَ ظَلُومًا جَهُولًا

The verse commences with the emphatic particle in order to give importance to the information that is to follow.[263] The verse then employs personification – or according to other commentators *tamthīl* ('exemplification', 'representation', 'likening', 'comparison') – in order to magnify the seriousness of the trust (*amānah*) given by Allah to all humankind.[264] The 'trust' mentioned here in the verse is said to be many things such as all Islamic obligations, monotheism as well as the *khilāfah* amongst other interpretive possibilities.[265] Also, the reason why السماوات والأرض is specifically mentioned is because both are cognitively immediate as, i.e. their vastness is well known and the mountain is joined to them grammatically because the mountain is the largest physical structure visible to the eye.[266] The therefore personification is employed to heighten the seriousness of the trust imparted by Allah of carrying Islam and establishing Allah's commandments and that human beings are negligent and unaware of the enormity of both the task and the action required to complete it.

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[263] Ibn ᶜĀshūr, *al-Taḥrīr wa'l-Tanwīr*, 23:125.

[264] Ibid., 23:125.

[265] Ibid., 23:125-126: "[...] And it is said it refers to the khilāfah of Allah on the earth which was given to human beings..."

فقيل: الأمانة الطاعة، وقيل: الصلاة، وقيل: مجموع الصلاة والصوم والاغتسال، وقيل: جميع الفرائض، وقيل: الانقياد إلى الدين، وقيل: حفظ الفرج، وقيل: الأمانة التوحيد، أو دلائل الوحدانية، أو تجليات الله بأسمائه، وقيل: ما يؤتمن عليه، ومنه الوفاء بالعهد، ومنه انتفاء الغش في العمل، وقيل: الأمانة العقل، وقيل: الخلافة، أي خلافة الله في الأرض التي أودعها الإنسان كما قال تعالى

[266] Ibid., 23:126.

4.

—— اللف و النشر / Epanodos / *al-laff wa'l-nashr*

This is when there is a recapitulation of the main ideas of a speech, clause or sentence – especially in reverse order.[267]

Example: **28:73**: 'And out of His mercy He made for you the night and the day that you may rest therein and [by day] seek from His bounty and [that] perhaps you will be grateful.'

وَمِنْ رَحْمَتِهِ جَعَلَ لَكُمُ اللَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ لِتَسْكُنُوا فِيهِ وَلِتَبْتَغُوا مِنْ فَضْلِهِ وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ

	Recapitulated Segment	**Effect**
Night/الليل	لتَسْكُنوا فيه	The effect is an elaboration of each object of Allah's bounty. The day and the night are mentioned followed by an elaboration of why each entity is a bounty. The night is a time of rest, repose and relaxation and the day time a means of earning one's livelihood. Another effect of epanodos is to create rhythm and movement of sound.
Day/النهار	لِتَبْتَغوا مِنْ فَضْله	

[267] al-Maydānī, *Balāghat al-ᶜArabiyyah*, 1:770.

Chapter 10

Meaning, Structure and Texture: *Qur'ānic Discourse World*

In the Qur'ān, semantics (meaning) is generated by grammatical elements (syntax) within a verse configuration.[268] Thus, *structure creates meaning* in the reader or listener. Syntactic elements like prepositions, particles and repetition for example – amongst a host of other features – are employed often to generate meaning. Below are a few examples of how the Qur'ān effectively uses structure or internal form to create interrelated meaning.

§1. Prepositions and Repetitions

1.

——— الحروف / *ḥurūf* / **Prepositions**:

Prepositions have a number of functions in Arabic although by themselves they have no single constituent meaning unless in relation to a noun or verb; nevertheless they act as meaning producers within a text and the Qur'ān is no different in that regard.[269]

Example in Q. 34:24: 'Say, "Who provides for you from the heavens and the earth?" Say, "Allah. And indeed, we or you are either upon guidance or in clear error"...'

قُلْ مَنْ يَرْزُقُكُمْ مِنَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۖ قُلِ اللَّهُ ۙ وَإِنَّا أَوْ إِيَّاكُمْ لَعَلَىٰ هُدًى أَوْ فِي ضَلَالٍ مُبِينٍ

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[268] Abdul-Raof, *Qur'an Translation*, p.48.

[269] On particles and prepositions, see the Ibn Hishām's *al-Mughnī al-Labīb*, 1:115-351 and A. Gully, *Grammar and Semantics in Medieval Arabic*, pp.138-192.

The structure of the verse has two prepositions على employed with the word هُدًى and فِي with the word ضَلَٰلٍ where each has its own meaning.[270] The shift in prepositions is semantically motivated to indicate a change in meaning. See table below:

هُدًى and على	ضَلَٰلٍ and فِي
'The right path', 'guidance'; the preposition here indicates an elevated position which suits the emotive expression in the verse. The preposition also suggests firmness on the path with struggle and hard work as well as a perspective that is more encompassing, broad and enlightened and with scope because it is from a raised position.[271]	'Misguidance', 'error'; the preposition here indicates a low position suits the emotive expression in the verse. The Preposition also suggests being engulfed and submerged in error and misguidance, i.e. darkness and that there is no elevated or enlightened position or perspective because it is a low and relegated position.[272]

2.

——— التكرار / *takrār* / **Repetition**

'Repetition' (*takrār*) is a unique feature of the Arabic language and carries a number of functions such as:

Functions:

1) Emphasising a point.
2) Stressing an important matter.
3) Affirming something as the case.

Effects:

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[270] Abdul-Raof, *Qur'an Translation*, pp.48-49.
[271] Ibid., p.48.
[272] Ibid., p.49.

1) Reinforces contents in the reader/listener.
2) Adds rhythm.
3) Adds dramatic effect.

One research paper summarises the repetition and its importance as follows:

> Since repetition is a style widely used in the Quran, some people who lack literary knowledge have supposed that it mars the eloquence and should be avoided in expression of the meanings. This mistaken idea prompted the Quranic commentators and scholars to expound the purpose of the repetitions in the Quran, and to explain their importance. For repetition is a style widely used in Arabic, for emphasis and for impressing intended meanings on the mind, and is an element of good style and a sort of eloquence...[273]

There are three major or common types of repetition evidently found in the Qur'ān and they are:

[1] Adjacent repetition: "This sort includes repetition of words, phrases, or whole verses..."[274]

[2] Separated repetition: "This includes repetition of a phrase, or a verse, or several..."[275]

[3] Meaning repetition:

> The repetition of meaning is the restating in different words and in different places of the same story or

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[273] G. al-Hamad, "The Purpose of Repetition in the Qur'an According to the *Risale-i-Nur*", *IBS* at http://www.iikv.org/academy/index.php/sympeng/article/view/955/1448

[274] Ibid.

[275] Ibid.

> subject. In this way a story is frequently repeated, and its repetition is apparent.[276]

Below are examples of each with their importance and meaning taken from the classical Qur'ān commentaries:

[1]
Adjacent Repetition

78:4-5:

{ كَلاَّ سَيَعْلَمُونَ } * { ثُمَّ كَلاَّ سَيَعْلَمُونَ }

'Verily, they shall soon [come to] know! / Verily, verily, they shall soon [come to] know!'

الكلمة قد تكررها العرب على التغليظ و التخويف، فهذا من ذلك...

> Sometimes in order to emphasize a meaning and intensify it, the Arabs repeat a word verbatim; this verse is such a repetition...[277]

[2]
Separated Repetition

54:17:

{وَلَقَدْ يَسَّرْنَا ٱلْقُرْآنَ لِلذِّكْرِ فَهَلْ مِن مُّدَّكِرٍ}

'And We have indeed made the Qur'ān easy to understand and remember; then is there any who will receive admonition?'

للادكار والاتعاظ بأن صرفنا فيه أنواع المواعظ والعبر، أو للحفظ بالاختصار وعذوبة اللفظ. { فَهَلْ مِن مُّدَّكِرٍ } متعظ.

> ...in order to remind and warn in that it directs us towards different types of admonition and lessons to learn; or to reinforce it in the mind due to its brevity and freshness of words...[278]

[3] Meaning Repetition

Ibn Qutaybah (d. 276/889) writes:

> ...representatives of the Arab tribes would come to the Prophet to become Muslims, and the Muslims would read and teach them a part of the Qur'ān. The amount

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[276] Ibid.
[277] al-Farrā', *Maᶜānī al-Qur'ān*, 3:287.
[278] al-Bayḍāwī, *Anwār al-Tanzīl*, 2:449.

> they learnt was sufficient for them. Similarly, the Prophet would send envoys to the tribes to teach them various chapters. If the stories about the peoples of the past had not been scattered through various chapters and had not been repeated, the story of Moses would have been related to one group, the story of Jesus to another, the story of Noah to another and the story of Lūṭ to yet another. But through His grace and mercy, Almighty God broadcasted these stories to every corner of the earth by scattering them through the chapters, establishing them in everyone's' minds, and through the stories manifested the message He wished to give to all the people who lived contemporaneously with the Qur'ān...[279]

وكانت وفود العرب ترد على رسول الله، صلّى الله عليه وسلم للإسلام، فيقرئهم المسلمون شيئا من القرآن، فيكون ذلك كافيا لهم وكان يبعث إلى القبائل المتفرّقة بالسّور المختلفة، فلو لم تكن الأنباء والقصص مثنّاة ومكرّرة لوقعت قصّة موسى إلى قوم، وقصة عيسى إلى قوم، وقصة نوح إلى قوم، وقصة لوط إلى قوم. فأراد الله، بلطفه ورحمته، أن يشهر هذه القصص في أطراف الأرض ويلقيها في كل سمع، ويثبتها في كل قلب، ويزيد الحاضرين في الإفهام والتحذير

Example: Q. 12:4

The Prophet Yūsuf tells his father that he had a dream in which the stars, or according to some translations, the planets were in prostration to him out of reverence and glory. The Qur'ān relates the verse as follows: '[Of these stories mention] when Joseph said to his father, "O my father, indeed I have seen [in a dream] eleven stars and the sun and the moon; I saw them prostrating to me"...'

إِذْ قَالَ يُوسُفُ لِأَبِيهِ يَا أَبَتِ إِنِّي رَأَيْتُ أَحَدَ عَشَرَ كَوْكَبًا وَالشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ رَأَيْتُهُمْ لِي سَاجِدِينَ

The verb رأى has been repeated twice in the verse without any obvious need. Thus, the repetition appears superfluous.[280] However, there is meaning generated by the

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[279] Ibn Qutaybah, *Ta'wīl Mushkil al-Qur'ān*, pp.232-234.

[280] M. Ali, *al-Tikrār al-Lafẓī fī'l-Qur'ān* ('Word Repetition in the Qur'ān'), *Journal of King Saud University* (19), pp.25-28.

repetition which is: The Prophet Yūsuf saw what he saw in a dream and in order to eliminate the possibility of it being delusional or plainly false, repetition of the verb <I saw> stands to indicate certainty and confirmation of the vision or dream. Thus, Yūsuf "resorted to the feature in the language that gives his argument the confirmation that it needs."[281] The repetition serves to create, on one level, strong emphasis that what Yūsuf saw was indeed real, i.e. it was veridical.[282] However, on a deeper level, it indicates Allah's direct involvement in causing the dream, i.e. it is a confirmation of Yūsuf's Prophethood (*nubuwwah*) and therefore its veracity because of this Divine involvement. Later in the *sūrah*, what Yūsuf 'saw' subsequently occurred.[283]

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[281] Ibid., p.27.
[282] Ibid., p.27.
[283] Ibn ᶜĀshūr comments:

> The clause 'I saw them' emphasises the statement 'I saw eleven bodies prostrating to me' which is used when relating visions and dreams where visions are corroborated with verbal emphasis or further clarification as if the listener of the dream were seeking more information on what was seen... *al-Taḥrīr wa 'l-Tanwīr*, 13:207.

