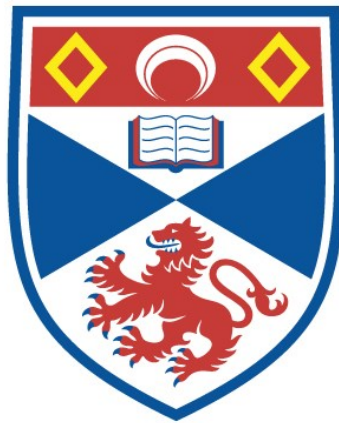


**THE PHILOLOGICAL TREATMENT OF QU'RĀN
SIMILES IN THE WORKS OF THE PHILOLOGISTS,
EXEGETES, LITERARY AND RHETORICAL
THEORISTS**

Hana Mahmood Shehab

A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of MPhil
at the
University of St Andrews



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THE PHILOLOGICAL TREATMENT OF QUR'ĀN SIMILES
IN THE WORKS OF PHILOLOGISTS, EXEGETES,
LITERARY AND RHETORICAL THEORISTS

BY

HANA MAHMOOD SHEHAB

A Thesis submitted for M.Phil. Degree
in the University of St. Andrews
April 1985.



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ABSTRACT

This thesis deals mainly with the philological aspects of the similes of the Qur'ān. It also deals with other aspects of Arabic science such as rhetoric, syntax and variant readings of some words in the verses containing similes.

The thesis falls into three parts which deal with the philologists, exegetes, rhetorical and literary theorists.

It explains how these authors look at the similes of the Qur'ān from all aspects, such as the philological, syntactical, or rhetorical viewpoint, although some of them do not refer specifically to the Qur'ānic simile in their books.

The first part of the thesis is divided into three chapters. The first one consists of general notes about the language and the simile and about the Arabs and their use of simile in their speech. The second chapter deals with the work of the philologists and how they treat the simile of the Qur'ān in their books. The third chapter deals with the other philological matters in the Qur'ānic verses containing similes, namely homophone-antonyms and metathesis.

The second part of the thesis deals with the studies of the simile of the Qur'ān by some exegetes, although they differ in their way of looking at the verses containing simile.

The third part is divided into two chapters, the first deals with the treatment of the Qur'ānic simile by those who study the inimitable style of the Qur'ān in their books. These pure Qur'ānic studies show the miraculous style of the Qur'ān. The second chapter deals with books by literary and rhetorical experts who refer to the similes of the Qur'ān in the course of their study of the poetry and speech of the Arabs or their treatment of other aspects of Arabic science.

DEDICATION

الى أبي و أبي
كما ربياني صغيرا
و أسأله تعالى أن يجعل ثواب
ما فيه من علم وعمل نافعين
شأبيب رحمة على أبي
و في ميزانه يوم الحساب

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of research work carried out by me, which is being made public for the first time, and that it has not been submitted previously for any other degree.

I also declare that the present work was conducted under the supervision of Dr. J. Burton, Department of Arabic Studies, University of St. Andrews to which I was admitted as a research student under Ordinance No. 12 in October 1982 and as a candidate for the degree of M.Phil. (Mode A) in April 1983.

St. Andrews
April, 1985.

H.M. Shehab.

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I should like to record my deepest gratitude and sincere thanks to my supervisor, Dr. J. Burton, for his scholarly guidance and invaluable suggestions during his supervision of my thesis.

I should also like to address a special word of thanks to my husband, Dr. Abdul-Jabbar al-Hubaity for his continuous help and encouragement in revising this work while busy preparing his own thesis.

I also wish to record a special word of love to my beloved son, Saif, and to my baby Sahim, who was born when this work was in its final stages.

I would also like to thank my mother, my brothers and sisters for their encouragement and help.

My thanks are also due to the staff of St. Andrews University Library, and to both Mrs. E. Kerr and Mrs. S. Brockett for typing this thesis.

Finally, I should like to thank my government (Iraq) and the University of Mosul for the financial support, without which the present work would not have been possible.

TABLE OF TRANSLITERATION

Consonants

• = ʾ (except when initial)	ز = z	ق = q
ب b	س s	ك k
ت t	ش š	ل l
ث <u>t</u>	ص ṣ	م m
ج ğ	ض ḍ	ن n
ح ḥ	ط ṭ	ه h
خ ḫ	ظ ḏ	ة a at (construct state)
د d	ع ʿ	و w
ذ <u>d</u>	غ ġ	ي y
ر r	ف f	

ال (article), al- (even before the antero-palatals and in the case of the šamsiyya letters).

Short Vowels

ا	a
و	u
ي	i

Long Vowels

آ ā	ā
و ū	ū
ي ī	ī

Diphthongs

اَو	aw
اِي	ai

Double Vowels

اَوَو	aww
اَوو	uww
اِيِي	iiyy

LIST OF GENERAL ABBREVIATIONS

A.H.	=	After Hegira
b.	=	Ibn
Ch.	=	Chapter
d.	=	Died
n.d.	=	No date
p.	=	page
pp.	=	pages
PBUH	=	Peace Be Upon Him
Q.	=	Qur ^{ān}
v.	=	verse
vv.	=	verses
Vol.	=	Volume
Vols.	=	Volumes

The dates which follow the names of prominent persons refer to their date of death according to the Islamic Lunar Calendar. Whenever two dates are given the first refers to the year of birth.

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INTRODUCTION

The Holy Qur^ʾān is considered to be a basis for every science of Islamic or Arabic linguistic studies and its literature. The Qur^ʾān represents the peak of the Arabic language. So I think that all Arabic studies, whether philological or syntactical or rhetorical or literary, must basically depend on the Qur^ʾān, which is considered the summit and most complete achievement of the Arabic language.

The simile and its place in the Arabic language

The simile is a form of expression as old as the oldest speech. It is considered to be the best way of providing explanation and clarification, and it is a good way of approaching the depths of meaning. It is enough recommendation that it is a comprehensible language even for the deaf. We see the deaf person when he wants to express something, for example, eating or drinking or walking, indicate by a sign someone who is eating or drinking or walking in order to make us understand what he wants to say. The usefulness of the simile is in addition to its beauty of expression in speech. As Aristotle says, it creates pleasure in the mind and a desire to look forward to hearing or reading the beautiful language.¹

This excellent form of expression was very familiar to the Arabs, who were famous for choosing exact vocabulary in their speech and were also famous for the high quality of their knowledge of rhetoric. So they frequently used the simile in their speech as they had a vivid imagination and a sensitive mind.

The earliest literary and rhetorical experts mentioned the important position of the simile in the Arabs' speech. As Qudāma b. Ġa'far says on this subject:

(1) * "التشبيه من أشرف كلام العرب وفيه تكون الفطنة والبراعة عندهم وكلما كان الشبه منهم في تشبيهه ألطف كان بالشعر أعرف ، وكلما كان بالمعنى أسبق كان بالحدق أليق." ²

And Abū Hilāl al-ʿAskarī says that the simile:

(2) "يزيد المعنى وضوحا ويكسبه تأكيدا ولهذا ما أطبق جميع المتكلمين من العرب والعجم عليه ولم يستغن أحد منهم عنه" ³

ʿAbd al-Qāhir al Ġurġānī gives a detailed explanation of its position.

He says:

(3) "انه يعمل عمل السحر في تأليف المتباينين حتى يختصر بعد ما بين المشرق والمغرب ، ويجمع ما بين المشتم والمعرق وهو يريك المعاني المشتمة بالاهام شبيها في الأشخاص المائله والاشباح القائمة ، وينطق لك الاخرس ، ويعطيك البيان من الاعجم . ويريك الحياة في الجماد ويريك التثام عين الاضداد فيأتيك بالحياة والموت مجموعين والماء والنار مجتمعين" ⁴

As I said earlier, the simile is the first subject which the critics mention in great detail. I could not find one rhetorical specialist who does not consider the simile to be the first type of ʿilm al-bayān.

People use similes in their speech unintentionally and quite naturally when there is a reason for it. It is used equally by Arabs, non-Arabs, high and low people, villagers or city-dwellers, civilized people and Beduins, the educated and the ignorant, the clever and the stupid. It is a wonderful kind of expression which is not peculiar to one language or one human race, because it is a natural specialty for all human beings.

* All the quotations and Qurʾānic verses are translated in an appendix (p.191) according to their numerical order which appears on the right side of each one. (The poetical Shawāhid are not all translated).

The bases of the simile are characteristics which are similar to each other in one point and which people see in their lives. For these reasons the simile became very widespread in the speech of the Arabs. We have even heard al-Mubarrid say that the simile was used very frequently in Arab speech and it is a chapter without end.⁵ He also says that it would not be to exaggerate if one said that most Arab speech is made up of simile.⁶

As the simile is very familiar among the Arabs, so the Qur'ān uses it a lot too, because the Qur'ān was revealed in accordance with Arab speech.

The simile in the Qur'ān

The Qur'ānic similes are very attractive. Sometimes the reader wonders how the Qur'ān connects things which seem far apart, but when one thinks about it it is wonderful, like this verse:

(4) "مثل الذين اتخذوا من دون الله أولياء كمثل العنكبوت اتخذت بيتا وإن
أوهن البيوت لبیت العنكبوت لو كانوا يعلمون" 7

Here Allāh likens one who worships another god than Him, thinking that this god will protect him, to a spider who protects himself in a very weak house. This spider thinks that his web will protect him from outside harm. We are surprised when we think about this wonderful simile which likens this kind of person in his weakness and lack of protection to the small insect's web. It is thus that the Qur'ān describes such people in their thinking that the other god will protect them. Even the Western Arabists do not ignore the necessity and the beauty of the simile in the

Qurʾān. Beeston says about the simile in the Qurʾān:

"Qurʾānic similes are not far-fetched. But it is necessary, as it is with the similes of pre-Islamic poetry, to have a clear and vivid picture of what the words meant for an Arab of the sixth and seventh centuries: once one does that, the simile will be seen to have a quite startlingly effective impact."⁸

The simile and the Arab environment

We know that the environment creates language by giving names to its material things. Language is made up of sounds ascribed to named things in a special environment which the people grow familiar with, and then it becomes a special language. For example, the Arabic language is affected by the desert they live in, so we see that their language is rich in desert words like camel, other animals, horsemanship, winds and water, because these words represent the pure life of the Arabs. They had seen these things in their everyday life. It has been said that there are nearly two hundred names just for the sword.

