

Linguistic Analysis: the distinctiveness Text of the Qur'an

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Abstract: The study investigates the literary form of the Holy book—The Qur'an. The book is explaining the principles of Islam—a religion of Muslim Ummah. In the era and since the Prophet Muhammad's time, it was questioned that it is a book written by a poet. It has been under the keen study to know the language used in the Holy Qur'an. The study explains the language of the Holy Qur'an. The Qur'an is not prose and that it is not verse either. It is rather Qur'an, and it cannot be called by any other name. The Holy Quran is the reference book for more than 1.6 billion of Muslims all around the world. Extracting information and knowledge from the Holy Quran is of high benefit for both specialized people in Islamic studies as well as none specialized people. The word Qur'an has never been used for any other book since long in the history of the universe. It has its unique form[1]. This study helps to introduce the reader to the language of the Holy Qur'an.

Keywords: Qur'an, Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W), Arabic's Literature

INTRODUCTION

Islam is the religion of peace, equality and moderation. It teaches the way of life. First words "Read in the Name of your Lord" (Qur'an Chap. 96:1). These words of the Holy Qur'an revealed to the Prophet Muhammad over fourteen hundred and thirty seven years ago. The Prophet Muhammad—known to have been in retreat and meditation in a cave outside Makkah, City of Saudi Arabia. Arabic literature had been influenced by the language and revelation of the Holy Qur'an[2]. It was neither a piece of poetry nor a prose but had used for the matters of believes, Islamic law, spiritual awareness and economic management. In was entirely in new literary form (Ibid). The Holy Qur'an is pointed to be the perfect book. It is as though Muhammad (May Peace and Blessing be Upon Him) had created an entirely new literary for—Without this experience of the Qur'an- it is extremely unlikely that Islam would have taken root.

"Western people find the Koran a difficult book and this is largely a problem of translation. Arabic is particularly difficult to translate: even ordinary literature and the mundane utterances of politicians frequently sound stilted and alien when translated into English, for example, and this is doubly true of the Koran, which is written in dense and highly allusive, elliptical speech"[3].

This unique literary form was the cause of the dramatic intellectual revival of desert Arabs. Angelika Neuwirth, a writer has worked upon the religious book

Qur'an and History with the title a Disputed Relationship Some Reflections on Qur'anic History and History in the Qur'an. He examines the history and the Holy Quran. In 2008 Daoud Mohammad Nassimi researched the book with angle of—a thematic comparative review of some English translations of the Qur'an. In which he found the mistakes i.e. morphological, syntactical and semantically. The more recent work in 2010, Dr.Muhammad Sultan Shah analyzed critically the Study of Abdel Haleem's New Translation of the Holy Qur'an. In order to get deep into the language of the Holy Qur'an. Qur'an has no extra requirement for the perfection it is perfect. In 2010 Angelika Neuwirth, Nicolai Sinai and Michael Marx very interesting work "The Qur'an in Context Historical and Literary Investigations into the Qur'anic Milieu. These kinds of research and publication have helped a lot in the modern ear for the religion Islam.

"Never have you read a book before this, nor have you ever transcribed one with your right hand. Had you done either of these, the unbelievers might have doubted. But to those who understanding the Qur'an are endowed with knowledge it is an undoubted sign. Only the wrongdoers deny Our signs" (Qur'an 29:48)

The Quran has had an extraordinary impact on the social, political and legal systems of the various Muslim societies throughout the history, which continues into the present times. The constitutions of several Muslim majority states canonize Islamic law

and thus the Quran forms the basis of legal precepts in those countries. This is by no means a recent development. As Iqbal said in 2013, the Quran formed the foundation of the legal codes in the earliest Muslim empires and was extensively utilized by the jurists in court proceedings.