وجملة { رأيتهم } مؤكدة لجملة { رأيتُ أحدَ عَشَرَ كوكباً }، جيء بها على الاستعمال في حكاية المرائي الحلمية أن يعاد فعل الرؤية تأكيداً لفظياً أو استئنافاً بيانياً، كأن سامع الرؤيا يستزيد الرائي أخباراً عمّا رأى

§2. Qur'ānic Texture

'Texture' is that which forms when micro-level features of discourse such as syntax and rhetoric are employed together in an effective way. A simple way of explaining the term may be to describe how a text 'hangs together' or in linguistics, *cohesion*.[284] The 'constituents' that engineer cohesion within the Qur'ān and therefore give it its unique texture are the *linguistic* and *rhetorical*:[285]

[1] Linguistic (syntax + semantics)	**[2] Rhetorical**
1. Conjunction.	1. Antiphrasis.
2. Ellipsis.	2. Chiasmus.
3. Hysteron/proteron.	3. Epizeuxis.
4. Reference (anaphoric, cataphoric and exophoric).	4. Hyperbole.
5. Substitution.	5. Imagery.
6. Thematic structure.	6. Polyptoton.
7. 'Ties' (recursive/phrasal).	7. Simile.
8. Structures (parallelistic and contrastive).[286]	8. Synecdoche.
	9. Alliteration.
	10. Cadence.
	11. Isocolon.
	12. Metaphor.
	13. Metonymy.
	14. Onomatopoeia.[287]

[284] Abdul-Raof, *Qur'an Translation*, pp.106-107.
[285] Ibid., pp.107-109.
[286] Ibid., pp.124-138.
[287] Ibid., pp.113-124.

§2.1. Some Rhetorical Examples:

[1] Antiphrasis: An antiphrasis (from the Greek: ἀντί ..., *antí*, "opposite" and fr£ φράσις , *phrásis*, "diction") is a **figure of speech** (not to be taken literally) in which a word or phrase is used to mean the opposite of its usual sense, especially **ironically** or sarcastically.

Function:

1) Enrich the discourse.
2) Dramatic effect.
3) Destroy and discredit some point

Effects:

1) Rebuke
2) Hostility.
3) Humour.
4) Psychologically impactive to audience.

Example: Q. 44:49: '...you will taste it! – O Mighty and Noble One!'

ذُقْ إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَزِيزُ الْكَرِيمُ

Here, the epithets <Mighty and Noble> are described of the recipient but in a sarcastic way. It is also a reference to Abū Jahl's haughty proclamations to the Prophet that none was mightier or nobler than him and that Muḥammad and his Lord had no power over him whatsoever.[288]

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[288] al-Rāzī comments:

> A number of aspects have been mentioned regarding this. One aspect is that the person addressed is mocked sarcastically giving the meaning of: 'you are the opposite of what is mentioned'... *Mafātīḥ al-Ghayb*, 17:216.

[2] Chiasmus: chiasmus (from the **Greek**: χιάζω, *chiázō*, "to shape like the letter **X**") is a **figure of speech** in which two or more **clauses** are related to each other through a reversal of structures in order to make a larger point, i.e. repetition of ideas and meanings in inverted order. This is a unique and evident feature of Qur'ānic discourse.

Function:

1) Use structure to generate meaning.
2) Use sound to generate meaning.

Effect:

1) Symmetry of text parts.
2) Euphony.
3) Rhythm.
4) Cohesion.

Example: Q. 30:19: '...it is He who brings out the living from the dead and the dead from the living...'

يُخْرِجُ الْحَيَّ مِنَ الْمَيِّتِ وَيُخْرِجُ الْمَيِّتَ مِنَ الْحَيِّ وَيُحْيِي الْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا ۚ وَكَذَٰلِكَ تُخْرَجُونَ

The structure is in the form of 'ABBA'. We have the initial clause of اَلْحَيَّ /اَلْمَيِّتِ and then اَلْمَيِّتِ /اَلْحَيَّ which produces not only a rhythm but makes a further point that Allah has mastery over his creation by mentioning both forward and reverse processes or any phenomena where something lifeless produces something living and something living produces something lifeless. This eliminates any doubts as to the possibility of it occurring as well as indicating Allah's power and Majesty.

وذكروا فيه وجوهاً الأول: أنه يخاطب بذلك على سبيل الاستهزاء، والمراد إنك أنت بالضد منه

[3] Isocolon: this is a **figure of speech** in which **parallelism** (giving parts of a sentence the same form) is reinforced by members that are of the same length.

Function:

1) Generate form.
2) Generate repeated unit.
3) To reinforce a point.
4) To imprint in the mind.

Effects:

1) Rhythm.
2) Symmetry.
3) Euphonic effect.
4) Impacts listener.
5) Aesthetic reception.

Example: Q. 56:28-30: 'they will be among lote-trees without thrones / among *Ṭalḥ* trees with flowers and fruits one on top of the other / in long extended shades...'

Register	Words	Verse no.
-d	3	28
-d	3	29
-d	3	30

فِي سِدْرٍ مَخْضُودٍ
وَطَلْحٍ مَنْضُودٍ
وَظِلٍّ مَمْدُودٍ

Each verse has three units or lexical items (conjunction + noun + adjective). This gives the *sūrah* a definite pattern and symmetry. It also affords the textual environment unique euphony and measured pace when listening or reading.

§2.2. Some Linguistic Examples:

[1] Conjunction:

—— و ('and') and ثم ('then', 'thereafter') connectives: these are linguistic devices that join parts of texts together to give it cohesion (i.e. a unit of meaning).

Function:

1) Join parts of sentences together.
2) To link different aspects into a whole.

Effects:

1) Creates flow of an idea or meaning.
2) Establishes continuity.
3) Establishing a relationship between parts.
4) Eliminate ambiguity.

Example: Q. 17:70: 'And We have certainly honored the children of Adam and carried them on the land and sea and provided for them of the good things and preferred them over much of what We have created, with [definite] preference.'

وَلَقَدْ كَرَّمْنَا بَنِي آدَمَ وَحَمَلْنَاهُمْ فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ وَرَزَقْنَاهُمْ مِنَ الطَّيِّبَاتِ وَفَضَّلْنَاهُمْ عَلَىٰ كَثِيرٍ مِمَّنْ خَلَقْنَا تَفْضِيلًا

Here in the verse, the connective و is repeated 5 times, sentence-initially, in order to link together the package of blessings Allah has granted human beings. He has honoured them, enabled them to make use of the land and sea and provided them with the most positive sustenance. He has also favoured them over much of creation. The consecutive connective also generates rhythm and flow and leads the reader/listener to the conclusion that Allah is Most bountiful.

Example: Q. 40:67: 'It is He who created you from dust, then from a sperm-drop, then from a clinging clot; then He brings

you out as a child; then [He develops you] that you reach your [time of] maturity, then [further] that you become elders. And among you is he who is taken in death before [that], so that you reach a specified term; and perhaps you will use reason...'

هُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ مِنْ نُطْفَةٍ ثُمَّ مِنْ عَلَقَةٍ ثُمَّ يُخْرِجُكُمْ طِفْلًا ثُمَّ لِتَبْلُغُوا أَشُدَّكُمْ ثُمَّ لِتَكُونُوا شُيُوخًا ۚ وَمِنْكُمْ مَنْ يُتَوَفَّىٰ مِنْ قَبْلُ ۖ وَلِتَبْلُغُوا أَجَلًا مُسَمًّى وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ

The repetition of the connective ثم occurs 5 times consecutively in this single verse construction in order to identify the sequential stages of human formation and how Allah creates through biological processes if He so wishes. The connective ثم serves to link and then lock the verse within a semantical continuity thus generating a textural efficiency and effectiveness that impacts the listener and reader and affects their disposition.

[2] Thematic intra-structure:

—— إذا ('when...', 'if...'): these are particles that are used to introduce dependent adverbial clauses denoting the time or manner of the action or some event and occurrence as well as to create suspense.[289]

Example: Q.81:1-14:

1. When the sun is wrapped up [in darkness]
2. And when the stars fall, dispersing,
3. And when the mountains are removed
4. And when full-term she-camels are neglected
5. And when the wild beasts are gathered
6. And when the seas are filled with flame
7. And when the souls are paired
8. And when the girl [who was] buried alive is asked
9. For what sin she was killed
10. And when the pages are made public

[289] A. Ibrahim, *The Literary Structure of the Qur'ānic Verse*, pp.118-119.

11. And when the sky is stripped away
12. And when Hellfire is set ablaze
13. And when Paradise is brought near,
14. A soul will [then] know what it has brought [with it].

إِذَا الشَّمْسُ كُوِّرَتْ

وَإِذَا النُّجُومُ انكَدَرَتْ

وَإِذَا الْجِبَالُ سُيِّرَتْ

وَإِذَا الْعِشَارُ عُطِّلَتْ

وَإِذَا الْوُحُوشُ حُشِرَتْ

وَإِذَا الْبِحَارُ سُجِّرَتْ

وَإِذَا النُّفُوسُ زُوِّجَتْ

وَإِذَا الْمَوْءُودَةُ سُئِلَتْ

بِأَيِّ ذَنْبٍ قُتِلَتْ

وَإِذَا الصُّحُفُ نُشِرَتْ

وَإِذَا السَّمَاءُ كُشِطَتْ

وَإِذَا الْجَحِيمُ سُعِّرَتْ

وَإِذَا الْجَنَّةُ أُزْلِفَتْ

عَلِمَتْ نَفْسٌ مَا أَحْضَرَتْ

> The '*idhā* cluster clause' is important functionally and not morphosyntactically and its construction is regarded as encoding temporal relations between events often simultaneously which is fitting here as the focus is the destruction of the cosmos.[290]

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[290] See "Tafsir of Surat al-Infitar Chapter 82" at http://daralnicosia.wordpress.com/?s=infitar and cf. Robinson, *Discovering the Qur'an*, p.131.

Without the *idhā* cluster clauses – repeated here in this prelude segment 12 times – the verses would not have hung together as a unit. They serve to build the theme of the verses to a crescendo and cause a climactic conclusion in the reader/listener (v.14) of the realisation of how their life was spent. The subject-matter is the cataclysmic events that await the world and build a picture of destruction and inversion of the entire cosmic order. Moreover, the pace of the events is mimicked by the saturated employment of the connective و and the *idhā* cluster-clauses consecutively.

[3] Linguistic ties:

—— و من آياته ('and His signs...') initiators: This is a Qur'ānic specific formula and invokes the listener or reader to ponder on the signs and portents of Allah through it being repeated. The phrase serves as a connective for intra-*sūrah* coherence as well as meaning production.

Example: Q. 30:21-25:

وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ أَنْ خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا لِتَسْكُنُوا إِلَيْهَا وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَكُمْ مَوَدَّةً وَرَحْمَةً ۚ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ

21. And of His signs is that He created for you from yourselves mates that you may find tranquility in them; and He placed between you affection and mercy. Indeed in that are signs for a people who give thought.

وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ خَلْقُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافُ أَلْسِنَتِكُمْ وَأَلْوَانِكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِلْعَالِمِينَ

22. And of His signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth and the diversity of your languages and your colors. Indeed in that are signs for those of knowledge.

وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ مَنَامُكُمْ بِاللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ وَابْتِغَاؤُكُمْ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ ۚ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يَسْمَعُونَ

23. And of His signs is your sleep by night and day and your seeking of His bounty. Indeed in that are signs for a people who listen.

وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ يُرِيكُمُ الْبَرْقَ خَوْفًا وَطَمَعًا وَيُنَزِّلُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَيُحْيِي بِهِ الْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا ۚ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ

24. And of His signs is [that] He shows you the lightening [causing] fear and aspiration, and He sends down rain from the sky by which He brings to life the earth after its lifelessness. Indeed in that are signs for a people who use reason.

وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ أَنْ تَقُومَ السَّمَاءُ وَالْأَرْضُ بِأَمْرِهِ ۚ ثُمَّ إِذَا دَعَاكُمْ دَعْوَةً مِنَ الْأَرْضِ إِذَا أَنْتُمْ تَخْرُجُونَ

25. And of His signs is that the heaven and earth remain by His command. Then when He calls you with a [single] call from the earth, immediately you will come forth.

Here in these verses the phrase <And of His signs> are cohesive constituents that knit the contents to afford thematic continuity as well as reinforcing in the mind of the listener or reader the bounties of Allah whether it is themselves as human couples (v.21), the heavens and the earth (v.22), the diversity in creation (v.22), natural phenomena like the night and day (v.23) or lightening and rain (24.) for new life to grow just like how Allah will resurrect all human beings again (v.25). Thus, these signs phrases serve as data on which to observe and ponder on the Greatness and Majesty of Allah and how new life processes are formed from these phenomena and therefore in the same way resurrection will be a new life process – a new living.