Then the Qurʾān was revealed using the same words and in the same quantity. We see that the word (wind) is mentioned 28 times in the Qurʾān and the word (water) is mentioned in 63 verses of the Qurʾān.

As language in general is affected by the environment so the simile, to be clear, has to be affected by the environment as well. The simile's image is different from one language to another according to what is familiar among the people who live in a particular place and

speak a particular language.

For example, the Arabic language in the pre-Islamic period and during the period of the revelation of the Qur'ān had similes of its own which differ from the similes of the later period.

The simile in the Qur'ān gives us a clear idea about how the people lived and how they were thinking and what they believed. The similes in the Qur'ān describe them as being anxious about water, shade, trees and rivers, and another time describe how they believe in jinn and imaginary things. It describes the rivers and wide trees in paradise which are the dreams they live with. These similes are from the heart of their lives in the course of which they suffer from some of these things or are eager for others.

But before we discuss this subject in order to see how philologists studied the simile in the Qur'ān we have to know what the simile means in Arabic linguistics (philology) and what the terminus technicus "tašbīh" means.

Tašbīh (in the Arabic language) means the same as tamīl:

(5) "الشَّبه والشَّبَّه والشَّبِيه العَثَل و قد تشابه الشَّيْثَان واشتبهَا أشبه كل واحد منهما صاحبه" ⁹

Al-maṭal in the Arabic language is close to ṣabah. It is said:

(6) "العَثَل بمعنى الشَّبه . يقال هذا مِثْلُه ومَثَلُه كما يقال : شَبَّهه وشَبَّهه" ¹⁰

We see that the Arabic language does not differentiate between tašbīh and tamīl, both are the same. And as the Arabic language does not differentiate between them, so the philologists themselves, when they

mention the simile in their books, do not differentiate between them either. I think that this philological meaning of tašbīh leads some rhetorical and literary experts to fail to mention the tamīl in their books, instead they talk about it in the context of their discussion of al-tašbīh.¹¹

The simile in colloquial usage

There are many definitions of the simile as a terminus technicus after just three words which were used by Abū-^cUbaida, al-Farrā' and al-Ġāḥiẓ. These three words were al-badal, al-matal, al-tašbīh. But the rhetorical specialists established its definition. al-Rummānī defines it as:

(7) "العقد على ان أحد الشيئين يسد مسد الآخر في حس أو عقل." ¹²

Abū-Hilāl defines it as:

(8) "الوصف بان أحد الموصوفين ينوب متاب الآخر بإداة التشبيه ناب متابه أو لم ينوب" ¹³

^cAbd al-Qāhir al-Ġurġānī says:

(9) "التشبيه أن يثبت لهذا معنى من معانى ذاك أو حكما من أحكامه" ¹⁴

I do not want to go on to mention all the definitions of the simile, but I just want to explain that all the definitions agree on one point, which is that the thing being compared and the thing with which the other is compared are in agreement in one respect. The first writer who defined the simile in this way is Abū-Hilāl al-^cAskarī.

The studies which the Holy Qur'ān inspired

The Holy Qur'ān created at the first moments of its revelation an intellectual movement in Arab society. The Arabs were surprised at its style and the new expressions created in the Qur'ān. It disconcerted them and left them in perplexity to see this perfect use of Arabic linguistics and rhetoric. Therefore the Qur'ān attracted many groups of people to study it. Each group had one aspect which they were interested in. The commentators followed its verses one by one explaining the meanings. The philologists studied how the Qur'ān used Arabic words or Arabicized words, the strange and the familiar words. The syntactical specialists studied the different desinential inflection of the words. The rhetorical people studied ʿilm al-bayān, metaphor, and style in general. The legal experts tried to find the law of Islam in the Qur'ān ... etc.

The first science which was created to study the Qur'ān was the science of commentary. But these commentators, even the earlier ones, had different interests in studying the Qur'ān. Some of them, like Abū ʿUbayda, were interested in strictly philological matters; some, like al-Farrāʾ, were interested in studying syntactical matters more than philological matters; some, like al-Zamahṣarī, were interested in studying the rhetoric of the verses in the Qur'ān. The important groups for us now are the first two whose books were entitled Mağāz al-Qur'ān, Maʿānī al-Qur'ān, and Muškil al-Qur'ān. These studies were general, universal. They discussed philology, syntax, different readings, and rhetoric in general.

The philologist's work

Philology appeared before rhetoric in the history of the analysis of the Arabic language. This science gave a philological education to the Arabs who lived far away from their own home language, also to the non-native Arabist and other Muslims whose own language was not Arabic. These people could derive from these philological books what they did not understand of the meaning of the verses. The books explained the philological meaning of the words as the philologists understood them and as the pure Arabs understood them.

Abū ʿUbayda studied in his book Mağāz al-Qurʾān how the vocabulary in the Qurʾān is used in order to understand its meaning, supporting his interpretation mainly with verses of Arab speech and their manner of using these words in their language.¹⁵

Abū ʿUbayda thinks that this explanation of the vocabulary of the Qurʾān by referring to the Arab poets and their speech would help those people who were living (during his period) far away from their own home and from the pure Arab homeland. So he felt that he had to link the language of the present to the language of the past to keep these people in touch with their mother tongue in order to understand the meaning of the Qurʾān.

This is his reason for writing his book as we can conclude from his introduction, when he says that the Arab Muslim forefathers did not have any difficulty in understanding the meaning of the words of the Qurʾān because it was the same as their mother tongue and was familiar to them.¹⁶ He felt that it is important to understand the meaning of

the Qurʾān and so wrote a book mentioning how ancient Arabs used the language and how the Qurʾān used the language in the same way.

The philologists themselves differ in their explanation of the words of the Qurʾān. We see that Abū ʿUbaida seldom supports his explanation with statements from previous commentators like Abū ʿAmr b. al-ʿAlāʾ and Muḡāhid. He also seldom supports his interpretation with statements by the prophet Muhammad or one of His followers.

By contrast we see that al-Farrāʾ, who was contemporary with Abū ʿUbaida and one of the experts on syntax and philology, was keen to mention the interpretation of these commentators alongside the philological explanation which he aimed to provide, although he did mention the philological explanation first.

By "Maḡāz", Abū ʿUbaida meant the philological meaning of this word: crossing, passage, corridor, way (maḡhab). The word maḡāz in his mind means how the words are actually used. It did not mean to him what it means to us now, in the hands of a student of rhetoric, namely the opposite of fact (ḥaqīqa).¹⁷ His treatment of the verses containing similes does not differ from his treatment of the rest of the verses of the Qurʾān. It is purely philological comment. He explains the meaning of the words and supports his comments with pre-Islamic poems or with instances drawn from Arab speech. He wants to show that the way the words are used in the Qurʾān is the same as the way they were used by the Arab in everyday speech. He mentions the simile,

considering it as (a usage) mağāz, without giving any detail or explanation.¹⁸

If we examine Maʿānī al-Qurʾān by al-Farrāʾ we see that it contains a good selection of philological material which is such as would be offered by any other small Arabic dictionary. Most of the time he mentions all the philological meanings of the word, then he selects one philological meaning which he thinks is the right one because it is familiar in the speech of the Arab. He supports his preference with citation from Arab poets and their use of the language.

Al-Farrāʾ goes more deeply into philology than Abū ʿUbaida because he was the head of a syntactical school in Kufa.¹⁹ Therefore al-Farrāʾ was more interested in grammatical questions than Abū ʿUbaida.²⁰ He was also interested in analysing the philological meaning of the words and mentioning their different inflection.²¹ He is more thorough than Abū ʿUbaida in his examination of rhetorical matters in analysing the simile and explaining its basis.²² The word tamṭil is generally synonymous with the word taṣbīh in the philologist's work as the language does not differentiate between them. We will see that the commentators do not differentiate between them either, because from the language they understand them as being the same.

Another philological matter in the philologist's work is the different readings of some words in the Qurʾān. These different readings were thought of as reflecting different pronunciations used by the different tribes. The philologists paused at this point in order to explain the philological meaning conveyed in each reading, supporting each with

illustrations from the speech of the Arabs and their poetry. They depend on the statement of the prophet who said:

(10) "نزل القرآن بسبع لغات كلها كاف شاف"

I discuss the books of Abū 'Ubaida and al-Farrā' in general terms for the most part and do not concentrate on the simile, because the simile in their books does not appear as a specific topic but is treated in the same way as all the other verses, especially by Abū 'Ubaida. I have to mention also that their quotations and the quotations of others whose books I have studied are kept in their language (Arabic) in order to show their exact meaning and their own expression about the subject. But all these quotations and the verses of the Qur'ān which appear in Arabic throughout the thesis are translated into English in an appendix at the end of the thesis.

Al-Mubarrid's and Ibn Qutaiba's books

Abū 'Ubaida and al-Farrā' are good representatives of the philological method. But I mention al-Mubarrid and Ibn Qutaiba along with them as they were philologists too, although their books are not pure philological works like the books of Abū 'Ubaida and al-Farrā'.

Al-Mubarrid's book is not a philological, explanatory book on the Qur'ān and he did not write his book to explain the verses of the Qur'ān but I mention it with this group because the book is rich in philological matters in general. He mentions the simile in a special chapter in his book and he mentions some verses of the Qur'ān containing simile. His explanation of them was philological rather than literary, so I prefer to categorise him among these writers. He divides

the simile into four kinds,²³ but most of what he says in support of his interpretation is taken from Arab poetry, and only sometimes does he mention verses from the Qur'ān. He concentrates on explaining the philological meaning of the words, but his book is not without the occasional rhetorical remark.²⁴

Kitāb Muškil Al-Qur'ān by Ibn Qutaiba, unlike al-Mubarrid's book, is not written on the language in general and it is not like Abū 'Ubaida's and al-Farrā' 's books which are written to explain the philological meaning of the Qur'ānic words, verse by verse. Ibn Qutaiba wrote his book in order to explain some verses which are difficult for the public to understand and also to reply to the doubters who ask many questions about some verses which they find difficult to understand.²⁵ He replied to them by supporting his answer mainly with the speech of the Arabs and their poetry or with the statements of the Prophet Muḥammad or one of His followers showing the figurative expression of the verse or metaphor as the Arab used them. I categorise Ibn Qutaiba among the philologists because he influenced them very clearly in his book. He influenced them by mentioning some rhetorical issues throughout his interpretation of the verses of the Qur'ān. He refers to the statements of the philologists when he explains the philological meanings of the words.