The Qur'an's Uniqueness

The word *qur'an* lexically means 'reading' and came to refer to 'the text which is read'. The Muslim scripture often calls itself '*kitab*': lexically this means 'writing' and came to refer to 'the written book'. Thus the significance of uttering and writing the revealed scripture is emphasized from the very beginning of Islam, and is locked in the very nouns that designate the Qur'an[4]. The human would like to start being writing about the different qualities of Qur'an; the Day of Judgment would come but they will not be able to finish the uniqueness of Holy book, The Qur'an. The unique literary form forms the backdrop to the doctrine of *I'jaz al-Qur'an*, the inimitability of the Qur'an. It lies at the heart of the Qur'an's claim to being of divine origin. If you are in doubt of what We have revealed to Our messenger, then produce one chapter like it. Call upon all your helpers, besides Allah, if you are truthful. (Chap. 2:23). The further evidence and explanation are exemplified with this –Or do they say he fabricated the message? Nay, they have no faith. Let them produce a recital like it, if they speak the truth (Chap.52:33-34)

These verses issue a challenge to produce a chapter (*surah*) that imitates the Qur'an's unique literary form. The tools needed to meet this challenge are the finite grammatical rules and the twenty eight letters that make-up the Arabic language; these are independent and objective measures available to all. The fact that it has not been matched since it emerged to this day does not surprise most scholars familiar with the Arabic language and that of the Qur'an. The human beings had shown inability to produce anything like the Holy Book –the Qur'an. Its unique literary form is the essence of the Qur'anic miracle—events which lie outside the productive capacity of nature. The unique literary form is beyond the scope of the productive nature any author; hence a supernatural entity –Allah—is the only sufficient comprehensive explanation[5]. The book itself, as printed today, covers less than 500 small pages. It was revealed over twenty-three years, which means a rough average of less than twenty-five pages a year, or two pages a month.

“And We inspired to Moses, ‘Throw your staff,’ and at once it devoured what they were falsifying. So the truth was established, and abolished was what they were doing” (Qur'an 7:117-118)

It achieves this unique literary form. The Intermingling metrical and non-metrical speech,

transcending features of *saj'* and Using literary and linguistic devices that render it stylistically distinct.

Arabic's Literature

The Muslims and Non-Muslims scholarships—the Qur'an cannot be described as any of the known forms of Arabic speech; namely poetry and prose. The form of the Qur'an is something different than any other text. You know that the Qur'an is not prose and that it is not verse either. It is rather Qur'an, and it cannot be called by any other name but this. It is not verse, and that is clear; for it does not bind itself to the bonds of verse. It is not prose, for it is bound by bonds peculiar to itself, not found elsewhere; some of the binds are related to the endings of its verses and some to that musical sound which is all its own. It is therefore neither verse nor prose. It is –a Book whose verses have been perfected the expounded, from One Who is Wise; All-Aware. We cannot therefore say its prose, and its text itself is not verse. It has been one of a kind, and nothing like it has ever preceded or followed it[6]. Every expression of the Arabic language falls into the literary forms of Prose and Poetry. There are other sub-forms that fall into the above categories such as *Kahin*; a sub-form of rhymed prose. However all literary forms can be categorized as prose or poetry.

Arabic's Poetry

According to English Writer—poetry is the spontaneous over flow of powerful feelings- said by William Words worth. Arabic poetry is a form of metrical speech with a rhyme. The rhyme (*qafiyah*) in Arabic poetry is achieved by every line of the poem ending upon a specific letter[7].The poem moves according to its rhythm, just like the waves in the sea.

Arabic's Prose

Arabic Prose can be described as non-metrical speech, meaning it does not have a consistent rhythmical pattern like poetry mentioned above. Arabic prose can be further divided into two categories; *saj'* which is rhymed prose and *Mursal* which is straight prose or what some may call 'normal speech'[8].

Saj is a literary form with some emphasis on rhythm and rhyme. It distinct from poetry; *Saj'* is not really sophisticated as poetry, but has been employed by Arab poets, and is the best known of the pre-Islamic Arabprosodies. It is distinct from poetry in its lack of metre, i.e. it has not consistent rhythmical pattern, and it shares with poetry the element of rhyme, though in many cases somewhat irregularly employed.