CONCLUSION

Introducing Arabic Rhetoric outlined the development and sub-disciplines of classical Arabic rhetorical studies. Drawing on key monographs in English as well as a range of classical Arabic texts on the subject and their sub-disciplines, the book presented many examples from the Qur'ān and the possible explanations given for their use. A considerable section of the book explained the doctrine of *iʿjāz* and the arguments Muslim scholars put forward for it as part of their apologetic enterprise. Although the examples cited are all exclusively Qur'ānic (with the exception of a few non-Qur'ānic citations), the same techniques figure in pre-Islamic poetry as well as post-Islamic periods and so the book can serve as a reference for literary studies on Arabic poetry. Finally, the book presented a selection of the rich combination of literary structures, linguistic features and rhetorical devices contained in the Qur'ān that powerfully convey the intended information and meanings affecting the reader and listener on a cognitive and noumenal level.

Appendix

I: Sūrat al-Najm: *Analysis of Rhetorical Features*

II: Sūrat al-Ṭāriq: *Analysis of Rhetorical Features*

III: *Balāghah* Examples from the Last Ten Sūrahs

IV: A Primer on Arabic Rhetoric: *Tuḥfat al-Ikhwān fī ᶜIlm al-Bayān*

Appendix I

Sūrat al-Najm:
Analysis of Rhetorical Features



Below will be a brief analysis of *sūrah* al-Najm (53) verses 1-18 with a view to identifying key rhetorical features and their employment and application for meaning production. It will be helpful to revise grammatical terms and references when reading the *sūrah*. It will also be helpful to bear in mind the aims and rules of Arabic rhetoric while analysing the verses.

——The Structure:[291]

Verse(s)	Content
1	Impersonal oath.
2-3	Rebuttal of accusations against the Prophet, a vindication of him.
4-5	Affirmation concerning status of the Islamic message.
6-11	Account of the Prophet's vision.
12	Rhetorical question.
13-18	Account of the Prophet's second vision.

1.

——*jinās* (الجناس) / paranomasia

{ وَٱلنَّجْمِ إِذَا هَوَىٰ }and { وَمَا يَنطِقُ عَنِ ٱلْهَوَىٰ }: in the first instance (v.1), the word هَوَىٰ means 'to fall', 'to descend' or 'to rise' but in the second instance ٱلْهَوَىٰ (v.3) it refers to inclinations, whims and

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[291] Taken from Robinson's *Discovering the Qur'an*, p.140 with minor changes. See also Abdul-Raof, *The Qur'an Outlined: Theme and Text*, pp.108-109.

desires. This is an example of incomplete *jināS* that serves to afford rhyme and rhythm to the verses through morphological variation.

2.

—— *Saj*ᶜ (السجع) / Assonance, rhymed prose, cadence:

The first quarter of the *sūrah* exhibits one of the most beautiful rhyming registers with all endings in *–a* (ىٰ / except later in v.28 and vv.57-62 which adopts two different registers). The words range between 3 and 6 giving it a harmony and rhythm that lends the *sūrah* a euphony and musical flow. Below is a table of the register and number of words in order to indicate the *sajᶜah* (phrase-unit) distribution:

REGISTER	WORDS	VERSE(s) 1-18
—*a*	3	1. وَٱلنَّجْمِ إِذَا هَوَىٰ
—*a*	5	2. مَا ضَلَّ صَاحِبُكُمْ وَمَا غَوَىٰ
—*a*	4	3. وَمَا يَنطِقُ عَنِ ٱلْهَوَىٰ
—*a*	5	4. إِنْ هُوَ إِلاَّ وَحْيٌ يُوحَىٰ
—*a*	3	5. عَلَّمَهُ شَدِيدُ ٱلْقُوَىٰ
—*a*	2	6. ذُو مِرَّةٍ فَٱسْتَوَىٰ
—*a*	3	7. وَهُوَ بِٱلأُفُقِ ٱلأَعْلَىٰ
—*a*	3	8. ثُمَّ دَنَا فَتَدَلَّىٰ
—*a*	5	9. فَكَانَ قَابَ قَوْسَيْنِ أَوْ أَدْنَىٰ
—*a*	5	10. فَأَوْحَىٰ إِلَىٰ عَبْدِهِ مَآ أَوْحَىٰ
—*a*	5	11. مَا كَذَبَ ٱلْفُؤَادُ مَا رَأَىٰ
—*a*	4	12. أَفَتُمَارُونَهُ عَلَىٰ مَا يَرَىٰ
—*a*	4	13. وَلَقَدْ رَآهُ نَزْلَةً أُخْرَىٰ
—*a*	3	14. عِندَ سِدْرَةِ ٱلْمُنتَهَىٰ
—*a*	3	15. عِندَهَا جَنَّةُ ٱلْمَأْوَىٰ
—*a*	5	16. إِذْ يَغْشَىٰ ٱلسِّدْرَةَ مَا يَغْشَىٰ
—*a*	5	17. مَا زَاغَ ٱلْبَصَرُ وَمَا طَغَىٰ
—*a*	6	18. لَقَدْ رَأَىٰ مِنْ آيَاتِ رَبِّهِ ٱلْكُبْرَىٰ

3.

—— *Qasm* (قسم) / oath:

{و}: particle of oath (*qasm*); for solemnity and seriousness; used usually to exalt the object of the oath for its importance and relevance. It also indicates the greatness of Allah and His Majesty in swearing an oath by the object that indicates that Majesty. Commencing with an oath is fitting for the context as it relates to what is to follow regarding vindicating the Prophet Muḥammad.

4.

—— Polysemous word:

{النجم}: is a polysemic word which can refer to:

1) the *saḥābah*;
2) the scholars;
3) the stars;
4) the Pleiades (*thurayya*);
5) the Prophet Muḥammad;
6) the Angel Gabriel;
7) the Qur'ān;
8) the arrows/missiles of Satan.

We thus have a cluster of generated possibilities:

	وَالنَّجْمِ	إِذَا هَوَى
1.	The stars	When they fall/disappear/set.
2.	The Qur'ān	When it descends piecemeal.
3.	The arrows	When thrown down by Satan.
4.	The Angel Gabriel	When he descends.
5.	The scholars	When they are no more.
6.	The Companions	When they rise/are elevated.

5.

—— *tawbīkh* (التوبيخ) / rebuke:

{صاحبكم}: your companion; your fellow; a member of your society; a member of your community; a known individual. The word <companion> is used here for rebuke and to scold (*li 'l-tawbīkh*) the Quraysh who know the character and personality of the Prophet very well yet obstinately reject his claims and attack his integrity.[292]

6.

—— *Takrār* (التكرار) / repetition:

{ما}: the intra-sentential repetition of the particle of negation 7 times in just 17 verses: — <he did not stray>, <he did not err>, <he does not speak of his own inclinations>, <his heart did not lie>, etc. This repetition is employed to reinforce the veracity of the Prophet's vision of the Angel Gabriel as well as everything that was shown to him. It is a way of Allah personally attesting to the truth of what the Prophet is relaying to Quraysh and upholding the status of the Prophet as truthful reporter.

7.

—— *ᶜatf al-khāṣṣ ᶜalā 'l-ᶜāmm* (عطف الخاص على العام) / conjunction of the specific after the general:

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[292] In the *Ḥāshiyah* of al-Ṣāwī on the *Tafsīr al-Jalālayn* it has:

> The suggestion of the Prophet being a close companion is out of scorn and rebuke to them because they know him just like they know their own children so they have no reason to criticise him…

وعبر بلفظ الصحبة تبكيتاً لهم، وإشعاراً بأنهم يعرفونه كما يعرفون أبناءهم، فلا يليق منهم نسبته للنقص

{مَا ضَلَّ صَاحِبُكُمْ وَمَا غَوَىٰ}: Allah first makes a general negation of any form of misguidance, error or straying on the part of the Prophet in مَا ضَلَّ <he did not stray> and then mentions specifically that the Prophet did not err in delivering anything of the Message nor did he believe in anything false by mentioning مَا غَوَىٰ <he did not err>. Erring is included in misguidance and error. The reason for mentioning something specific after the general is for emphasis and reinforcing the truthfulness and veracity of the Prophet which is fitting for this segment of the *sūrah* as it is the full vindication segment.

8.

——*Ibhām* (الإبهام) / ambiguity:

{فَأَوْحَىٰ إِلَىٰ عَبْدِهِ مَآ أَوْحَىٰ}[293] and {إِذْ يَغْشَى ٱلسِّدْرَةَ مَا يَغْشَىٰ}: here Allah leaves the details of what he revealed and inspired to His Prophet as well as what covered the ٱلسِّدْرَةَ <Lote Tree> in order to indicate the exalted contents of what was revealed (i.e. Islam

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[293] al-Ālūsī comments:

> '**He inspired**' i.e. the Angel Gabriel the revelation which came down from Allah Most High to the servant of Allah. Allah – glorified is He! – said: '**that which He inspired**'. Allah did not mention any pronoun out of reverence to the revealed word and that it is an exalted thing beyond description as well as to preclude anyone from claiming it for himself as poetry or speech of soothsayers... *Rūḥ al-Maᶜānī*, 27:49.

{فَأَوْحَىٰ } أي جبريل ذلك الوحي الذي مر أنه من عند الله تعالى إلى عبد الله وإنما قال سبحانه: { مَآ أَوْحَىٰ } ولم يأت بالضمير تفخيماً لشأن المنزل وأنه شيء يجل عن الوصف فأنى يستجيز أحد من نفسه أن يقول إنه شعر أو حديث كاهن

and its laws) as well as the immensity of what the Prophet saw.[294]

9.

—— past tense meaning with present form verb:

{أَفَتُمَارُونَهُ عَلَىٰ مَا يَرَىٰ}: Here Allah is rebuking the Quraysh for denying and rejecting the report of the Prophet (see point 10 below) and the past tense is indicated through use of the present tense. This is in order to keep what was seen by the Prophet in the present, alive and fresh or to relay the contents as though they are being seen now. This is also to eliminate any possibility of the Quraysh producing an argument that perhaps the cosmic events of the *miʿrāj* did occur but now the Prophet has forgotten and cannot quite clearly remember. Such an argument would have been possible had the verb been in the perfect form.

10.

—— *istifhām* (الإستفهام) / interrogation:

The interrogation here by Allah through the interrogative particle أ stands for rebuke and rejection and hence is rhetorical without intending an answer. The rebuke is fitting for their denial and disputation with the Prophet and what he saw.

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[294] al-Ālūsī comments:

> keeping the revelation undefined is out of elevating and this is a similar example to '...**and there covered them from the sea that which covered them** [20:78]'... *Rūḥ al-Maʿānī*, 27: 48-49:
>
> وإبهام الموحى به للتفخيم فهذا نظير قوله تعالى : فَغَشِيَهُمْ مِّنَ ٱلْيَمِّ مَا غَشِيَهُمْ طه : 78

Thus, in the opening verses of *sūrah* al-Najm, a number of rhetorical features are evident. They are used fittingly for stylistic, semantic and aesthetic purposes in order to communicate the information goals and objectives; one of which is vindication of the Prophet and another is confirmation of all that he saw in his heavenly ascent.

Appendix II

Sūrat al-Ṭāriq:
Analysis of Rhetorical Features



Below will be a brief analysis of *sūrah* al-Ṭāriq (86) with a specific view to identifying some important linguistic features and their employment and application for meaning production and rhetorical effect. Identifying the function of the grammatical terms and references as well as the aims of Arabic rhetoric while reading and analysing the *sūrah* will aid the appreciation and comprehension of the contents.

—— The Structure:

Verse(s)	Content
1	Impersonal oath.
2-3	An explanation of the Star.
4	Protective agents or guardian angels for all people.
5-7	Creation of human beings and their biological origins.
8-10	Affirmation of Resurrection, Divine power and human inability and helplessness.
11-12	Additonal oath cluster.
13-14	The decisive Truth of the Qur'ān.
15-17	Divine counter-plot against the enemy scheming.

1.

—— *Qasm* (قسم) / oath:

{و}: particle of oath (*qasm*). It is used for solemnity and seriousness as well as to exalt the object of the oath for its importance and relevance. It also indicates the greatness of Allah and His Majesty in swearing an oath by the object that indicates that Majesty.