We see his effect on them in another respect, when he supports his interpretation with verses of Arab poetry and their speech in order to show that this word or this use of words was familiar among the true Arabs and that they used it before and after the period of the revelation of the Qur'ān.

But the important thing about Ibn Qutaiba's book is that he did not understand the mağāz as Abū 'Ubaida understands it from the philological meaning of the word, namely crossing or passage. He already understood it rather as the opposite of "fact", as the rhetorical specialists understand it now in the well-known antithesis mağāz/ḥaqīqa.²⁶ Unfortunately, Ibn Qutaiba did not devote a special chapter to the simile in his book, but his remarks about it are spread throughout the book.

Sometimes Ibn Qutaiba mentions some verses containing similes from the philological aspect only or from the grammatical and philological aspects without touching on its rhetorical aspect. One interesting thing in his book is his defence of the use of mağāz in the Qur'ān and his reply to those who denied the existence of mağāz in the Qur'ān. He says that anyone who denies the existence of mağāz in the Qur'ān does not understand the philology of the Qur'ān. He also says that mağāz existed not only in the Qur'ān but even in the other Holy Books.

Generally in all these philological books we see that the interest of the philologists in the purely philological aspects of the verses containing similes prevented them from going into a detailed explanation of the meaning of the verses in general as the commentators do. This prevented them from detailing the rhetorical aspect of the verse. The important thing for the philologists is to explain philologically the meaning of each word in the verses

and to explain how the Arabs used the same words or the same phrase in their speech.

Other philological material in the Qur'ānic similes

In the verses containing similes in the Qur'ān there is other philological material like homophone-antonyms and metathesis. I mention them because I am studying the philological aspect of the Qur'ānic simile.

Al-Didd, in the philologist's use, means a word which has two different meanings. The Arabs used this type of word in their language. They called two opposite things by one name in order to convey vagueness of expression and also from their liking for striking effect. This subject creates arguments between the philologists: some of them support it and emphasise that the Arabs sometimes used words like these in their speech.

Aḥmad b. Fāris is one of these philologists who wrote a book proving the existence of this philological material in the Arabic language.²⁷ Some of them denied its existence in Arabic and denied that the Arab used one word for two opposite meanings. They tried to interpret these words which were uttered by the ancient Arabs themselves. Ibn Durustawāih is one of the group who wrote a book denying this philological material in the Arabic language.²⁸

There is another idea which is reasonable and which the mind might accept; namely, that although it is impossible that the Arab used one name for two different things, it could be that one word was used by one tribe of Arabs and another word by another tribe. Then one tribe would hear the word from another and the word became the designation

for two different things. For example, 'al-gawn meant "white" in one tribal language and the same word was used for "black" in another tribal language. Each took the word from the other, and in time this one word was used both for the colour black and for the colour white.

It might be that one word was used for two different things for social reasons. For example, out of optimism and also out of good manners,²⁹ we call the blind "seeing" (endowed with eyesight). We resort to the homophone-antonyms even in our colloquial language by way of sarcasm. For example, we call a madman "sane", and we use the word "generous" for the avaricious man.

However, whatever the reason for the existence of this philological material in the Arabic language, it was very little used in the speech of the Arabs, and as the Qur'^{ān} was revealed in accordance with the speech of the Arabs so we see the language of the Qur'^{ān} also used this material very little. How little it appears in the Qur'^{ān} can be seen from the fact that there are only six verses where one word is used for two opposite things out of all the 94 verses of the Qur'^{ān}ic simile.

In the work of commentators like Ṭabarī, Zamah^ṣarī and Rāzī we can see the difference between them when they interpret some words which have two different meanings, for example with the verse:

(11) "وَأَسْرُوا النَّدَامَةَ لَمَّا رَأَوُا الْعَذَابَ."³⁰

The verb asarrū is considered to be a homophone-antonym which has two different meanings. One is the original meaning, "hidden", and

another meaning is the opposite, which means "appearance".

Ṭabarī does not consider this verb to be a homophone-antonym. He mentions only the original meaning of the word, but Zamahṣarī and Razi mention the two opposite meanings and they interpret the verse according to these different meanings.

If we look at these words in the Qur'ānic simile we see that the two opposite meanings do not affect the beauty of the simile or reduce the impact of the wonderful nature-picture of the words. I think that each meaning gives an additional beauty to the simile as we see with this verse:

(12) "الله نور السموات والارض ، مثل نوره كمشكاة فيها مصباح • المصباح في زجاجة"³¹

Whatever the meaning of the miškāt in this verse it does not reduce the impact of the simile. Miškāt either means "niche with an exit" in the Abyssinian language, as Al-Buḥārī says, or it means "without exit" as in the Arabic language, as Abū^c Ubaida says.³² These two meanings do not affect the beauty of the simile, which means that the light of Allāh is likened to the light of this miṣbāḥ which lightened this deep, dark place.

The substitution

Another philological aspect of the verses containing simile in the Qur'ān is substitution. Although it is very little used in these verses I have not ignored it.

Substitution means that one letter was replaced by another in a word, keeping all the other letters in their places. This philological

phenomenon also creates an argument between the philologists, but it was not so strong as with the homophone-antonyms. Ibn Fāris said that substitution is the customary practice of the Arab,³³ but Abū al-Tayyib has another view, namely that the Arab did not use one letter instead of another intentionally but that they are different words with the same meaning.³⁴

I agree with this idea because it is impossible that one tribe changed one letter to another in a word to use both with one meaning, but each tribe would have used each letter in their language and then each one took it from the other. We can see this philological subject-matter nowadays in our colloquial language too. For example, the people in Baghdad pronounce the word kam by saying cam, replacing the letter kāf with the letter gīm. They also change the letter qāf to kāf. For example in the word qāla, they pronounce it as kāla. We see that the people in Mosul³⁵ change the letter rā to gain in most words of their language, for example they say agid instead of arid and ištağa instead of ištara.

However, there are only four verses containing similes which contain a substitution.³⁶ As a matter of fact the substitution did not affect the meaning of the simile or reduce its beauty, because both readings of the word give the same meaning as in this verse:

(13) "أنا أوحينا إلى موسى أن اضرب بعصاك البحر فانفلق فكان كل فرق كالطور العظيم".³⁷

Either it was read as falq with letter "l" or farq with letter "r".

It means that each part of the sea is likened to a great mountain.

The commentators' method in analysing the Qur'ānic simile

I discussed in the part on commentators four interpreters who represent four different methods in their interpretation of the Holy Qur'ān. The difference between them derives from their various interests in one aspect of the Qur'ān and not another and also as a result of the different viewpoints from which they look at the Qur'ān.

One of them is interested in the uninterrupted chain of authorities on which a tradition is based (isnād) until it reaches the Prophet in order to explain the meaning of a word philologically, or to interpret the meaning of the verse as a whole, as Ṭabarī did in his book Ġāmi' al-bayān 'an ta'wīl āy al-Qur'ān. Some of them are interested in the rhetoric in the Qur'ān, like Zamaḥṣarī in his book al-Kaṣṣāf. He gave his attention to the rhetorical material in the verses containing simile more than any other aspect. In his introduction he considers rhetoric as the first science which the interpreter has to know. Some of them are philosophers who are interested in introducing philosophic material throughout their interpretation of the Qur'ān, as Rāzī did in his book al-Tafsīr al-kabīr. He interprets the verses intellectually and logically in order to prove one of his philosophical theories. His interpretation is far removed from Arab usage.

The last group is made up of the syntactical interpreters. Abū Hayyān represents this method in his book al-Baḥr al-muḥīṭ. He is interested in mentioning the desinential inflection in the verses containing simile or any other verses in explaining the rules of syntax and its principles and the difference in the various syntactical views.

How the simile is explained in each method

In Tabarī's interpretation of the Qur'ānic simile he concentrates on the philological explanation as spoken by the Prophet. He tries to attribute each philological interpretation of the word in the Qur'ān to the Prophet Muḥammad. He is interested mainly in what the Prophet said about a particular word or verse without paying any attention to its philological interpretation. Sometimes he resorts to quoting from the philologists, like Abū 'Ubaida and Farrā' (if he does not have an interpretation by the Prophet) to prove that this kind of simile was used by Arabs before and that it was familiar to them. But if he has a statement from the Prophet he does not mention the philologists' statements.

I think that Tabarī's method was created as a reaction against the pure philologists' method like that of Abū 'Ubaida. We have discussed how Abū 'Ubaida related each word to the speech of the Arab and how the Arabs used a particular word (among themselves) without paying any attention to the interpretation of the early commentators who had heard this interpretation from the Prophet himself or one of His followers. The important thing for them is how the Arab used these words.

So, Tabarī's method is in opposition to Abū 'Ubaida's method. He wants to relate each explanation of the word to the Prophet and not to the Arab if he has both interpretations, and only if he does not have the Prophet's explanation does he return to Arab speech to explain the meaning of the word philologically. He rejects any philological

explanation if this explanation differs from the statements of the Prophet about this word. By contrast the philologists prefer the philological meaning if it differs from the explanation of the early commentators.

However, he explains the simile in a very simple way. He does not go on to give any detail in interpreting the simile. He does not differentiate between the taṣbīh and tamṭīl. Both are the same in his mind.

Zamaḥṣarī, in his interpretation, uses a lot of rhetorical material in his book. He is affected by ʿAbd al-Qāhir al-Ġurġānī in his rhetorical views. He took from him most of his ideas, and the only respect in which he differs from him is that he is not affected by al-Ġurġānī's view of differentiating between the taṣbīh and tamṭīl. Zamaḥṣarī considers them to be the same. He differentiates between the compound simile, which is when the thing being compared or the thing with which the other is compared is made up of more than one sentence, and the likeness between them is derived from an understanding of the meaning of the whole sentence, not from each part as compared with the other parts, and between the "part-by-part" simile which means that each part of the thing being compared is likened to each other part of the thing with which the other is compared.³⁸ Zamaḥṣarī always repeats the difference between these two kinds of simile throughout his explanation of the similes of the Qurʾān.