The Qur'an's Literary Form

The Qur'an has its own unique form. It cannot be described as any of the known literary forms. The similarities between *saj'* and early Makki chapters, some Western Scholars describe the Qur'an's literary form as *saj'*. Angelika Neuwirth states,

“Saj’ is given up completely in the later suras where the rhyme makes use of a simple –un/-in – scheme to mark the end of rather long and syntactically complex verse—saj’ style is thus exclusively characteristic of the early suras[9]. The scholars have acknowledged uniqueness of the Holy Book, The Qur’an. Its external features—the style of the Qur’an is modeled upon saj’, or rhymed prose; but with such freedom that it may fairly be described as original. Those passages from the Qur’an that approach saj’ still elude all procrustean efforts to reduce them to an alternative form of saj[10]’. This shows the undefined form of the Holy Qur’an—book revealed on Prophet Muhammad (May Peace and Blessing be Upon Him). Thereupon narrates with three parts.

a. Metrical and Non Metrical Speech

The Qur’an achieves this unique literary form by fusing metrical and non-metrical speech. This fusion of metrical and non-metrical composition is present throughout the whole of the Qur’an and cannot be found in any Arabic text, past or present and no possibility in the future it is for sure.

b. Qur’anic’s Saj’

The Qur’an shares similar features with saj’, specifically in the early Makki Chapters, but it completely transcends many aspects of what defines saj’. Hence western scholars describing the Qur’anic form as ‘Qur’anicsaj’. What makes the Qur’an unique in this context are:

- Greater tendency to mono-rhyme
- Inexact rhyme,
- Greater range of saj’ phrases
- Higher frequency of rhetorical features[11]

c. Qur’an’s stylistic variations

The Arab Linguists such as al-Ash’ari, al-Rummani and al-Baqillani held that the Qur’an does not contain saj’ and is unique to all types of saj’. Their reasoning is that in the Qur’an, the use of language is semantically orientated and its literary structure is distinct, whereas in saj’, conformity to style is a primary objective. Furthermore the Qur’an uses literary and linguistic devices in such a way that has not been used before and achieves an unparalleled communicative effect. This use of language, called stylistic variation or stylistic differences, includes, but is not limited to,

- Word’s order
- Choice of Words
- Semantically driven assonance and rhyme
- Interrelation between sound, structure and meaning
- Unique linguistic genre
- Grammatical shifts

The Qur’an’s not Poetry

The Holy book Qur’an—which is proved to the most read and perfect book. It is not written in

poetic form because the totality of each chapter (surah) does not conform to any of the al-Bihar and in many places exhibits inexact and irregular rhyme. Surah al-Kawthar (The Abundance).The syllables do not correspond to any pattern similar to the al-Bihar of Arabic poetry (Andreas). The Readers familiar with Arabic poetry realize that it has long been distinguished by its wazn, bahr, ‘arud and qafiya – exact measures of syllabic sounds and rhymes, which have to be strictly adhered to even at the expense of grammar and shade of meaning at times. All this is categorically different from Qur’anic literary style (khalifa, Colin). The repetition of the word “anzala” is to confirm therevelation of the Criterion and that it is indeed a divine scripture while the placement of the word “alfurqana” at the end of the sentence is to confirm that the Criterion is the last and final scripture i.e.66 Ayat refers to examples like these as 'the chemical composition of the Qur'an' which indicate the delicate and balanced stylistic variation in the Qur'an[12]

Morphological - Lexicon

We divided the lexicon of the Qur’an into three classes:

- i. Closed-class words (including prepositions, pronouns, particles, conjunctions, adverbials, etc.)
- ii. Nominal bases
- iii. Verbal bases[13]

Conclusion

The Qur’an is a unique form of Arabic speech. The form of its language cannot be described as prose or poetry. Qur’an critics often claim that the Qur’anic challenge is subjective and is based upon aesthetic criteria. This is a false accusation. The Qur’an can either be described as prose, poetry or unique. Literary forms are not based upon aesthetic criteria; they are based upon the structural features of a text. It can be clearly seen above that literary forms are defined and can be distinguished from one another. The totality of every chapter has a special character, with its own unique form, and its unique use of literary devices. These features of the Qur’an are part of the reason of why it has not been emulated to this day. The Makkians still demanded of Him a miracle, and with remarkable boldness and self-confidence Muhammad appealed as a supreme confirmation of his mission to the Qur’an itself. Like all Arabs they were connoisseurs of language and rhetoric. Well, then if the Qur’an 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 Qur’an as an outstanding evidential miracle. There are many Muslim and Non-Muslim Scholars who testify that the Qur’an is indeed unique and inimitable.

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