2.

——*jināS* (الجناس) / polyptoton

{ إِنَّهُمْ يَكِيدُونَ كَيْداً } and { وَأَكِيدُ كَيْداً }: v.15 and v.16 exhibit polyptoton with the words يَكِيدُونَ <they plot> and كَيْد <a plot> which are derived from the same root. This is not only for stylistic purposes but for lending rhyme and rhythm to the verses and hence adds to the euphony. It is also to denote a form of sarcasm. Sayyid Quṭb (d. 1966) explains:

> Those who were created from gushing water, then issued between the loins, brought forth without any strength, ability or will of their own, guided along their long journey by divine power and destined to that return when secrets are searched and tried and where they have no strength or support — are devising a scheme against the Prophet and the Muslims! I, the Creator who guides, preserves, directs, brings back to life and puts to trial; the Almighty; the Victor who has made the sky, the night visitor, the gushing water and man; the Maker of the heaven with its returning rain and the earth splitting with verdure; I, God, am devising a scheme of My own. So, there are the two schemes and the battle. It is, in truth, a one-sided battle but described as being between two sides for the sake of sarcasm.[295]

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[295] Quṭb, *Fī Ẓilāl al-Qur'ān*, 18:115 (tr. A. Salahi):

إنهم . هؤلاء الذين خلقوا من ماء دافق يخرج من بين الصلب والترائب . بلا حول ولا قوة ولا قدرة ولا إرادة، ولا معرفة ولا هداية. والذين تولتهم يد القدرة في رحلتهم الطويلة. والذين هم صائرون إلى رجعة تبلى فيها السرائر، حيث لا قوة لهم ولا ناصر.. إنهم هؤلاء يكيدون كيداً..وأنا . أنا المنشئ.. الهادي. الحافظ. الموجه. المعيد. المبتلي. القادر. القاهر. خالق السماء والطارق. وخالق الماء الدافق، والإنسان الناطق، وخالق السماء ذات الرجع، والأرض ذات الصدع.. أنا الله.. أكيد كيداً..فهذا كيد. وهذا كيد. وهذه هي المعركة.. ذات طرف واحد في الحقيقة.. وإن صورت ذات طرفين لمجرد السخرية والهزاء!

3.

——— *istifhām* (الإستفهام) / interrogation:

{ وَمَآ أَدۡرَاكَ مَا ٱلطَّارِقُ }: This is a perlocutionary act which is something aimed at generating a psychological impact such as persuading, rebuking, frightening, censuring or some other effect of impacting a listener's attitude and inclination. The interrogation here by Allah in v.2 through the interrogative particle أ is not for information acquisition but rhetorically stands for exalting the subject-matter (*tafkhīm* and *taᶜẓīm*).[296]

4.

——— *Kināyah* (الكناية) / metonymy:

{ يَخۡرُجُ مِنۢ بَيۡنِ ٱلصُّلۡبِ وَٱلتَّرَآئِبِ }: here, the the word ٱلصُّلۡبِ <loins> is a metonymy for a man and ٱلتَّرَآئِبِ <chest-bone> for a woman. This is in order to ornately describe the biological conception of a human being from the union of a man and women. The reference is intended to be subtle and poetic without being

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[296] On the Qur'ānic rhetorical interrogative *wa mā adrāka* ('and what will let you know?') al-Shawkānī relates:

> Sufyān said: every phrase of the Qur'ān that is of the form 'and do you know what such and such is?' (*wa mā adrāka*) is subsequently explained and answered by Allah. Whereas every phrase that is of the form 'and what will make you know' (*wa mā yudrīk*) is not subsequently answered and explained. This was mentioned by al-Farrā'... *Fatḥ al-Qadīr*, p.1642 (cf. https://daralnicosia.wordpress.com/2012/07/30/a-tafsir-of-surat-al-qadr-unveiling-the-night-of-al-qadr/).

قال سفيان: كلّ ما في القرآن من قوله :وما أدراك، فقد أدراه، وكلّ ما فيه وما يدريك فلم يدره، وكذا قال الفراء...

crass and crude.[297] Another example of *kināyah* is the word رُوَيْدًا <little> which alludes to the divine punishment awaiting those who deny the reality of the resurrection.[298]

5.

——*Ṭibāq* (الطباق) / antithesis:

This is a rhetorical device where opposite ideas or themes are put together to create a contrast effect. The contrast also creates emphasis because it is exhibited visibly through a parallel structure of opposing words and phrases. There is antithesis in the words السماء <sky> and الأرض <earth> as well as الفصل <criteron> and الهزل <jest>.[299] In the case of the latter pair, the antithesis is to highlight the Qur'ān as a criterion of Truth while negating it as a discourse of jest. It also builds in the reader/listener's mind the seriousness of the Qur'ān and the subject-matter it is warning about: reality of the Hereafter, bodily resurrection and accountability before Allah. Through *ṭibāq* then, not only is a rhythmic parallel form generated but the subject-matter under discussion is brought out emphatically in order to help the audience produce a sober judgment about it.

6.

——*Iṭnāb* (الإطناب) / verbosity:

{ فَمَهِّلِ ٱلْكَافِرِينَ أَمْهِلْهُمْ رُوَيْداً }: This is a rhetorical technique in Arabic that aims to inform the listener by multiplying lexical items (i.e. words or chains of words) than is usually required. Pragmatic functions of *iṭnāb* (i.e. where context and author's intent provide meaning) include: (a) building sympathy, appreciation and affection in the listener; (b) building reverence, respect and loftiness for the addressee or

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[297] M. Salamah, *I'rāb Juz' ʿĀmma*, p.99.
[298] Ibn ʿĀshūr, *al-Taḥrīr wa'l-Tanwīr*, 31:268-269.
[299] Salamah, *I'rāb Juz' ʿĀmma*, p.99.

some matter (*li-tafkhīm al-amr wa taᶜẓīmuhu*); (c) to achieve affirmation and emphasis (*al-takrīr/al-ta'kīd*) and (d) to provide clarification to the listener (*al-īḍāḥ baᶜd al-ibhām*).[300] The closing verse of the *sūrah* has a repetition of the imperative to offer respite to the non-believers in مَهِّلِ <give them respite> and أَمْهِلْ <offer them respite>. This is used in order for emphasis. The Prophet is told by Allah not to hasten any sort of retribution against them and to submit to Allah's plan and decree of undoing their plots and schemes.

7.

——*al-Taṣālub* (التصالب) / chiasmus:

{ خُلِقَ مِن مَّآءٍ دَافِقٍ } and { فَلْيَنظُرِ ٱلإِنسَانُ مِمَّ خُلِقَ } : vv.5-6 clearly a pairing of two verbs arranged in inverted order, e.g. A-B-B-A. So, v.5 ends with خُلِقَ <created> and v.6 immediately begins with خُلِقَ <created>. The function is to lay emphasis on what is communicated. Allah is reminding human beings of their lowly origins. By use of chiasmus as a structural and rhetorical device, Allah also puts beyond doubt the created nature of human beings.

8.

——*Sajᶜ* (السجع) / Assonance, rhymed prose, cadence:

The *sūrah* exhibits one of the most beautiful rhyming registers with a variation in its endings. The word numbers range between 2 and 6 with the exceptional register being in v.6 –ẓ (ظ). This creates a harmony and rhythm that lends the *sūrah* a beautiful euphony and balance. Below is a table of the register and number of words in order to indicate the *sajᶜah* (phrase-unit) distribution:

REGISTER WORDS VERSE(s) 1-17

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[300] al-Qazwīnī, *al-Īḍāḥ fī ᶜUlūm al-Balāghah*, pp.152-153.

1. وَالسَّمَاءِ وَالطَّارِقِ	2	—*q*
2. وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا الطَّارِقُ	4	—*q*
3. النَّجْمُ الثَّاقِبُ	2	—*b*
4. إِنْ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ لَمَّا عَلَيْهَا حَافِظٌ	6	—*ẓ*
5. فَلْيَنْظُرِ الْإِنْسَانُ مِمَّ خُلِقَ	4	—*q*
6. خُلِقَ مِنْ مَاءٍ دَافِقٍ	4	—*q*
7. يَخْرُجُ مِنْ بَيْنِ الصُّلْبِ وَالتَّرَائِبِ	5	—*b*
8. إِنَّهُ عَلَىٰ رَجْعِهِ لَقَادِرٌ	4	—*r*
9. يَوْمَ تُبْلَى السَّرَائِرُ	3	—*r*
10. فَمَا لَهُ مِنْ قُوَّةٍ وَلَا نَاصِرٍ	6	—*r*
11. وَالسَّمَاءِ ذَاتِ الرَّجْعِ	3	—^{c}
12. الْأَرْضِ ذَاتِ الصَّدْعِ	3	—^{c}
13. إِنَّهُ لَقَوْلٌ فَصْلٌ	3	—*l*
14. وَمَا هُوَ بِالْهَزْلِ	3	—*l*
15. إِنَّهُمْ يَكِيدُونَ كَيْدًا	3	—*d*
16. وَأَكِيدُ كَيْدًا	2	—*d*
17. فَمَهِّلِ الْكَافِرِينَ أَمْهِلْهُمْ رُوَيْدًا	4	—*d*

9.

—— *tawkīd* (التوكيد) / emphasis:

The particles of stress إِنَّ and لَ are paired for double emphasis and repeated twice in v.8 and v.13. This is fitting given their contextual requirement. In v.8, Allah's power to resurrect is affirmed and the particle إِنَّ and لَ are both used to close off any doubt in that. In v.13, the employment of إِنَّ and لَ are to affirm the Qur'ān as the criterion of Truth, a discourse that differentiates between what is true and what is false. The double emphasis is exacting as it is used as a response to a direct denial of something and not just a mere stress of an assertion.[301]

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[301] al-Jurjānī relates from Ibn al-Anbārī an exchange in his *Dalā'il al-I'jāz*, p.303 with no *isnād* between the renown grammarian al-

10.

—— polysemous word

The word ٱلرَّجْعِ occurs twice in the *sūrah* both with a different meaning. In the first instance (v.8), it means the resurrection of human beings by the power of Allah and in the second instance (v.11) it means the 'rain that often returns'. Both words evoke connotations of divine power and revivification in order to mentally link or highlight to the reader or listener the nature of the phenomenon of resurrection.[302] This is fitting given the context being the denial of the resurrection.

Mubarrad (d. 285/898) and the great philosopher al-Kindī (d. 257/870) regarding the various emphatic forms in Arabic:

> 'I find redundant usages in the language of the Arabs' 'Where is that?' asked al-Mubarrad. 'Arabs say: "*`Abdullāh qā'im*", then they say "*inna `Abdullāhi qā'im*" and again "*inna `Abdullāhi la-qā'im*". 'No' answered al-Mubarrad, 'meanings differ according to the differences in the use of words. The first statement only asserts the fact of Abdullāh standing, the second is an answer to a question, the third is a response to a denial of the assertion. (tr. from Ibrahim, *The Literary Structure of the Qur'ānic Verse*, p.144).

روي عن ابن الأنباريّ أنه قال: ركب الكنديّ المتفلسف إلى أبي العباس وقال له: إنّي لأجد في كلام العرب حشوا! فقال له أبو العباس: في أي موضع وجدت ذلك؟ فقال: أجد العرب يقولون: «عبد الله قائم»، ثم يقولون «إنّ عبد الله قائم»، ثم يقولون: «إنّ عبد الله لقائم»، فالألفاظ متكرّرة والمعنى واحد . فقال أبو العباس: بل المعاني مختلفة لاختلاف الألفاظ فقولهم: «عبد الله قائم»، إخبار عن قيامه وقولهم: «إنّ عبد الله قائم»، جواب عن سؤال سائل وقوله: «إنه عبد الله لقائم»، جواب عن إنكار منكر قيامه، فقد تكرّرت الألفاظ لتكرّر المعاني. قال فما أحار المتفلسف جوابا

[302] Mawdūdī in *Tafhīm al-Qur'ān* comments in his preface to this *sūrah*:

> ...it has been pointed out that just as the falling of rain from the sky and the sprouting of plants and crops

From a cursory look at *sūrah* al-Ṭāriq, a number of rhetorical devices are evident that are intentionally employed in order to enhance the communicative impact and reach of the information coded in the verses. The context of the *sūrah* determines somewhat the language, style and selection of these devices for maximal effect.