I think that this interest in giving the details of the division and sections in the simile is a result of the philological and syntactical

study of Zamahṣarī because both these studies create in the researcher a strong desire to think about these particular aspects.

We see another philological aspect in his interpretation of the simile in that he gives a reason for most of his philological explanation of the words which he mentions. This kind of explanation becomes a general aspect of his study. There is little support for his interpretation from the speech of the Arabs and their poetry in his book compared with the books of the philologists and even with Ṭabarī. He is just concerned with explaining in detail how the simile is created and its nature. He creates something new in his study in that he supports his explanation with the poetry of late poets "Muwalladīn" like Abū Tammām, al-Mutanabbī and al-Buḥturī.³⁹ No one before him supports his interpretation with their poetry. This is another aspect which appears as something new in his interpretation.

He also mentions syntax throughout his interpretation of the Qurʾānic simile. Syntax is of secondary importance in his assessment of the rhetoric in the Qurʾān. He does not ignore the philological material, although it is not foremost in his interpretation. Sometimes he explains the kind of thing with which the other is compared philologically and explains how the difference between the definite article and indefinite article has an effect on the nature of the simile.⁴⁰ On other occasions he follows the method of the philologists, who explain the words according to their use by the Arab.

Al-Rāzī relies on philosophy in his interpretation of the Qurʾānic simile or other verses in the Qurʾān. His interest in rhetoric comes

after his interest in philosophy. He mentions the position of the simile and the importance of it in the Qurʾān. He explains philosophically why Allāh used the simile a lot in His book and what the simile arouses in the heart of the reader.⁴¹ In his explanation of the simile he is influenced by Zamahṣarī. He also refers to the simile as tamṭīl, and he defines the simile in the same terms as Zamahṣarī although he adds something to the definition.⁴² He divides the basis of the simile into many different sections, which is his method in explaining all other aspects of the language of the Qurʾān. Even syntax does not escape his complex intellectual philosophy. Philology appears in his book from time to time although he does not go into it deeply or in any detail as he does with other philosophical aspects. He seldom supports his explanation with the speech of the Arab or their poetry.

Abū Hayyān is a syntactical expert, so he considers the science of syntax to be the most important thing which the interpreter of the Qurʾān should know.⁴³ Syntax is the main subject which he deals with throughout his book. There are no verses containing simile which escape his detailed syntactical explanation. Although he is very interested in syntax, he mentions the importance of knowing the speech of the Arab and the poetry in addition to a knowledge of syntax.⁴⁴ So we see him supporting his philological or syntactical explanation with Arab poetry. He does not agree with Zamahṣarī in supporting his explanation with the poetry of the late poets. Abū Hayyan supports his interpretation with the speech and poetry of the Arab which the

philologists mention before him. His interest in syntax does not prevent him from being interested in philology. When he explains the philological meaning of a word in the Qur'ānic simile he mentions most of the philologists' statements about this word and its use.⁴⁵ I think that this additional interest in philology is a result of his interest in syntax, because both sciences are very closely linked. He devotes most of his attention to the desinential inflection in the verse containing simile and its position, not to the comparison in the verse or how the simile is used or its nature. He mentions the syntactical statements which have been made about these verses and sometimes he mentions only the syntactical aspects of the Qur'ānic simile. Like other commentators he does not differentiate between tašbīh and tamtīl. He explains the simile in a simple way as Tabarī does, without concentrating on the thing being compared or the thing with which the other is compared or the basis of the comparison.

General note

We have seen that none of the fourth group of commentators differentiate between tašbīh and tamtīl. They consider both of them to be the same because they look at the philological meaning of the two words, which gives them the same meaning. Even Zamahṣarī, who is affected by the headmaster of rhetoric "al-Ğurġānī" who differentiates between the two, does not change his mind about the meaning of them and regards them as the same. There is another general point which encompasses all of them, in that when they mention the philological aspects of the verses containing simile they resort to philologists like

Abū 'Ubaida and Farrā' to take from them their statements about the meaning of the words and they mention the same poetry and the same speech as they did.

Although the method of this group of commentators does differ from the method of the philologists, all the commentators give philology a special importance which they believe the commentator should be aware of before he starts to interpret the Holy Qur'ān. They believe that ignorance of the philology of the Qur'ān leads to a misunderstanding of its meaning.

So we have seen that when the philologists compared the style of the Qur'ān with the style of Arab speech to show the similarity between them, they prefer the philological explanation to the interpretation of the early commentators. We see in this group of commentators one of them, like Tabarī, does not acknowledge the philological explanation, if he has an interpretation belonging to the Prophet.

Another type is the intellectual philosopher, who attributes to the word in the Qur'ān a great deal of meaning in order to fix his philosophical viewpoint. Another is the rhetorical expert, who concentrates on rhetoric, although his explanation is without intellectual interpretation, giving the word more than one or two meanings. Then there is the syntactical expert, who is concerned with explaining the desinential inflection in the verse and the type of syntax used.

The impact of the Qurʾān in creating the art of rhetoric

The aim of the rhetorical experts in their study is an awareness of the inimitable style of the Qurʾān and to explain the secret of its inimitability. This aim is purely religious, initiated to serve the Qurʾān and fix the Islamic faith in the people's minds.

But there are another two secondary aims in studying rhetoric which are: criticism in order to differentiate between good and bad speech, and a scientific aim by which rhetoric helps to create literature (poetry and prose). There are hardly any introductions to Arabic rhetorical books which do not mention these three aims, especially the books which study the miraculous style of the Qurʾān. The Qurʾān had a great effect in creating rhetoric and in developing it. It led people to write down rhetorical rules and principles. This effect was not widespread in the early Islamic period because the Arabs at that time were busy establishing the foundation of Islam and spreading the Islamic religion outside the Arab land. But rhetoric was established in the Abbasid period when the Arabs settled in the countries which they had conquered and after they had made contact with other peoples and their education and after the translation of Greek, Syrian and Persian books into Arabic.

Therefore, we see that a study of the Qurʾān helps a great deal in building the foundation of rhetoric and in establishing its rules. This effect was seen clearly even in the early philological interpretation of the Qurʾān. We have seen that the books of Abū ʿUbaida and Farrāʾ were not without a few rhetorical remarks. These few rhetorical remarks

were considered to be a landmark pointing the way to a widespread study of rhetoric, especially during the fourth and fifth centuries (A.H.).

The rhetorical remarks were not only written by rhetorical experts, but were also made by commentators, philologists, syntax experts, poets, writers and cultured people, as we have seen in the work of some of them. But in any case a study of the miraculous style of the Qurʾān is considered to be the most important factor in creating Arabic rhetoric.

The study of the iʿgāz (inimitable style) of the Qurʾān

The people who study this aspect of the Qurʾān rely mainly on studying rhetoric in order to understand the meaning of the Qurʾān. Knowledge of its rules, its style and expression leads to proving its supernatural nature. Al-Rummānī did this in his study al-Nukat fī iʿgāz al-Qurʾān⁴⁶ and al-Bāqillānī in his book iʿgāz al-Qurʾān⁴⁷ and al-Ġurġānī in his book Dalāʾil al-Iʿgāz.⁴⁸ These writers divide their studies into many parts, all relating to rhetoric. They try to find out which type of rhetoric is more eloquent than the other and to discover the secret of the inimitable style of the Qurʾān by looking at its rhetoric.

Some of them rely in their study on a comparison between the style of the Qurʾān and the style of classical poetry in order to differentiate between perfect style and inferior style, as al-Bāqillānī does in his book. With regard to the simile, al-Bāqillānī denies that the miraculous style of the Qurʾān is due to the nature of its similes, because

the simile, in his view, can be learnt. The inimitable style of the verse containing simile in his view is due to the position of the words and to the connection between them and the simile. However, he considers the inimitable style of the verse containing metaphor to be produced by the metaphor itself, because he believes that the metaphor does not have to be learnt.

Some of them produced a new kind of rhetoric which added to the work of previous rhetorical experts, as ʿAbd al-Qāhir al-Ġurġānī did in his two books Dalāʾil al-ʿġāz and Asrār al-balāġa by embarking on a new type of study which differs from the study of early critics like Abū Hilāl al-ʿAskarī (theory study). Al-Ġurġānī created a practical study which depends on intellectuality.

Others are interested in demonstrating the wonderful rhetorical pictures in the Qurʾān and occasionally mention a verse of poetry to make a comparison between them, as al-Rummānī did. He explains very well and in detail the thing being compared and the thing with which the other is compared and the basis of the comparison. He is considered to be the first one who explains in detail the rhetoric of the Qurʾān. He adds some new rhetorical rules and establishes several other types of rhetoric like brevity, metaphor and simile. However, he does not digress from his subject, which is the study of the inimitable style of the Qurʾān, throughout all his rhetorical explanations.

We see that this group differs from the philologists in their view of the study of the Qurʾān. For instance, we see that al-Bāqillānī finds fault with the philologists and syntactical people who wrote about the

philology and syntax in the Qurʾān and did not go on to explain the miraculous style of the Qurʾān. He thinks that this part of a study is more worthwhile than philology or syntax.⁴⁹ This shows us that they are not interested in philology for its own sake.

The simile in literary and rhetorical works

The study of the simile in this kind of work differs from the studies of philologists and commentators. The literary people are not interested in the philological meaning of a word or the use or lack of use of this word or a particular kind of simile by the Arab, as the philologists and some commentators are.

We have seen that the literary people are interested only in explaining the kind of simile used and its type and its division. They are interested also in mentioning either a verse from the Qurʾān as Abū Hilāl does⁵⁰ or a verse from poetry as Ibn Rašīq does⁵¹ and categorising it under each type or each division. This is not prominent in this kind of study because it is considered to be a purely literary and rhetorical study. They concentrate on the rhetorical subject and its definition. They do not pay attention to whether this was familiar to the Arab or not.

There is another aspect which they acknowledge. They support their rhetorical interpretation with quotations from pre-Islamic poets and late poets like al-Buḥturī, al-Mutanabbī, Abū Nuwās . . . etc. as Abū Hilāl and Ibn Rašīq do in their books. But we have seen that the philologists and commentators do not support their interpretation with

the late poets except Zamahšarī who does.

In the early literary works we have seen that al-Gāhiz, for example, did not differentiate between the tašbīh and tamtil, although he mentioned the simile as a technical term.⁵² But he was still looking at the philological meaning of these two words. Other literary experts do likewise, until we reach al-Gurḡānī.

Abū Hilāl was influenced by al-Rummānī in most of his study of the simile.⁵³ He took from him his division of the simile and he mentions the same verses of the Qurʾān as al-Rummānī did. He also mentions the definition and division of the rhetorical subject-matter and then for each part quotes a verse of the Qurʾān then a verse of Arab speech. Then he mentions the poetry of the late poets. But with regard to the simile he just mentions a verse from the Qurʾān exactly as al-Rummānī did.

The similarity between Abū Hilāl and Ibn Sinān al-Hafāḡī is very strong because both men attributed two aims to rhetoric or to the faṣāḡa, as Ibn Sinān calls it.⁵⁴ There is the literary aim, which leads to a knowledge of literature, and the religious aim which leads to an awareness of the inimitability of the Qurʾān.

However, Ibn Sinān talks briefly about simile, taking all that he says from al-Rummānī as well, just as Ibn Rašīq does. Although Ibn Rašīq devotes a chapter in his book to the simile,⁵⁵ he takes all his interpretation from al-Rummānī, except that he supports his explanation mostly with poetry, not with verses from the Qurʾān as al-Rummānī did.

I discuss al-Šarīf al-Raḍī's book in the chapter on the work of the literary and rhetorical experts, although this book studies more particularly the metaphor in the Qurʾān and not the simile. But I mention it because al-Šarīf quotes a few verses in which he describes the simile as metaphor.⁵⁶ He uses the term istiʿāra even for other rhetorical subjects like brevity.

It seems that the word metaphor in his mind means maḡāz, although he describes in close detail the metaphor in each verse of the Qurʾān. His book is considered to be the first one to discuss the rhetorical subject of metaphor and maḡāz in the Qurʾān in a book specifically devoted to the subject and not only in a special chapter in a book as others do.

Al-Šarīf means by maḡāz its rhetorical meaning, and not what Abū ʿUbayda means by it, although both books have the same title. This book represents another direction in the study of rhetoric and maḡāz in the Qurʾān.

The aim of this study differs from the aim of previous writers. The aim of the early study by Abū ʿUbayda and Farrāʾ is to remove the difficulty by interpreting the meaning of the word in the Qurʾān. Then later, in the work of al-Ġāhiz and Ibn Qutaiba, this aim becomes a defence of the Qurʾān against those doubters who ask many questions about some verses because they misunderstand the maḡāz in the Qurʾān. Then comes this study of al-Šarīf al-Raḍī which aims to explain the beauty and the wonderful nature which maḡāz added to the verses of the Qurʾān.

If al-Šarīf is considered to be the first man who devotes a book to the metaphor in the Qurʾān, then there is another writer who also devotes a book to explaining the simile in the Qurʾān, that is Ibn Nāqiya al-Baġdādī.⁵⁷ This book is not purely rhetorical nor purely philological nor purely literary, but it is a rhetorical, philological, literary, syntactical and commentary book at the same time. It is better for this book to be called encyclopedic, as it contains each aspect of the science of the Arabic language.

The last one who is mentioned with this group is ʿAbd al-Qāhir al-Ġurġānī and his two books Dalāʾil al-Īġāz and Asrār al-balāġa.⁵⁸ This was the last author I consulted because I think that all the books which were written after him repeat what this man said in his two books. The admiration of these writers for him prompted them to write books which are like miniature versions of his two books, some of them abbreviating what he says in his two books. Examples of these books are: Nihāyat al-Īġāz fī dirāyat al-Īġāz by al-Rāzī (d. 606 A.H.) and al-Tibyān fī ʿilm al-bayān al-muṭṭaliʿ ʿala Īġāz al-Qurʾān by Ibn al-Zamalkānī (d. 651 A.H.) and al-Tirāz by al-ʿAlawī (d. 749 A.H.).

Although most of the rhetorical subjects mentioned by ʿAbd al-Qāhir al-Ġurġānī, like figurative expression, simile, comparison and metaphor were discussed earlier by other rhetorical experts, they did not study these subjects and their types and divisions in such detail or as deeply as he did.

The most important thing in his study with regard to the simile is his division of tašbīh and tamṭīl. He considered the tašbīh to be a general term and the tamṭīl to be a particular term. So each tamṭīl is

tašbīh, but not each tašbīh is tamtīl. He also explains the compound simile, which is the basis of the simile in these verses, as being intellectual and taken from more than one sentence. This analysis of the compound simile is a new study of the simile which al-Ğurğānī discovered. But although he supports most of his interpretation with poetry and seldom with the verses of the Qurʾān, I mention him as he has great importance in Arabic rhetoric-history. He established the rules of Arabic rhetoric and its principles. So it is impossible to write a chapter on the simile in the work of literary and rhetorical experts without mentioning the father of the rhetorical experts and the founder of Arabic rhetoric, that is ʿAbd al-Qāhir al-Ğurğānī.

Footnotes to Introduction

1. Al-Aṭraqḡī, Wāḡida Maḡīd, al-Tašbīhāt al-Qur'āniyya wa al-bī'a al-ʿarabiyya, p.34.
2. Ibidem.
3. Al-ʿAskarī, Abū Hilāl al-Hasan b. ʿAbdullāh b. Saḥīl, al-Sināʿatāin, p.243.
4. Al-Ġurḡānī, ʿAbd al-Qāhir, Asrār al-balāḡa, p.111.
5. Al-Mubarrid, Abū al-ʿAbbas Muḥammad b. Yazīd, al-Kāmil, Vol. 2, p.100.
6. Ibid., p.69.
7. Q.29, 41.
8. Beeston, A.F.L., Journal of Arabic Literature, Vol. IV, p.94.
9. See pp. 39-41.
10. See p.41.
11. As al-ʿAskari did, see below p.153.
12. Al-Rummānī, Abū al-Ḥasan ʿAlī b. ʿĪsa, al-Nukat fī l'ḡāz al-Qur'ān, p.80.
13. Al-ʿAskarī, p.239.
14. Al-Ġurḡānī, op.cit., p.68.
15. See p. 50.
16. Abū ʿUbaida, Maʿmar b. al-Muṭanna al-Taimī, Maḡāz al-Qur'ān, the introduction, p.8. See also below, p. 52.
17. See p.50.
18. See pp. 52-53.
19. A city in South Iraq.
20. See p.60.
21. See p.61.
22. See pp.58-60.
23. See p. 63.
24. See pp.64-66.
25. See pp.72-74.
26. See p.68.
27. See p. 76.
28. See p. 76.
29. Al-Sāmarrāʾī, Ibrahīm, al-Taṭawwur al-Luḡawī al-tārīḫī, p.102.

30. Q.10, 55.
31. Q.24, 35.
32. See p. 79.
33. See p. 82.
34. See p. 82.
35. A city in North Iraq.
36. See pp. 83-84.
37. Q.26, 63.
38. See p.111.
39. See p.108.
40. See p. 106.
41. See p.120.
42. See p.119.
43. See p.123.
44. See p.127.
45. See pp.125-126.
46. See p. 140.
47. See p. 144.
48. See p.174.
49. See p. 144.
50. See p.153.
51. See pp.157-158.
52. See p. 151.
53. See p. 153.
54. See p. 158.
55. See p. 157.
56. See p. 154.
57. See p. 160.
58. See p. 170.

PART ONE

GENERAL NOTES ABOUT THE LANGUAGE AND SIMILE

The language in the philologists' view

Before we start to talk about the discussion of the Qur'ānic simile in the works of the philologists, we have to know what they mean by philology (Luḡa).

The philologists define language as follows:

- (1) " بأنها أصوات يعبر بها كل قوم عن أغراضهم " ¹ . " وأما تصرفها ومعرفة حروفها فأنها فُعلة من لغوت اي تكلمت أصلها لُغُوَةٌ كَكُورَةٍ وَقُلَّةٍ وَجُبَّةٍ " ² . " وفي المحكم الجمع لغات و لُغُونٌ والنسبة اليها لُغَوِيٌّ ولا تقل لُغَوِيٌّ " ³ . " قال الأزهري : و اللغة من الاسماء الناقصة واصلها لُغُوَةٌ من لغا اذا تكلم واللغاما لا يعد من أولاد الابل في دية او غيرها لصغرهما " ⁴ . " واللُغُو النُطْق يقال هذه لُغَتُهُم التي يَلُغُونُ بها اي ينطقون و لُغَوِي الطير أصواتها و الطير تَلُغِي بأصواتها اي تَنغَم " ⁵ .

Ibn Fāris says about the Luḡa :

- (2) " ان في لغو معنيان أحدهما يدل على الشئ لا يُعْتَدُّ به و الآخر على اللُهِج بالشيء فالأول اللُغُو: ما لا يعتد به من اولاد الابل في الدية . قال العبدى :

او مائةٍ تجعلُ اولادها لُغَوًا و عُرِصَ المائةِ الجَلْدُ
يقال منه لغا يلغو لُغَوًا وذلك في لُغُو الأيمان . واللُغَا هو اللُغُو
بعينه قال الله تبارك وتعالى " لا يؤاخذكم الله باللُغُو في أيمانكم " ⁶
اي ما لم تعقدوه بقلوبكم . وفي الحديث الشريف " من قال في الجمعة
صه فقد لغا " اي تَكَلَّمَ . والثاني قولهم : لُغَوِيٌّ بالأمر اذا لُهِجَ به
ويقال ان اشتقاق اللغة منه اي يَلُهِجُ صاحبها بها " ⁶ .