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from the earth is no child's play but a serious task, so also the truths expressed in the Qur'an are no jest but a firm and unchangeable reality. The disbelievers are involved in the misunderstanding that their plans and devices will defeat the invitation of the Qur'an, but they do not know that Allah too is devising a plan which will bring to naught all their scheming and planning. Than in one sentence the discourse has been summed up, with a word of consolation to the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) and a tacit warning to the disbelievers, saying: "Have patience for a while: let the disbelievers do their worst. Before long they will themselves realize whether they have been able to defeat the Qur'an by their scheming or the Qur'an has dominated them in the very place where they are exerting their utmost to defeat it." Reproduced from http://englishtafsir.com/Quran/86/index.html

Appendix III

Balāghah Examples from the Last Ten Sūrahs



It what follows, I will identify and outline a cluster of evident and recurring *balāghah* features in a few of the shorter *sūrahs* within *juz' ᶜāmm* (part 30 of the Qur'ān).[303] The aim is to allow an engagement with the Qur'ānic text to see the application of the *balāghah* features, the meanings they produce and the effects they have on the reader. This greatly enhances the appreciation of the Qur'ān's linguistic inimitability (*iᶜjāz*) as discussed at enormous length by the classical scholars and explained in the previous chapters.

Some of the recurring *balāghah* features that are distributed across these shorter *sūrahs* include but not restricted to:[304]

1. *Majāz* = allegory.[305]
2. *Kināyah* = metonymy.[306]

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[303] For basic references for *juz' 'amma* in English, see A. Y. Ali, *Holy Qur'an for Beginners 30th Part* (Juz Amma); A. Nawafal, *Methodological Interpretation of the Noble Qur'an Part 30 Juz Amma*; M. Ayoub, *The Awesome News: Interpretation of Juz 'Amm The Last Part of the Qur'an*; S. Quṭb, *In the Shade of the Qur'ān*, vol.18; M. S. Abdul-Rahman, *Tafsir Ibn Kathir Juz' 30* (Part 30); *Tafsir Ibn Kathir*, ed. S. Mubarakpuri, part 30 (Darussalam edn); S. Strauch, *Tafsir Ibn Kathir Juz' 'Amma* (IIPH edn); Mawdudi, *Towards Understanding the Qur'ān*, (Juz Amma Part 30); M. Shafi, *Ma'ariful Qur'an* and J. Bint Rafai, *The Qur'an: Translation and Study Juz 30 Word to Word Arabic and English*.

[304] The rhetorical aspects of the Qur'ānic verses that are discussed are underlined in the translation segments. For a good reference for much of what is outlined in this appendix, see *al-Iᶜjāz al-Balāghī fī'l-Qur'ān al-Karīm* by Salamah (1st edn. Cairo: Dār al-Āfāq al-ᶜArabiyyah, 2002).

[305] al-Qazwīnī, *al-Īḍāḥ fī ᶜUlūm al-Balāghah*, pp.205-212.

3. *Ṭibāq* = antithesis.[307]
4. *Iṭnāb* = epistrophe.[308]
5. *Iḍāfah* = the construct form.
6. *Isti^{c}ārah* = metaphor.[309]
7. *Tashbīh* = simile.[310]
8. *Ījāz* = succinctness.[311]
9. *Saj^{c}* = assonance.[312]
10. *Jinās* = polyptoton.[313]

§1. al-Fīl ('The Elephant')

{ أَلَمْ تَرَ كَيْفَ فَعَلَ رَبُّكَ بِأَصْحَابِ ٱلْفِيلِ } * { أَلَمْ يَجْعَلْ كَيْدَهُمْ فِي تَضْلِيلٍ } * { وَأَرْسَلَ عَلَيْهِمْ طَيْراً أَبَابِيلَ } * { تَرْمِيهِم بِحِجَارَةٍ مِّن سِجِّيلٍ } * { فَجَعَلَهُمْ كَعَصْفٍ مَّأْكُولٍ }

'Have you been informed or do you know o Prophet about the people of the Elephant led by the Abyssinian King Abraha that tried to destroy the Ka'ba and how your Lord dealt with them? Have you not seen how He undone their plot and annihilated them by sending against them birds in flocks, numerous and one after the other dropping hard baked stones on them leaving the attackers like dry, hollowed and chewed crops?'[314]

Some of the *balāghah* aspects of this chapter of the Qur'ān include:

***iḍāfah* / الأضافة**	***Tashbīh* / تشبيه**
'***fa^{c}ala rabbuka***...': the	'***faja^{c}alahum ka-^{c}aṣfim***

[306] Ibid, pp.241-251.
[307] Ibid, pp.258-259.
[308] Ibid, pp.151-163.
[309] Ibid, pp.212-231.
[310] Ibid, pp.164-172.
[311] Ibid, pp.142-151.
[312] Ibid, pp.296-301.
[313] For more on *jinās/tajnīs*, see al-^{c}Askarī, *Kitāb al-Ṣinā^{c}atayn*, pp.330-345 and Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Mathal al-Sā'ir*, 1:263-277.
[314] al-Māwardī, *al-Nukat wa 'l-^{c}Uyūn*, 6:338-345.

construct form 'your Lord' that here denotes the honour and respect afforded to the Prophet through his ascription with the blessed name of Allah.

ma'kūl...}': this is a *simile* which is a rhetorical mode of discourse that compares two different entities or components in order to produce some strong effect in the reader such as clarity, appeal, effectiveness and seriousness.

Here, the simile components are: [1] the likened-to (*al-mushabbah*) here *-hum*/'them'; [2] the likened (*al-mushabbah bihi*) here *ᶜaṣf ma'kūl*/'chewed corn' and [3] simile particle *–ka*/'as', 'like'.

This simile is employed to vividly depict the condition of the 'People of the Elephant' like chewed and hollowed crops i.e. destruction and utter annihilation through the interventionist act of Allah.

§2. al-Quraysh ('The Quraysh')

{ لِإِيلَٰفِ قُرَيْشٍ } * { إِيلَٰفِهِمْ رِحْلَةَ ٱلشِّتَآءِ وَٱلصَّيْفِ } * { فَلْيَعْبُدُوا۟ رَبَّ هَٰذَا ٱلْبَيْتِ } * { ٱلَّذِىٓ أَطْعَمَهُم مِّن جُوعٍ وَءَامَنَهُم مِّنْ خَوْفٍۭ }

'Because of the innumerable favours and grace given to the tribe of Quraysh[315] who make their safe travels during winter and summer in order to engage in successful trade, they should worship the Lord of this House Who detests idols so let that be a reminder to them and they should worship He Who has kept them from hunger and kept them safe in times of fear, because they are the inhabitants of the Sacred Precinct and because Allah has made them inheritors of the *Khilāfah* after the Messengers of Allah'.[316]

Some of the *balāgha* aspects of this chapter of the Qur'ān include:

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[315] The name "quraysh" can mean: [1] *tafrīsh*: being united and unified after being separated; [2] *takassub*: immersion in trade and livelihood derived from it; [3] *taftīsh*: supervisors and caretakers of the Sacred Precinct and [4] *qirsh*: shark or large predatory fish in the sea. See al-Māwardī, *al-Nukat wa 'l-ᶜUyūn*, 6:346-348:

واختلفوا في تسميتهم قريشاً على أربعة أقاويل: أحدها: لتجمعهم بعد التفرق، والتقريش التجميع، ومنه قول الشاعر:

إخوةٌ قرَّشوا الذنوب علينا في حَديثٍ مِن دَهْرِهم وقَديمِ

الثاني: لأنهم كانوا تجاراً يأكلون من مكاسبهم، والتقريش التكسب. الثالث: أنهم كانوا يفتشون الحاج عن ذي الخلة فيسدون خلته، والقرش: التفتيش، قال الشاعر:

أيها الشامتُ المقرِّشُ عَنّا عند عَمرو فهل له إبْقاءُ

الرابع: أن قريشاً اسم دابة في البحر، من أقوى دوابه، سميت قريشاً لقوتها وأنها تأكل ولا تؤكل، وتعلو ولا تعلى...

[316] Ibid., 6:349:

الرابع: يعني آمن قريشاً ألا تكون الخلافة إلا فيهم، قاله علّي رضي الله عنه

iḍāfah / الأضافة	*ṭibaq* / الطباق	*Taqdīm wa ta'khīr* / تقديم و تأخير
'***rabba hadhā 'l-bayt***...': the *construct* form 'Lord of this House' that here denotes the honour and greatness of the Ka'bah being ascribed with Allah.	'***...al-shitā' wa 'l-ṣayf***...': this is an instance of *antithesis* (cf. *muqābalah*; *muṭābaqah*) which is a combination of two opposite terms or entities within a sentence. Often it is employed for underscoring a contrast or difference for heightened effect. 'Winter and summer' are here mentioned in order to indicate the unceasing trade the Quraysh would have during the entire year that enabled them to have sufficient sustenance and success all purely by the Grace of Allah.	'***li-ilāf quraysh***...': is an instance of *foregrounding* within the branch of *balāghah* called *ᶜilm al-maᶜānī* ('word order') where the syntax of a given passage is re-configured within the required context and here in the *sūrah* the bounty and grace given to the Quraysh tribe is fronted before the command to worship Allah further down ('...so they should worship the Lord of this House') in order to emphasise this bounty, grace and graciousness.

§3. al-Māʿūn ('The Small Gifts')

{ أَرَأَيْتَ ٱلَّذِي يُكَذِّبُ بِٱلدِّينِ } • { فَذَٰلِكَ ٱلَّذِي يَدُعُّ ٱلْيَتِيمَ } • { وَلَا يَحُضُّ عَلَىٰ طَعَامِ ٱلْمِسْكِينِ } • { فَوَيْلٌ لِّلْمُصَلِّينَ } • { ٱلَّذِينَ هُمْ عَن صَلَاتِهِمْ سَاهُونَ } • { ٱلَّذِينَ هُمْ يُرَآءُونَ } • { وَيَمْنَعُونَ ٱلْمَاعُونَ }

'O Prophet, have you seen and are you aware of he who denied any notion of a final judgment and recompense as well as he who rejected the ruling of Allah? Likewise, this person also treated the orphans harshly and oppressed them and he neither feeds the poor and needy nor does he urge others to do so? So woe to and damned be those hypocrites who perform their prayer with heedlessness, recklessness, delay and have ostentation in their actions and are arrogant! They even prevent *zakat*, goodness, obedience to Allah, basic goods, peoples' rights and amenities.'[317]

Some of the *balāghah* aspects of this chapter of the Qur'ān include:

***Ījaz* / الإيجاز**

'***fa-dhālik alladhī yadʿʿu 'l-yatīm...***': here is an instance of *elliptical succinctness*. This is an effective stylistic mode of communication that contracts relevant information of a given context into minimal sentences in order to achieve brevity.

Here, there is an ellipsis (*ḥadhf*) of a prior conditional phrase, 'if you wanted to know, he is the one who repulses the orphans harshly'.

***Jinās* / الجناس**

'***...wa yamnaʿūna 'l-māʿūn***': an instance of *incomplete jinās*. It is a scheme of stylistic emphasis where words derived from the same root are repeated within the textual environment (also known as *polyptoton*).

In the case of the *incomplete jinās*, it is where two lexical items are different in one letter and gives an effect of rhythm and movement to the verse.

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[317] Ibid., 6:350-354.