Al-Suyūṭī in his book al-Muzhir says:

- (3) " وقال ابن الحاجب في مختصره: حدّ اللغة كل لفظ وضع لمعنى . وقال الأسنوي في شرح منهاج الاصول: اللغات عبارة عن الألفاظ الموضوعة للمعاني ."⁷

The origin of the language

The philologists differ about the origin of the language. Is it the result of divine inspiration or conventional usage? Most of them say that the origin of the language is conventional usage and not inspiration. Ibn Ġinnī discusses the subject in his book al-Ḥaṣā'is. He says:

- (4) " هذا موضع محج الى فضل تأمل . غير أن أكثر أهل النظر على أن أصل اللغة انما هو تواضع و اصطلاح لا وحي و توقيف"⁸

But Ibn Fāris is one of those who say that the language is inspiration.

He says in his book Fiqh al-luġa :

- (5) " ان لغة العرب توقيف ودليل ذلك قوله جل ثناؤه "و علم آدم الأسماء كلها" فكان ابن عباس يقول: علّمه الاسماء كلها و هي هذه الأسماء التي يتعارفها الناس من دابة وأرض و سهل و جبل و جمل و حمار و أشباه ذلك..."⁹

His evidence in support of his idea is:

- (6) " اجماع العلماء على الاحتجاج بلغة القوم فيما يختلفون فيه أو يتفقون عليه ثم احتجاجهم بأشعارهم و لو كانت اللغة مواضعة و اصطلاحا لم يكن اولئك في الاحتجاج بهم بأولى منا في الاحتجاج بنا لو اصطلاحنا على لغة اليوم و لا فرق"¹⁰

The etymology of language is further evidence of Ibn Fāris view. He says that the Arabs use etymology in their speech and derived some words

from others. He says:

(7) "ان العرب تشتق بعض الكلام من بعض و اسم الجن مشتق من الاجتتان وان الجيم والنون تدلان أبدا على الستر. تقول العرب للذرع: جُنَّةٌ ، وأجَنَّهُ الليل ، وهذا جنين اي هو في بطن امه . وان الانس من الظهور يقولون: آنست الشيء : أبصرته وعلى هذا سائر كلام العرب علم ذلك من علم و جهله من جهل" ¹¹

Then he adds:

(8) " وهذا مبنى أيضا على ما تقدم من أن اللغة توقيف فان الذي وقفنا على ان الاجتتان الستر هو الذي وقفنا على ان الجن مشتق منه وليس لنا اليم ان نخترع ولا ان نقول غير ما قالوه ولا أن نقيس قياسا لم يقيسوه لان في ذلك فساد اللغة وبطلان حقائقها" . ¹²

This group thinks that Allāh teaches languages to Ādam and Ādam

teaches them to his sons. Then Ādam's sons separate on the earth.

So each nation has a different language. Ibn Ġinnī tells us about this group's idea when he says:

(9) " ان الله سبحانه علم آدم أسماء جميع المخلوقات بجميع اللغات : العربية والفارسية والسريانية والعبرانية والرومية وغير ذلك من سائر اللغات فكان آدم وولده يتكلمون بها ثم ان ولده تفرقوا في الدنيا وعلق كل منهم بلغة من تلك اللغات فغلبت عليه واضمحلت عنه ما سواها لبعده عهدهم بها" . ¹³

But the second group thinks that the language is conventional usage,

i.e. that the people created a word or name for everything they needed in order to differentiate between them.

Ibn Sīda tells us about their idea as well. He says:

(10) " وذلك كأن يجتمع حكيمان أو ثلاثة فصاعدا يريدون أن يبينوا الأشياء المعلومات فيضعوا لكل واحد منهما سمة ولفظا اذا ذكر عرف به ما سمّاه ليمتاز به من غيره" . ¹⁴

Ibn Ġinnī and Ibn Sīda answer the other group who, like Ibn Fāris, support their view with a verse of the Qur'ān which is "And He taught Ādam all the names".¹⁵ They say that this verse is not decisive evidence, because it might mean that Allāh allowed Ādam to name everything.

They say about this verse as evidence:

(11) "وهذا ليس باحتجاج قاطع وذلك أنه قد يجوز أن يكون تأويله أقدر آدم على أن يضع عليها وهذا المعنى من عند الله سبحانه لا محالة فان كان ذلك محتملا غير مستنكر سقط الاستدلال به".¹⁶

In addition, there is a third group who say that the origin of language is created from the sounds which are heard. Ibn Ġinnī agrees with this view. He says:

(12) "وذهب البعض الآخر إلى أن أصل اللغات كلها هو من الأصوات السميعة كدوي الريح وحنين الرعد وخرير الماء وسحيج الحمار ونعيق الغراب وصهيل الفرس ونزيب الطيبي ونحو ذلك ثم ولدت اللغات عن ذلك فيما بعد وهذا عندي وجه صالح ومذهب متقبل".¹⁷

This, in my view, is the most likely; normally, that most words are derived from sounds for things perceptible through the senses in a specific environment.

These sounds became common usage among people who lived in that place and then became a part of language for them.

The simile in the Arab environment

The environment forms the words of a language by producing names for its material things. For example, the language of the Arabs is taken from their place of residence. They were affected by their surroundings and by what they saw in the desert such as camels, water,

rain, winds ... etc. So their language became rich in these words and many others which are common in a desert surrounding. For example, they frequently use the word "water" because they live in a place which needs plenty of water to protect them from thirst and death.

As the language is affected by the place generally, so the simile must be affected by it too. The simile is considered a more refined form of expression.

It differs from language to language according to what dominates in that language with regard to the familiar picture of nature among the people who speak that language.

For example the Arabic language in the pre-Islamic period and at the time of the revelation of the Qur'ān has a special simile. The nature of the desert forced this kind of simile upon the language. As we see, the pre-Islamic poet Ka'b b. Zuhair describes fire by saying:

(13) وَ نَارٍ كَسَحَرِ الْعُودِ يَرْفَعُ ضَوْفَهَا مَعَ اللَّيْلِ هَبَّاتُ الرِّيحِ الصَّوَارِدِ¹⁸

The philological meaning of the simile (tašbīh)

The philological meaning of al-tašbīh is al-tamtil.¹⁹

In philological books such as al-Muḥaṣṣas by Ibn Sida we see him saying:

(14) "أَنَّ التَّشْبِيهَ وَالتَّشْبِيهَ الْمَثَلُ وَقَدْ تَشَابَهَ الشَّيْءَانِ وَاسْتَبَاهَا أَشْبَهُ كُلِّ وَاحِدٍ مِنْهُمَا صَاحِبُهُ وَشَبَّهَتْهُ أَيْاهُ شَبَّهَتْهُ بِهِ"²⁰

He also says:

(15) "الْمَشَابِيهَةُ وَالْمُضَارَعَةُ وَالْمَعَاثِلَةُ سِوَاهُ فِي اللُّغَةِ فَمِثْلُ وَمَثَلُ كَشَبَّهَ وَشَبَّهَ"²¹

In Lisān al-ʿArab we also see the same meaning. Ibn Manẓūr says:

- (16) "شبه إذا ساوى بين شيء وشيء" ²² "وأشبهت فلانا وشابهته واشتبه علي وتشابه الشيطان واشتبهها أشبه كل واحد منهما صاحبه وفي التنزيل "وأتوا به متشابهها" وهوليس من الاشتباه المشكل إنما هو من التشابه الذي هو بمعنى الاستواء" ²³

Al-Sabah has two objective meanings; the first one is that subscribed to by most of the philologists where they say:

- (17) "الشبه : شجرة كثيرة الشوك تشبه السَّعْرة وليست بها قال العجاج يصف رملا :
و بالفرنناد له امطي
الشبه : اسم شجر .
والمُشَبَّه : المصغر من النصِّي . والقباه : حب على لون الحُرْف يشرب للدوا .
والتَّشْبَهُان : نبت يشبه الثَّمام ويقال له الشَّهْبَان" ²⁴

The second objective meaning is adopted by some of the philologists where they say:

- (18) "الشَّبه والشَّبه النحاس يصبغ فيصقّر" ²⁵

Ibn Fāris comments on the Ṣabah by saying:

- (19) "ان الشبه من الجواهر الذي يشبه الذهب" ²⁶

Ibn Sīda gives a reason for calling copper Ṣabah when he says:

- (20) "لأنه إذا فعل به ذلك أشبه الذهب بلونه" ²⁷

We note from both explanations that the colour yellow is the common factor between them. So al-ṣabah has this name because of the colour yellow which is like the colour of gold.

I think that the first meaning of Ṣabah which means a kind of yellow plant is the original name, because the pre-Islamic Arabs might be more familiar with yellow plants than with gold or any other metal.

The yellow plants were closer to their mind and to the life of the desert.

The philological meaning of (Matal)

Al-matal is similar to al-šabah. In Lisān al-ʿArab we see:

- (21) "المثل بمعنى الشبه يقال هذا مثله ومثله كما يقال شبيهه وشبهه" ²⁸
and in al-Qāmūs:
29 "وقولهم تمثل به تشبه به ومثل الشيء بالشيء: سوى به وقدر تقديره"

Al-matal and al-šabah are the same in philological meaning, and the

word matal resembles the word šabah in al-taswiya, as

al-Gawharī and Ibn Manẓūr say: ³⁰ (22) "ان مثل كلمة تسوية"

Also Ibn Fāris says that all other meanings of the word matal give

the same meaning of al-taswiya. ³¹ The compilers of dictionaries

have almost all agreed that al-matal has derived from the meaning of

al-taswiya or al-šabah or al-naẓīr. ³²

The language has not differentiated between the tašbīh and tamtil. Both are the same. Al-tašbīh is tamtil and al-tamtil is tašbīh. We see this clearly in the first philological interpretations of the verses of the Qurʾān like those of Abū ʿUbaida and al-Farrāʾ, when they explain the tašbīh and the maḡāz in the Qurʾān. We will see that when we examine each of them in detail.

The simile between the true state of affairs and the figurative expression

Before we talk about the subject, we have to pause briefly to give the philological meaning of the "true state of affairs" Al-ḥaqīqa and the philological meaning of the figurative expression al-maḡāz.

Al-ḥaqīqa, as Ibn Fāris says, is:

- (23) "الحقيقة من قولنا: حق الشيء إذا وجب واشتقاقه من الشيء المحقق وهو المحكم يقال ثوبٌ محقق النسيج أي محكمه . فالحقيقة الكلام الموضوع موضعه الذي ليس باستعارة ولا تمثيل ولا تقديم فيه ولا تأخير"³³

And he says about the maḡāz:

- (24) "أنه مأخوذ من جاز يجوز إذا استنّ ماضياً تقول جازينا فلان و جاز علينا فارس وهذا هو الاصل ثم تقول يجوز أن تفعل كذا: أي ينفذ ولا يُرد ولا يمنع"³⁴

Then he adds:

- (25) "يعني ان الكلام الحقيقي يمضي لشئنه لا يعترض عليه وقد يكون غيره يجوز جوازه لقرنه منه الا أن فيه من تشبيه واستعارة وكف ما ليس في الاول."³⁵

But Ibn Ġinnī and Ibn Manẓūr define al-ḥaqīqa and al-maḡāz as follows:

- (26) "الحقيقة ما أقر في الاستعمال على أصل وضعه في اللغة والمجاز ما كان بضد ذلك"³⁶

Al-Fayrūz Ābādī says about al-ḥaqīqa that:

- (27) "الحقيقة ضد المجاز وحقه تحقيقاً صدقه والمحقق من الكلام الرصين"³⁷

and says about al-maḡāz:

- (28) "جاوز في كلامه إذا تكلم بالمجاز والمجاز خلاف الحقيقة."³⁸

The philologists differ with regard to the existence of the maḡāz in the language and they differ about which one is more frequently used. Ibn Fāris says that the ḥaqīqa is more used in language. He says:

- (29) "الحقيقة أكثر الكلام وأكثر آي القرآن و شعر العرب على هذا."³⁹

But Ibn Ġinnī says that the mağāz is far more frequently used in the language than the haqīqa. He says:

(30) "و اعلم ان اكثر اللغة مع تأمله مجاز لا حقيقة وذلك عامة الأفعال كجاء الصيف وانهمم الشتاء" ⁴⁰

and he also says:

(31) "ان هذه اللغة اكثرها جار على المجاز وقلما يخرج الشئ منها على الحقيقة" ⁴¹

Others adopt an intermediate position between the two ideas by saying:

(32) "اللغة مشتملة على الحقيقة و المجاز" ⁴²

and they do not say which one is more frequent. Their evidence for their idea is that the Arabs used both of them equally.

Others exaggerate in their view when they say:

(33) "لا مجاز في لغة العرب" ⁴³

But we see al-Suyūṭī angry with those who deny the existence of mağāz in the Arabic language. He replies to them by saying:

(34) "ومنكر المجاز في اللغة جاحد للضرورة ومبطل محاسن لغة العرب لانهم يقولون: استوى فلان على متن الطريق ولا متن لها و فلان على جناح السفر ولا جناح للسفر وهذه كلها مجازات." ⁴⁴

I agree with the group who take the middle course. I think that the language has both. The true Arabs used al-haqīqa as well as al-mağāz. We cannot say which one was more frequently used because we have their philological wealth which contains both equally, and we have the holy Qurʾān which was revealed in the same Arab speech and in the same style and use of words. The Qurʾān contains the haqīqa in the same measure as the mağāz: neither more than the other.

After we have finished discussing the meaning of the ḥaqīqa and the meaning of the mağāz and the difference between them, we return to the main subject which is the simile, to see the ideas of the philologists and the rhetorical specialists about it and what they consider it to be. Do they consider it as part of the ḥaqīqa or as part of the mağāz.

We saw earlier how Ibn 'Fāris considers the simile and metaphor in the mağāz where he explains the meaning of mağāz.⁴⁵ He supports his explanation with a comparative sentence. He says:

(35) "وذلك كقولنا عطاء فلان من واكف فهذا تشبيه وقد جاز مجاز قوله عطاؤه كثير واف، ومن هذا قوله تعالى: "سَنَسُومُهُ عَلَى الْخُرطوم" فهذا استعارة".⁴⁶

We see also that Ibn 'Ginnī considers the simile as a part of the mağāz when he says:

(36) "انما يقع المجاز ويعدل اليه عن الحقيقة لمعان ثلاثة وهي الاتساع والتوكيد والتشبيه فان عدت الثلاثة تعيّن الحقيقة".⁴⁷

Al-Suyūṭī tells us about al-Rāzī's view too on the subject when

al-Rāzī describes the simile as a third form of the mağāz.⁴⁸

Ibn Rašīq al-Qayrawānī also considers the simile

as a kind of mağāz. He says:

(37) "و اما كون التشبيه داخلا تحت المجاز فلأن المتشابهين في اكثر الأشياء انما يتشابهان بالمقاربة على المسامحة و الاصطلاح لا على الحقيقة".⁴⁹

But we see an opposite viewpoint to all these with al-Ġurġānī, who says that the overt simile is to be considered as a kind of the ḥaqīqa, not a

kind of the maḡāz, for example if someone likened Zaid to a lion,

this sentence is a kind of the haqīqa in his view. He says:

(38) "كل متعاط لتشبيه صريح لا يكون نقل اللفظ من شأنه ولا من مقتضى غرضه
فإذا قلت زيد كالأسد وهذا الخبر كالشمس في الشهرة لم يكن منك نقل اللفظ
عن موضوعه ولو كان الأمر على خلاف ذلك لوجب أن لا يكون في الدنيا
تشبيه الا وهو مجاز وهذا محال لان التشبيه معنى من المعاني وله حروف
تدل عليه فإذا صرح بذكر ما هو موضوع للدلالة عليه كان الكلام حقيقة كالحكم
في سائر المعاني".⁵⁰

Al-Zarkašī tells us the view of others who agree with al-Ḡurḡānī on this point. He says in the chapter on simile:

(39) "والمحققون على أنه حقيقة. قال الزنجاني⁵¹ في المعيار: التشبيه ليس بمجاز
لأنه معنى من المعاني وله ألفاظ تدل عليه وضعا فليس فيه نقل اللفظ عن
موضوعه وإنما هو توطئة لمن سلك سبيل الاستعارة والتشثيل لانه كالأصل لهما
وهما كالفرع له والذي يقع منه في حيز المجاز عند البيانين هو الذي يجي
على حد الاستعارة".⁵²

And he adds:

(40) "وتوسط الشيخ غزيرين فقال: ان كان بحرف فهو حقيقة. أو بحذفه فمجاز بناء على
ان الحذف من باب المجاز".⁵³

We see that there is a different idea here about the simile. But most of the philologists and rhetorical specialists consider it as a kind of the maḡāz. I agree with them, because for example when we liken someone to a lion it means that he is not really a lion but we want to describe his bravery in terms of the bravery of a lion. So it is the opposite of the haqīqa.

The reason for the philologists' interest in Qur'ānic Linguistics

The Qur'ān is the important event in the history of the Arabs, because it is considered to be a new example of Arabic language. As the expression of God's will demanding certain actions from men, it had to be understood by men if they were to be certain of their personal salvation.

The Qur'ān created a new culture and this new Islamic culture introduced new philological material.

The philologists, in the early period of Islam, knew that to understand the rules of Islam contained in the Qur'ān, they must first understand the philology of the Qur'ān properly, as its language holds many new, unfamiliar philological meanings. For that reason, the first philologists intended to interpret the language of the Qur'ān, but they hesitated for a long time to undertake this work because they strongly believed that the language of the Qur'ān involved new meanings. Were they to explain the external aspects of the word or should they give a figurative interpretation of the word in order that the people understand the meaning behind the word.

In this case the philologists thought that they should resort to the speech of the Arabs and their poetry in order to help them to understand the language of the Qur'ān. Abū 'Ubaida, the philologist, followed this method in his book Maǧāz al-Qur'ān. He interprets the verses of the Qur'ān with the help of the poetry or examples of the speech of the Arabs which contains the same word or the same meaning. Al-Farra' did the same too in his book Ma'ānī al-Qur'ān.

The poetry of the Arabs was very important in helping with the interpretation of the Qurʾān.

Aḥmad b. Fāris, the philologist, agrees with this when he says:

(41) "الشعر ديوان العرب وبه حفظت الانساب وعرفت المآثر وهذه تَعَلَّيت اللغة وهو حجة فيما أشكل من غريب كتاب الله وغريب حديث رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم وحديث صحابته والتابعين" ⁵⁴

But we should mention that there is another group of philologists who refused to mention any word of the poetry of the Arabs with reference to a word in the Qurʾān. This is the attitude of al-Aṣmaʿī, one philologist, who lived during the second century of the Heḡira. (He was a contemporary of Abū ʿUbayda and al-Farrāʾ). He refuses to use any word of the poetry to explain a word of the Qurʾān, as al-Mubarrid tells us in his book al-Kāmil :

(42) "كان الأصمعي لا يفسر شعرا يوافق تفسيره شيئا من القرآن" ⁵⁵

Ibn Duraid also says about al-Aṣmaʿī's refusal to explain a word already mentioned in the Qurʾān. In his book Ḡamhara :

(43) "لم يتكلم في عصفت وأعصفت لان في القرآن "ريح عاصف" ولم يتكلم في نَشَرَ الله الميت وأنشره ، ولا في سَحَتَه وأسحته لانه قرئ "فَيُسْحِتُكُمْ" ولا في سلك الطريق وأسلكه لان في القرآن "ما سلككم في سقر" ولا في خلد الى الارض وأخلد ولا في كنت الحديث و اكنته لان في التنزيل: "بيض مكنون" و "وما تكن صدورهم" ⁵⁶

and Abū al-Tayyib says about him:

(44) "وكان شديد التأله فكان لا يفسر شيئا من القرآن ولا شيئا من اللغة له نظير و اشتقاق في القرآن وكذلك الحديث تحرّجا" ⁵⁷

The new Islamic words in the Qur'ān

In fact the language of the Qur'ān contains a wealth of terms which we can call the new Islamic words.

The Qur'ān creates new words which were not used before its revelation. The Qur'ān also changed the meaning of some previously used words. We see that Aḥmad b. Fāris says about this subject in his book Fiqh al-luḡa:

(45) "وكانت العرب في جاهليتها على ارث من ارث آبائهم في لغاتهم وآدابهم و نسائهم و قرابينهم فلما جاء الله تعالى بالاسلام حالت أحوال و نسخت ديانات و أبطلت أمور و نقلت من اللغة ألفاظ في مواضع الى مواضع آخر بزيادات زيدت و شرائع شرعت و شرائط شرّطت فعقّى الآخر الاول فكان مما جاء في الاسلام ذكر المؤمن والمسلم والكافر والمنافق".⁵⁸

We can count many words which acquired a new meaning in this historic period of the Arabic language, such as:

taqwā, īmān, tawḥīd, Muslim, Mu'min, Kāfir, mulḥid, fāsiq. Those words and many others in the language of the Qur'ān were changed to reveal a new meaning which differs from the original meaning.