§4. al-Kawthar ('The Abundance')

{ إِنَّآ أَعْطَيْنَاكَ ٱلْكَوْثَرَ } * { فَصَلِّ لِرَبِّكَ وَٱنْحَرْ } * { إِنَّ شَانِئَكَ هُوَ ٱلْأَبْتَرُ }

'O Prophet, We have indeed given you given you unparalleled good like rivers and pools in Paradise, unequalled knowledge, the Qur'an, Prophethood and innumerable followers. So offer prayers to your Lord and turn toward him doing what is good and is ordered to you. Your enemy will surely be in ruin and cut off from all that is good if he opposes you.'[318]

Some of the *balāghah* aspects of this chapter of the Qur'ān include:

***iḍāfah* / الأضافة**	***ṭibāq* / الطباق**	***inna* / إن**
'***li-rabbika***...': the *construct* form 'your Lord' that here denotes the honour and respect afforded to the Prophet through his ascription with the blessed name of Allah.	'***...al-kawthar...wa 'l-abtar***...': this is an instance of *antithesis* (cf. *muqābalah*; *muṭābaqah*) which is a combination of two opposite terms or entities within a sentence. Often it is employed for underscoring a contrast or difference for heightened effect. The word "kawthar" means some unparalleled reward and good granted to the Prophet whereas "abtar" is the opposite. Thus the contrast is to highlight the ruin and destruction of anyone	'***inna***...': This is an emphatic particle used to give additional effect and surety. The plural form of 'Indeed we have...' adds to the emphasis and seriousness. Here, the particle "inna" takes the place of an elided divine oath (*qasm*) to solemnise and guarantee what is to follow.

[318] Ibid., 6:354-357.

who opposes the
Prophet.

§5. al-Kāfirūn ('The Nonbelievers')

{ قُلْ يَاأَيُّهَا ٱلْكَافِرُونَ } * { لاَ أَعْبُدُ مَا تَعْبُدُونَ } * { وَلاَ أَنتُمْ عَابِدُونَ مَآ أَعْبُدُ } * { وَلاَ أَنَآ عَابِدٌ مَّا عَبَدتُّمْ } * { وَلاَ أَنتُمْ عَابِدُونَ مَآ أَعْبُدُ } * { لَكُمْ دِينُكُمْ وَلِيَ دِينِ }

'Say o Prophet: 'O Unbelievers, I do not worship the idols that you worship nor are you people who worship the One God that I do and neither will I ever worship what you worship and you will never worship what I worship. To you is your way of life and to me mine because you will never accept the Message of Islam'.[319]

Some of the *balāghah* aspects of this chapter of the Qur'ān include:

Khiṭāb / الخطاب	***ṭibāq*** / الطباق	***Muqābalah*** / المقابلة
'***yā ayyhā 'l-kāfirūn***...': this is a direct address to the nonbelievers in order to denote scorn (*tawbīkh*).	'***lā aᶜbudu mā taᶜbudūn***...': this is an instance of *antithesis* (cf. *muqābalah*; *muṭābaqah*) which is a combination of two opposite terms or entities within a sentence. Often it is employed for underscoring a contrast or difference for heightened effect. More specifically, it is an example of negated antithesis (*ṭibāq al-salb*) where two antonyms are employed and	The entire *sūrah* contains *multiple antithesis* (*muqābalah*) in order to demonstrate the utter distinction between *īmān* and *kufr* as well as *ḥaqq* and *bāṭil*. The use of multiple antithesis also emphasises the non-overlapping character between both camps and the uncompromising attitude of truth in the face of opposition.

[319] Ibid., 6:357-359.

negated here
represented by the
negation particles
"lā" and "mā".

§6. al-Naṣr ('The Victory')

{ إِذَا جَآءَ نَصْرُ ٱللَّهِ وَٱلْفَتْحُ } * { وَرَأَيْتَ ٱلنَّاسَ يَدْخُلُونَ فِي دِينِ ٱللَّهِ أَفْوَاجاً } * { فَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ وَٱسْتَغْفِرْهُ إِنَّهُ كَانَ تَوَّاباً }

'When the help and victories of Allah come against your enemies especially the conquest of Mecca and you O Prophet will see people from all different communities and places enter and embrace this religion of Allah in droves and massive numbers, then at that time offer prayers, glorify your Lord and extol His praises, seek forgiveness and maintain remembrance of Allah because He is without doubt the One Who often forgives'.[320]

Some of the *balāghah* aspects of this chapter of the Qur'ān include:

***iḍāfah* / الأضافة**	***Khāṣṣ ba^{c}d al-^{c}āmm* / خاص بعد العام**	***Mubālagah* / مبالغة**
'***dīn Allāh***...': the *construct* form 'religion of Allah' that here denotes the honour (*tashrīf*) and dignity given to the religion in it being ascribed with Allah's blessed Name.	'***naṣr Allāh wa 'l-fatḥ***...': mention of the specific (*fatḥ* = conquest of Mecca) after the general (*naṣr* = all victories granted by Allah) in order to emphasise and exalt the Meccan conquest; thus it is extremely important, a turning point and a great achievement for Islam and Muslims.	'***tawwāba***...': Here is the use of the grammatical form "fa^{cc}āl / فعال" which is intensive in its signification. Thus, the use of *hyperbole* or exaggeration emphasises the intrinsic forgiving character of Allah: i.e. 'oft-forgiving' not just he who forgives once.

[320] Ibid., 6:359-363.

§7. al-Lahab ('The Lapping Flame')

{ تَبَّتْ يَدَآ أَبِي لَهَبٍ وَتَبَّ } * { مَآ أَغْنَىٰ عَنْهُ مَالُهُ وَمَا كَسَبَ } * { سَيَصْلَىٰ نَاراً ذَاتَ لَهَبٍ } * { وَٱمْرَأَتُهُ حَمَّالَةَ ٱلْحَطَبِ } * { فِي جِيدِهَا حَبْلٌ مِّن مَّسَدٍ }

'Let the hands, power, deeds, work and indeed Abu Lahab himself perish! Neither his property, wealth nor his children and deeds will help him one bit. He will be burnt in a fire of blazing and lapping flames as well as his wife who is that wood carrier! She will have a twisted rope of palm fibre around her neck'.[321]

Some of the *balāghah* aspects of this chapter of the Qur'ān include:

***Majāz mursal* / مجاز مرسل**	***Kināyah* / الكناية**	***Istiᶜārah* / الإستعارة**	***Jinās* / الجناس**
'***yada Abī Lahab***...': the category known as *allegory* (*majāz*) is a non-literal meaning contained within a sentence or statement that has connection to the original lexical meaning. More specifically, although a	'***Abī lahab***...': this is an instance of *metonymy* where something is alluded to indirectly in the text without the explicit identity unveiled. The aim is to suggest a characteristic feature of someone through a fixed expression.	'***ḥammālat al-ḥaṭab***...': is an example of *metaphor* and its use is one of the most powerful within figures of speech (*ᶜilm al-bayān*) its aim being to not only enrich the text but heighten meaning and communicative signification. Here the metaphor denotes her haughtiness, corrupt	'***abī lahab...dhāt lahab***...': this is an evident instance of morphological *jinās* which is a scheme of stylistic emphasis where words derived from the same root are repeated within the textual environment (also known as *polyptoton*). The *jinās* here occurs through

[321] Ibid., 6:363-369.

part is explicitly mentioned ('hand') what is intended is the complete person (*nafs*), i.e. the destruction of Abū Lahab himself is intended.[322]	Here, the metonymy is achieved by mentioning Abū Lahab with his agnomen not out of honour or rank, but scorn, rebuke and humiliation and that he is destined for Hellfire. The word "lahab" is used by the Arabs when the fire billows smoke.[323]	character, arrogance and daily effort to thwart the path of the Prophet with wood and splinters.	repetition of "lahab"; the first occurrence is of the agnomen suggesting scorn and belittling and the second occurrence is a description of his ultimate state in the Hereafter which is Hellfire (*nār*).

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[322] Ibid., 6:364:

أحدهما: يعني نفس أبي لهب، وقد يعبر عن النفس باليد كما قال تعالى { ذلك بما قدمت يداك } أي نفسك. الثاني: أي عمل أبي لهب، وإنما نسب العمل إلى اليد لأنه في الأكثر يكون بها

[323] Ibn ᶜĀshūr, *Tafsīr al-Taḥrīr wa'l-Tanwīr*, s.v. 31:602:

أو لأن في كنيته ما يتأتى به التوجيه بكونه صائراً إلى النار، وذلك كناية عن كونه جهنمياً، لأن اللهب ألسنةُ النار إذا اشتعلت وزال عنها الدخان...

§8. al-Ikhlāṣ ('The Sincerity')

{ قُلْ هُوَ ٱللَّهُ أَحَدٌ } • { ٱللَّهُ ٱلصَّمَدُ } • { لَمْ يَلِدْ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ } • { وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَّهُ كُفُواً أَحَدٌ }

'Say o Prophet: 'Allah is One and that Allah is Eternal, Self-Sufficient and Everlasting. He does not beget anything nor is He begotten by anything. And is no equal or anything comparable to Allah in any way whatsoever'.[324]

Some of the *balāghah* aspects of this chapter of the Qur'ān include:

***saj*ᶜ / السجع**

{*-aḥad*; *-ṣamad*; *-yūlad*; *-aḥad*...} is an instance of *saj*ᶜ ('rhymed prose/rhythmical prose/assonance/accent rhyme/cadenced prose') where the final consonant (letter/radical) – in this case *–d/*د – is largely the same within a regular and rhythmic composition.[325]

The *saj*ᶜ composition gives a regularity, beauty, succinctness and effectiveness to the chapter generating a resonance within the listener.

It falls under the study of ᶜ*ilm al-badī*ᶜ ('semantic embellishments') a sub-branch of Arabic *balāghah*.

***jinās* / الجناس**

{***...lam yalid...wa lam yūlad***} an instance of *incomplete jinās*. It is a scheme of stylistic emphasis where words derived from the same root are repeated within the textual environment (also known as *polyptoton*).

In the case of the *incomplete jinās* here, it is where two lexical items are different in one letter and gives an effect of rhythm and movement to the verse. In this case, to emphasise and underscore the utter transcendent and non-human qualities of Allah and so He is beyond the natural processes and physical laws that affect human beings.

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[324] al-Māwardī, *al-Nukat wa 'l-ᶜUyūn*, 6:369-378.

[325] Devin J. Stewart, "*Saj*ᶜ in the Qur'ān", pp.101-139 and R. Drory, *Models and Contacts: Arabic Literature and its Impact on Medieval Jewish Culture*, pp.105-111.

§9. al-Falaq ('The Dawn')

{ قُلْ أَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ ٱلْفَلَقِ } • { مِن شَرِّ مَا خَلَقَ } • { وَمِن شَرِّ غَاسِقٍ إِذَا وَقَبَ } • { وَمِن شَرِّ ٱلنَّفَّاثَاتِ فِي ٱلْعُقَدِ } • { وَمِن شَرِّ حَاسِدٍ إِذَا حَسَدَ }

'Say o Prophet: 'I seek refuge and protection in the Lord of the Daybreak, the Lord of all creation and the Lord of the prisons of Hell. I seek refuge from the evil that is Iblis[326] and his cohorts as well as the created Hellfire. And also seek refuge and protection in Allah from the evil of the Moon when it disappears, the stars when they fall and the night when it veils everything as well as the evil of the magicians, sorcerers, soothsayers and the evil of the envious when they envy when it consumes and destroys'.[327]

Some of the *balāghah* aspects of this chapter of the Qur'ān include:

***iḍāfah* / الأضافة**	***Khāṣṣ ba^{c}d al-^{c}āmm* / خاص بعد العام**	***iṭnāb* / الإطناب**	***jinās* / الجناس**
'***a^{c}ūdhu bi-rabb al-falaq...***': the *construct* form 'Lord of the *falaq*' that here denotes the honour and dignity given to human beings through their ascription with the	'***min sharri mā khalaq...***': of mentioning the specific after the general in order to emphasise and alert the reader to the importance and seriousness of evil and its effects.	'***min sharri mā khalaq...wa min sharr ghāsiq...wa min sharr al-naffāthāt...***': this is an instance of *epistrophe*; a sub-form of the *epizeuxis* category which is a mode of semantic embellishment (*al-muḥassināt*	'***ḥāsid ...ḥasad***': this is an evident instance of *morphological jinās* and '***falaq...khalaq***' as an instance of *incomplete jinās*. Both are schema of stylistic emphasis where words derived from the same root are repeated within the textual environment

[326] On Iblis, see P. J. Awn, *Satan's Tragedy and Redemption*, pp.1-56.
[327] al-Māwardī, *al-Nukat wa 'l-^{c}Uyūn*, 6:373-378.

Allah.	*al-badīʿiyyah*) where the communicator repeats a word or expression in order to affirm a matter or idea. Here in the chapter, the repetition (*tikrār*) of the word "sharr" indicates its abominable, hideous, dangerous character.	(also known as *polyptoton*). In the case of the *incomplete jinas*, it is where two lexical items are different in one letter.

§10. al-Nās ('Humankind')

{ قُلْ أَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ ٱلنَّاسِ } * { مَلِكِ ٱلنَّاسِ } * { إِلَٰهِ ٱلنَّاسِ } * { مِن شَرِّ ٱلْوَسْوَاسِ ٱلْخَنَّاسِ } * { ٱلَّذِى يُوَسْوِسُ فِي صُدُورِ ٱلنَّاسِ } * { مِنَ ٱلْجِنَّةِ وَٱلنَّاسِ }

'Say o Prophet: 'I seek refuge in the Lord of all human beings, The King and Owner of all human beings; the only deity and object of worship of all human beings. Seek refuge in Him from the Shaytan who detracts others from the remembrance of Allah and who subtly whispers bad and capricious thoughts into the hearts and thoughts of men and seek refuge from the effects of the evil whisperings of men and the jinn'.[328]

Some of the *balāghah* aspects of this chapter of the Qur'ān include:

***iḍāfah* / الأضافة**	***ṭibāq* / الطباق**	***iṭnāb* / الإطناب**	***jinās* / الجناس**
'aʿūdhu bi-rabb al-nās...': the construct form 'Lord of the people' that denotes the honour and dignity given to human beings through their association with Allah.	***'al-jinnati wa 'l-nās'***: this is an instance of *antithesis* (cf. *muqābalah*; *muṭābaqah*) which is a combination of two opposite terms or entities within a sentence. Often it is employed for underscoring a contrast or difference for heightened effect.	***'rabb al-nās...malik al-nās...ilāh al-nas...'***: this an instance of *epistrophe*; a sub-form of the *epizeuxis* category which is a mode of semantic embellishment (*al-muḥassināt al-badīʿiyyah*) where the communicator repeats a word or expression in order to affirm a matter	***'...yuwaswisu...al-waswas...'***: this is an evident instance of morphological *jinās* which is a scheme of stylistic emphasis where words derived from the same root are repeated within the textual environment (also known as *polyptoton*). Here, the repetition serves to make one alert, guard against, be wary and pay

[328] Ibid., 6:378-380.

Here in the verse the *antithesis* are humans and jinn both agents of satanic whisperings.	or idea.[329] Here in the chapter, the repetition (*tikrār*) of the word "*nās*" indicates additional respect, care, attention for human beings.	particular attention to whisperings of the devil, evil people and jinn that distract from remembrance of Allah and adherence to His commandments.

[329] Also known as 'prolixity'.

Appendix IV

A Primer on Arabic Rhetoric: *Tuḥfat al-Ikhwān fī ᶜIlm al-Bayān*

O

Below is the Arabic text *Tuḥfat al-Ikhwān fī ᶜIlm al-Bayān* by the renowned Mālikī jurist, mystic of the Khalwatī Order and Azharite luminary Aḥmad al-Dardīr (d. 1201/1786)[330] which is a well-known primer on Arabic rhetoric (*balāghah*). The manuscript this Arabic edition is based on is MS Riyadh, King Saud University no. ت.د. 819.4 fols.1a-2a. It is written in a clear and clean script with no interlinear corrections or marginalia with approximately 20 lines a page and approximately 14 words per line. The manuscript Colophon states the scribe as being a one Tāj Luṭfī Ibn Muḥammad Faraḥ ᶜAzzāwī.[331]

al-Dardīr states that his aim in writing it is to present a short treatise on 'Figures of Speech' (fol.1a) and the key tropes that are found in that sub-discipline of Arabic rhetoric with examples. Figures of speech, as mentioned in Chapter 3 and explored more in depth in Chapter 7 is seen as one of the most attractive and relished area of study in Arabic – particularly for Qur'ānic exegesis.

The content of the *Tuḥfat al-Ikhwān* divides in order of treatment as follows:

1. *Majāz* (fol.1a).
2. *Istiᶜārah* (fol.1a).
3. *Tashbīh* (fol.2a).
4. *Kināyah* (fol.2a).

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[330] See al-Nabhānī, *Jāmiᶜ Karāmāt al-Awliyā'*, 1:564.

[331] See: Kaḥḥāla, *Muᶜjam al-Mu'allifīn*, 2:67; al-Ziriklī, *al-Aᶜlām*, 1:232 and Brockelmann, *GAL*, 8:315.

There are brief examples given for each major trope with terse definitions and remarks that inevitably calls for elaboration and further commentary. For this reason, it is advised to consult the material within the *Introducing Arabic Rhetoric* book in order to understand the difficult passages.

تحفةُ الإخوانِ في علمِ البيانِ

...

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

الحمدُ للهِ والصلاةُ على رسولِ اللهِ.

هذهِ رِسالةٌ لطيفةٌ في بيانِ المجازِ والتشبيهِ والكِنَايةِ على سبيلِ الاختصارِ والاقتصارِ، جعلتُها تحفةً للإخوانِ ضاعفَ اللهُ لي ولهُمْ الأجرَ والإحسانَ.

اِعلمْ أَنَّ المجازَ إِمَّا أَنْ يكونَ في الإسنادِ، وإِمَّا في الكلمةِ، وإِمَّا في المركبِ. فالمجازُ في الإسنادِ هوَ: إسنادُ الفعلِ أَوْ ما في معناهُ إلى غيرِ ما هوَ لهُ لِمُلَابَسَةٍ معَ قَرِينةٍ مانعةٍ عن إرادةِ الإسنادِ إلى مَا هُوَ لَهُ. ويسمى مجازًا في الإثباتِ، ومجازًا عقليًّا، وإسنادًا مجازِيًّا. ولهُ ملابَسَاتٌ شتَّى، يلابِسُ الزمانَ والمكانَ والمفعولَ والسببَ، نحوُ: نهارُهُ صائمٌ، ونهرٌ جارٍ، وعيشةٌ راضيةٌ، وسَالَتِ الأَبَاطِحُ، وأخرجتِ الأرضُ أثقالَها، وأنبتَ الربيعُ البقلَ، وبنى الأميرُ المدينةَ.

والقرينةُ إمَّا لفظيَّةٌ كقولِ مجهولِ الحالِ بعدَ قولِهِ أنبتَ الربيعُ البقلَ: إنَّ اللهَ على كلِّ شيءٍ قديرٌ، وكقولِكَ: هزمَ الأميرُ الجندَ وهوَ في قَصْرِه. وإمَّا معنويَّةٌ كصدورِ الأَوَّلِ مِن الموحِّدِ، وكَاستِحالةِ قيامِ المُسْنَدِ بالمذكورِ.وأَمَّا المجازُ المفردُ فهوَ: الكلمةُ المستعملةُ في غيرِ ما وُضِعتْ لهُ لعَلاقةٍ معَ قرينةٍ مانعةٍ عن إرادَتِهِ. فإنْ كانتْ عَلاقتُهُ المشابهةَ فاستعارةٌ. وإنْ كانتْ غيرَها كالسببيَّةِ، والمُسَبَّبِيَّةِ، والمُجَاوَرَةِ، والكلِيَّةِ، والبعضِيَّةِ، واعتبارِ ما كانَ، أَو مَا يَؤُولُ إليهِ ونحوِهَا، فمجازٌ مرسلٌ.

فصلٌ

الاستعارةُ إمَّا تصريحيَّةٌ، وإمَّا مَكنِيَّةٌ، وإمَّا تخْيِيلِيَّةٌ. فالتصريحيةُ هي: التي صُرِّحَ فيها بذكرِ المشبَّهِ بهِ فقطْ. نحوُ: رأيتُ أسدًا في الحمامِ. والمَكْنِيَّةُ هيَ: التي طُوِيَ فيها ذكرُ المشبَّهِ بهِ بذكرِ شيءٍ مِن لوازمِهِ. فلمْ يُذكرْ فيها سوى المشبَّهِ. والتخييليةُ هي: إثباتُ ذلكَ اللازمِ الدالِّ على المشبَّهِ بهِ. فهيَ مُلازِمةٌ للمكنِيَّةِ. نحوُ: أظفارُ المنيَّةِ نَشِبَتْ بفلانٍ. شُبِّهتِ المنيَّةُ بالسبعِ في الاغتيالِ، واستُعِيرَ اسمُ السبعِ لهَا ثم طُوِيَ ذكرُهُ استعارةً بالكنايةِ، ودُلَّ عليهِ بذكرِ لازمِهِ وهُوَ الأظفارُ، وإثباتُ الأظفارِ تخييليةٌ.

فصلٌ

الاستعارةُ إنْ قُرِنَتْ – بعدَ القرينةِ المانعةِ – بما يلائِمُ المستعارَ منهُ فمُرشَّحَةٌ، نحوُ: رأيتُ أسدًا في الحمامِ لهُ لِبَدٌ. وإنْ قُرِنَتْ بما يلائمُ المستعارَ لهُ فمجرَّدَةٌ نحو: رأيتُ أسدًا في الحمامِ لهُ سلاحٌ، وإلا فمطلقةٌ. والترشيحُ أبلغُ من الإطلاقِ الأبلغِ مِنَ التجريدِ.

فصلٌ

إنْ كانَ المستعارُ اسمَ جنسٍ أَيْ اسمًا غيرَ مشتقٍّ، كالأسدِ والقَتْلِ فالاستعارةُ أصليَّةٌ، وإلَّا فتبعيَّةٌ لجَرَيَانِها في الفعلِ أَو في المشتقِ بعدَ جريانِها في مصدرِهِ، وفي الحرفِ بعدَ جريانِها في مُتعلَّقِ معناهُ.

والمرادُ بمُتَعَلَّقِ معنى الحرفِ المعنى الكليُّ كالابتداءِ في مِن، والانتهاءِ في إلى، والظرفيةِ في فِي، والاستعلاءِ في على؛ إذْ الحرفُ لا يؤدي إلا معنى جزئيا، والجزئيُّ له تعلقٌ بالكليِّ لاندراجِه تحتَهُ.

وَأَمَّا المجَازُ المركبُ فهُوَ: اللفظُ المركبُ المستعملُ في غيرِ مَا وُضِعَ لهُ لعَلاقةٍ معَ قرينةٍ مانعةٍ مِنْ إرادتِهِ. فَإِنْ كانتْ عَلاقَتُهُ المشَابهةَ سُمِّيَ استعارةً تمثيليةً كَقولِكَ لمنْ يتردَّدُ في أمرٍ: إنِّي أراكَ تُقدِّمُ رِجلًا وتُؤخِّرُ أُخرى. وَمَتَى فَشَا استعمالُهُ كَذلكَ سُمِّيَ مَثَلًا وَلذا لا تُغَيَّرُ الأمثالُ. وَإِنْ كانتْ غيرَهَا سُمِّيَ مجازًا مركبًا.

وَأَمَّا التشبيهُ فهوَ: الدَلالةُ على مشاركةِ أمرٍ لأمرٍ في معنى لا على وجهِ الاستعارةِ. وأركانُهُ أَربعةٌ: طرفاهُ ووجهُهُ وأداةٌ. نحوُ: زيدٌ كالبدرِ في الحُسْنِ. وَقدْ يكونُ طرفاهُ حِسِّيَيْنِ كَمَا مُثِّلَ، أَوْ عَقْلِّيَيْنِ نحوُ: العلمُ كالحياةِ في كونِهما جِهتَيْ إدراكٍ، أَوْ مُختلِفَينِ كالمنيةِ والسبعِ وتشبيه محسوس بمعقول. وَوَجْهُهُ قَدْ يكونُ هيئةً مُنتزَعَةً مِن عدةِ أمورٍ نحوُ:

كَأَنَّ مُثَارَ النَّقْعِ فَوْقَ رُؤُوسِنَا * وَأَسْيَافَنَا ليلٌ تَهَاوَى كَوَاكِبُهْ.

والأغلبُ حذفُهُ، وَقَدْ تُحذفُ الأداةُ أيضًا ويُسمى بليغًا. وَكُلَّمَا بَعُدَ الوجهُ دَقَّ وَحَسُنَ، وَقدْ يُتصرَّفُ في القريبِ المبتذَلِ بما يُصَيِّرُهُ دقيقًا حَسَنًا كقولِهِ:

يَا أَيُّهَا الرَّشَأُ الْمَكْحُولُ نَاظِرُهُ * بِالسِّحْرِ حَسْبُكَ قَدْ أَحْرَقْتَ أَحْشَائِي

إِنَّ انْغِمَاسَكَ فِي التَّيَّارِ حَقَّقَ أَنـ * ـنَ الشَّمْسَ تَغْرُبُ في عَيْنٍ مِنَ الْمَاءِ

فإنَّ تشبيهَ الجميلِ بالشمسِ قريبٌ لكنْ لما تَصَرَّفَ فيهِ بما تَرى حَتَى أَنَّهُ جعلَ انغماسَهُ في الماءِ دليلًا على أَنَّ الشمسَ تغرُبُ في عينٍ مِنَ الماءِ دَقَّ ولَطُفَ.

فصلٌ

أَصْلُ الاسْتِعَارَةِ التَّشبيهُ؛ لأَنَّهُ إذا حُذِفَ مِنْهُ مَا عَدَا المشَبَّهَ بهِ صارَ استعارةً تصريحيَّةً، وإذا حُذِفَ مَا عَدَا المشبَّهَ صَارَ استعارةً بالكنايةِ على مَا تقدَّمَ ولا يُسمى حينَئِذٍ تشبيهًا؛ إذْ مَبنى الاستعارةِ على تناسي التشبيهِ.

وَأَمَّا الكِنايةُ فهِيَ لفظٌ أُرِيدَ بهِ لازمُ معناهُ مَعَ جوازِ إرادةِ المعنى مَعَهُ. فهيَ تُخالفُ المجازَ مِن جهةِ جوازِ إرادةِ المعنى الحقيقي معَ إرادةِ لازمِهِ نحوُ: زيدٌ طويلُ النِّجَادِ تُريدُ طولَ القَامَةِ، وزيدٌ مهزولُ الفصِيلِ، أَوْ كثيرُ الرَّمَادِ كنايةٌ عَنْ كرمِهِ، ونحْوُ:

إنَّ السَّمَاحَةَ وَالمرُوءَةَ والنَّدَى * فِي قُبَّةٍ ضُرِبَتْ عَلَى ابْنِ الحَشْرَجِ

كنايةٌ عن ثبوتِ هذهِ الصفاتِ لهُ.

تمت

* * *

Translation

In the Name of Allah, Lord of Mercy and Giver of Mercy

All praises belong to Allah and peace and blessings
on the Messenger of Allah.

This is a small treatise explaining *allegory*, *simile* and *metonymy* in a short and summarized way. I have made it a small gift to my brothers – may Allah increase me and them in reward and goodness.

Know that allegory occurs either in its attribution to the verb (*isnād al-fiʿl*), a word (*kalimah*) or in a compound (*murakkab*). As for allegory that occurs attributively, it is an attribution to a verb or whatever takes its meaning to other than what it originally was for due to a relation with a contextual clue (*qarīnah*) that prevents it from the originally intended attribution. It is called allegory through affirmation, cognitive allegory (*majāz ʿaqlī*) and attributive allegory (*isnādan majāziyyan*). It has various relations such as with time, place, object and cause. Some examples are: 'his days are fasting', 'a running river', 'a pleasant life' [Q. 101:7], 'the valleys flowed', 'the earth discharges its burden' [Q. 99:6], 'spring had brought forth pastures' and 'the prince built the city'.[332]

The contextual clue can be verbal (*lafẓiyyah*) as in the saying of an unknown after his statement 'spring had brought forth pastures': 'Indeed Allah has power over all things' or in your saying, 'the leader defeated the army while in his castle'. It can also be semantic (*maʿnawiyyah*) as in 'the hearts of the first generation of monotheists' or the impossibility of a pillar to actually stand when mentioned.

As for allegories that occur in words, it refers to using a word with a meaning other than what it originally was designated due to the presence of a clue that prevents the originally intended meaning. If the relation is one of comparison, it will be considered a metaphor (*istiʿarah*). However, if [the relation] is not [a comparison] but a causality

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[332] See above, pp.135-138.

relation (*sababiyyah*), result relation (*musabbabiyyah*), close proximity relation (*mujāwarah*), whole or part relation, past relation or instrument relation (*ma ya'ūlu ilayhi*) or other relations, then it will be considered hypallage (*majāz mursal*).[333]

Section

Metaphors are *explicit*, *implicit* or *imaginary*. The explicit metaphor is that in which the likened element (*al-mushabbah bihi*) alone is clearly mentioned. For example, 'I saw a lion in the bathroom'. The implicit metaphor is where the likened element is elided with some other semantically corollary consequent being mentioned. Nothing but the likened-to (*al-mushabbah*) is mentioned. The imaginary metaphor is where the affirmation of that semantically corollary consequent (*lāzim*) indicates the likened element. Thus it is a consequent of the implicit metaphor. For example, 'the claws of fate clutched so and so'. Here, 'fate' has been likened to a beast of prey in the way it snatches and kills. It was metaphorically described as a beast of prey but then its mention was elided becoming a metaphor by metonymy (*al-istiʿārah bi'l-kināyah*). A semantically related quality was mentioned which are the claws. Thus, the affirmation of the claws is imaginary.[334]

If a metaphor – despite the presence of a contextual clue – is connected through anything that appropriately relates to the borrowed-from (*al-mustaʿār minhu*), then it is an *enhanced* metaphor, e.g. 'I saw a lion in the bathroom and it had a mane'. If it is connected to the borrowed-to (*al-mustaʿār lahu*), then it is a *naked* metaphor, e.g. 'I saw a lion in the bathroom and it had a weapon' otherwise it is an *absolute* metaphor. And the enhanced metaphor is more eloquent than the absolute and naked metaphor.[335]

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[333] See above, pp.148-151.
[334] See above, pp.139-143.
[335] See above, pp.139-147.

Section

If the borrowed quality or notion (*al-mustaᶜār*) is a generic noun that is not derived (*mushtāq*), like the word 'lion', or 'enemy', then it is an *original* metaphor and if not, then it is a *contrived* metaphor. If neither, then it is a *natural* (*ṭabᶜiyyah*) metaphor due to it ocurring in the verb or a derived noun after it occurs with its verbal noun or a preposition after it occurs with its related meaning.

What is meant by that which relates to the meaning of the preposition is a general meaning like the that of [the preposition] *min* ('from') indicating 'a commencing point' (*ibtidā'*), *ilā* ('to') indicating 'the end' (*intihā'*), the locative in the preposition *fī* ('in') and *ᶜalā* in the meaning of 'elevation' (*istiᶜlā'*) because a preposition only imparts partial meaning and the partial has a relation to the whole because it is subsumed under it.

As for the compound allegory (*majāz murakkab*), it is where a compound term is used for other than what it was originally designated due to a clue that prevents the intended meaning. If its relation is a comparison, it is a *proverbial* metaphor (*istiᶜārah tamthīliyyah*) as in your saying to someone who hesitates over a matter, 'Indeed, I see you putting a man forward and another back'. And when its use becomes widespread, it is a *similitude* (*mathal*) and that is why similitudes do not change. If the [relation] is not [a comparison], it is a *compound* allegory.

As for the simile, it is an indication of some [aspect] one thing shares with another in meaning but not in the form of a metaphor. The elements of a simile are four: its two ends (*ṭarfāhu*), its aspect (*wajh*) and the particles (*ādāt*). An example is 'Zayd is like the moon in beauty'.[336] The two ends of the simile can be *sensible* like in the example just given or *cognitive* like 'knowledge is like life' where in both instances the simile aspects are fathomable[337] or *different* like fate and beast of prey and a simile is sensible through what is

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[336] See above, pp.121-124.

[337] Perceptible, comprehensible and understood.

intelligible. The simile aspect sometimes is extracted from a number of things. For example:[338]

It is as if the dust raised by the wind above our heads,
And our swords are a night of which the stars fall one by one.

In most cases, however, [the simile aspect] is elided. Sometimes, the simile particle is omitted in which case it is called an *effective* (*balīgh*) simile. The more the aspect is remote and abstract, the more subtle and beautiful the simile becomes. Sometimes a more common aspect can be employed that creates a beautiful and subtle affect like for example:[339]

O young woman with powdered eyes and whose gaze
is spell-binding! Enough! You have burned my innermost being.
Indeed, your flowing oceanic depth makes it real
that the sun sets on the water captured in your eyes.

The beautiful simile with the sun is close and known but when he equates the plunging and oceanic depth of the girl as an indication of the sun setting on the water in the eye, this was exquisite and very subtle.

Section

At the core of metaphors is a comparison[340] because if everything except the likened element is omitted, it is an explicit metaphor and if everything except the likened-to is omitted, it becomes a metaphor by metonymy based on what we already mentioned and in that instance, it is not called a simile since a metaphor is based on the omission of a direct comparison.

As for metonymy (*al-kināyah*), it is a word whose necessary meaning can be taken alongside the intended meaning.[341] It is different from the metaphor in respect to the

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[338] Bashshār b. Burd cited in al-Iṣfahānī's *Kitāb al-Aghānī*, 3:142.
[339] Alternatively, 'in origin, metaphors are similes'.
[340] Ibn al-Ṣaffār cited in al-Kutubī's *Fawāt al-Wafayāt*, 3:121.
[341] See above, pp.130-134.

intended literal meaning being permissible to take alongside the necessary meaning, e.g. 'Zayd is long of sword' which signifies his tall height or 'emaciated look' and 'many ashes' which signify his generosity. Also, [the lines]

Tolerance, virtue and magnanimity
on a dome placed on Ibn al-Ḥashraj.

is a metonymical reference for affirming these qualities for him.

* * * * *

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Basic Glossary of Arabic Terms

For more specific and elaborate translations of terms and definitions, see the corresponding sections from the chapters in book.

أ

إبهام	Ambiguity.
أدوات التوكيد	Particles of emphasis.
أسلوب	Style.
إستعارة	Metaphor.
إعجاز	Inimitability; miraculousness.
إلتفات	Rhetorical shifts.
إيجاز	Succinctness.

ب

بلاغة	Rhetoric.

ت

تشبيه	Simile.
تشخيص	Personification.
تأخير	Backgrounding.
تقديم	Foregrounding.
تكرار	Repetition.

ج

جناس	Paronomasia.

ح

حذف	Ellipsis.

س

سجع	Assonance; rhymed prose.

ع

عطف الخاص على العام	The conjunction of specific over the general.

ف

فصاحة	Eloquence.

ك

كناية	Metonymy.

ق

قافية	Rhyme.
قرينة	Indication; lexical clue.

ل

اللف و النشر	Epanodos.

م

مجاز	Allegory.
مجاز مرسل	Hypallage.
مبالغة	Hyperbole; exaggeration.
مجانسة	Alliteration.
مقابلة	Chiasmus.

ن

نظم	Word-system; order-system.

~ Notes ~

About the Book

Arabic Rhetoric (*ᶜilm al-balāghah*) is one of the most technical but exciting subject areas of study. By the third/ninth century, Muslim linguists and literary critics had developed the major framework and core specialised jargon related to the art (*fann*) of impressive and poetic, persuasive and pragmatic discourse as well as elevated compositional techniques. The subject area took on an inevitable convergence with theology due to the doctrine of Qur'ānic *iᶜjāz* ('inimitability') which states that the Qur'ānic discourse is beyond the productive capacity of human imitation, implying therefore, it is of Divine authorship. This meant analysing the specific *iᶜjāz* feature that defined the Qur'ān as a literary miracle. It is with consideration to this theological claim that *Introducing Arabic Rhetoric* was primarily written.

This new revised and expanded edition contains not only elaborated chapters but new chapters as well. Moreover, additional examples of each sub-area of Arabic rhetoric – *ᶜilm al-maᶜānī*, *ᶜilm al-bayān* and *ᶜilm al-badīᶜ* – have been included and further references from more recent literature in the field provided. Furthermore, a translation of the primer on Arabic rhetoric *Tuḥfat al-ikhwān fī ᶜilm al-bayān* by Aḥmad al-Dardīr attached as an appendix will be a useful primary text for students engaging with the rhetorical and literary tools commonly found in rhetoric manuals. It is hoped the modest size of the book is not a deterrent but a sufficient enterprise to enable one to embark on his literary journey to appreciating the Qur'ān, if not as an inimitable document, at least as a literary marvel.

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