Aḥmad b. Fāris mentions the philological origin of some of these new Islamic words saying:

(46) "ان العرب انما عرفت المؤمن من الأمان و الايمان وهو التصديق ثم زادت الشريعة شرائط و اوصافا بها سمي المؤمن بالاطلاق مؤمنا وكذلك كانت لا تعرف من الكفر الا الغطاء والستر"⁵⁹

Ibn Qutaiba explains the philological origin of the word Kāfir which is mentioned in the verse:

(47) "كَمَثَلِ غَيْثٍ أَعْجَبَ الْكُفَّارَ نَبَاتُهُ"⁶⁰

saying:

(48) "يقال للزارع كافر لأنه اذا ألقى البذر في الأرض كفره أي غطاه" ⁶¹

In the Lisān al-⁶Arab , the Arabic dictionary, the author Ibn Manẓūr also explains the philological origin of the word Kāfir saying:

(49) "أصل الكفر تغطية الشيء" و سمي الكافر كافرا لان الكفر غطى قلبه كله .
وتقول العرب للزارع كافر لانه يكفر البذر المبذور بتراب الارض المشارة .⁶²

For this reason, the philologists thought that urgent necessity required them to write books explaining this new language created by the Qurʾān.

Now we can see that these books bear such titles as Maḥāz al-Qurʾān , or Maʿānī al-Qurʾān, or Ḡarīb al-Qurʾān and Muṣkil al-Qurʾān.

We will detail each one in the following sections.

THE QUR'ĀNIC SIMILES IN WORK OF PHILOLOGISTS

Abū 'Ubaida and his book Mağāz al-Qur'ān

One might conclude from the title that Abū 'Ubaida classifies his book as a study of figurative rhetoric. But in fact the title refers to the explanation of the usage of words found in the verses of the Qur'ān, as is clearly apparent from the first few lines of his book. He mentions in the introduction:

(50) "قال الله جل ثناؤه "ان علينا جمعه و قرآنه " مجازه تأليف بعضه الى بعض ثم قال "فاذا قرأناه فاتبع قرآنه " مجازه فاذا ألفنا منه شيئا فضمنناه اليك فخذ به واعمل به وضمه اليك" .⁶³

He means by mağāz how words of the Qur'ān are used. We can see an example of what Abū 'Ubaida means about the verse's mağāz while it is in fact no more than the philological explanation of the verse; his explanation about the verse:

(51) "يا أيها الذين آمنوا لا تبطلوا صدقاتكم باليمن والأذى كالذي ينفق ماله رياء الناس ولا يؤمن بالله واليوم الآخر فمثل كمثل صفوان عليه تراب فأصابه وابل فتركه صلدا"⁶⁴ "و مثل الذين ينفقون أموالهم ابتغاء مرضات الله و تثبيتا من أنفسهم كمثل جنة بركة ..."⁶⁵

He says:

(52) "الصفوان: جماع ويقال للواحدة صفوانة في معنى الصفاة والصفاء للجمع وهي الحجارة الملس. "صلدا" والصلد: التي لا تثبت شيئا أبدا في الأرضين والرؤوس قال رؤبة:
براق أصلاد الجبين الأجله
وهو الاجلح

"بركة" بركة: ارتفاع من المسيل"⁶⁶

So we see that Abū ʿUbaida explains the philological meaning of the words of the Qurʾān. It is not surprising that his book is considered a philological book rather than an explanatory or rhetorical book as we know he is one of the philologists in the second century of the Heġira.

If we examine any other pure philological books like ʿal-Muḥkam wa al-muḥit by Ibn Sida, we see that they do not differ from Abū ʿUbaida's book regarding the interpretation of the words, except that Ibn Sida explains a wide range of Arabic words where Abū ʿUbaida explains only the words of the Qurʾān. For example, we see the similarity between them with regard to the word Iṣṣār in the verse:

(53) "أيود أحدكم أن تكون له جنة من نخيل وأعناب تجري من تحتها الأنهار
له فيها من كل الثمرات وأصابه الكبر وله ذرية ضعفاء فأصابها أعصار فيه
نار فاحترقت" ⁶⁷

Ibn Sida says:

(54) "الأعصار: الريح تثير السحاب وقيل هي التي فيها نار وقال الزجاج
الأعصار الريح التي تهب من الأرض كالعمود إلى نحو السماء" ⁶⁸

Abū ʿUbaida says:

(55) "الأعصار: ريح عاصف تهب من الأرض إلى السماء كأنه عمود فيه نار" ⁶⁹

We see Abū ʿUbaida elsewhere explains the philological meaning of the verse:

(56) "ذلك مثلهم في التوراة ومثلهم في الإنجيل كزرع أخرج شطأه فآزره فاستغلظ
فاستوى على سوقه يعجب الزراع ليغيظ بهم الكفار" ⁷⁰

He says:

(57) "أخرج شطأه" أخرج فراخه يقال: قد أشطأ الزرع فهو مشطى* اذا فُرخ .
"فآزره" ساواه ، صار مثل الام . "فاستغلظ" غلظ . "فاستوى على سوقه"
الساق حاملة الشجرة"⁷¹

Does this philological explanation of the word of the verse differ from the approach met with in any other purely philological book? My view is also supported by Ibn Taimiyya, who says in his book al-Īmān about Abū 'Ubaida's book:

(58) "أول من تكلم بلفظ المجاز أبو عبيدة معمر بن المثنى في كتابه ولكن لم
يعن بالمجاز ما هو قسم الحقيقة و إنما عني بالمجاز ما يعبر به عن الآية"⁷²

His method regarding the book

He explains the word in the verse and then follows it by referring to the poetry of the Arabs or their ordinary speech producing examples which have the same meaning or the same words, with the help of his excellent memory of the garīb. He wants to say that the variety of expression in the Qur'ān (garīb, ma'ānī, i'rāb) is the same as in the speech of the Arabs. He points this out clearly in the introduction of his book. He says:

(59) "انما انزل القرآن بلسان عربي مبين... فلم يحتج السلف ولا الذين
أدركوا وحيه الى النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم أن يسألوا عن معانيه لأنهم
كانوا عرب الأئسن فاستغنوا بعلمهم به عن المسألة عن معانيه و عما فيه مما
في كلام العرب مثله من الوجوه والتلخيص وفي القرآن مثل ما في الكلام
العربي من وجوه الاعراب ومن الغريب والمعاني"⁷³

We see this style of explanation in all the verses he explains, as we see with this verse:

(60) "أو كصّيب من السماء فيه ظلمات و رعد و برق يجعلون أصابعهم في آذانهم من الصواعق حذر الموت والله محيط بالكافرين" . 74

He says:

(61) "أو كصّيب من السماء" معناه كعطر و تقديره تقدير سيد . صاب يصب
معناه ينزل المطر ، قال علقمة بن عبدة :

كانهم صابت عليهم سحابة صواعقها لطيرهن دبيب
فلا تعدلي بيني وبين مُغَمَّرٍ سقتك روايا العزّ حيث تصوب
وقال رجل من عبد القيس جاهلي يمدح بعض الملوك :
و لست لأنسي ولكن لعلّك تنزل من جو السماء يصب 75

I think that whoever reads Abū 'Ubaida's book will encounter

two styles , the Qur'ān style and the style of the speech of the Arabs .

This indicates his wide knowledge in the field of linguistics . He knows every detail of the poetry of the Arabs , their speech , their similes , their customs and the impact of their proverbs .

The rhetorical aspect of Abū 'Ubaida's book

I have to mention Abū 'Ubaida's studies of the similes of the Qur'ān .

The rhetorical features can be seen in his book . He mentions some rhetorical idioms such as simile , metaphor , allusions , inversions , abbreviation , repetition and mental reservations .

It has been said that the reason for his writing this book is to show the rhetorical state related to the simile of the Qur'ān as al-Anbārī says in his book Nuzhat al-alibbā' . He says:

(62) "ان ابا عبدة سئل في مجلس الفضل بن الربيع عن قوله تعالى " طلعتها كأنه رؤوس الشياطين " وقالوا : انما يقع الوعد والايعاد بما قد عُرِفَ مثله وهذا لم يُعرف . فأجاب أبو عبدة : انما كلم الله تعالى العرب على قدر كلامهم واستشهد بقول امرئ القيس :
أ يقتلني والمشرقي مضاجعي
ومسنونة زرق كأنيا ب أغوال

فاستحسنوا جوابه ، قال : فلما رجعت الى البصرة عملت كتابي هذا الذي سميت
المحاضر⁷⁶
Abū 'Ubaida mentions a few points regarding the comparisons of the

Qur'ān because he regards the comparison as figurative without however
analysing the details of the simile. The first time he mentions the
word 'simile' is when he comments on the verse: "Your women are a
tilth for you (to cultivate).⁷⁷ He says: " ⁷⁸ بأنها كناية و تشبيه (63)
and does not add anything further.

Sometimes Abū 'Ubaida does not mention the word comparison
in the verses containing similes, but explains only the philological
meaning of the verse, as happens with the verse:

"فشاربون شرب الهيم"⁷⁹ (64)

He says:

"الهيم واحدها أهيم وهو الذي لا يروى من رمل كان أو بعير"⁸⁰ (65)

He uses the philological style when dealing with the similes of the
Qur'ān.

Abū 'Ubaida uses the word tamtīl in his interpretation as synonymous
with tašbīh. He explains the verse:

"ختم الله على قلوبهم وعلى سمعهم وعلى أبصارهم غشاوة"⁸¹ (66)

saying:

"انقطع النصب فصار خبرا فارفعت فصار "غشاوة" كأنها في التمثيل (67)

قال "وعلى أبصارهم غشاوة" اي غطاوة"⁸².

The use of the word tamtīl as synonymous with the tašbīh is not
confined to Abū 'Ubaida's book, but it is common to all the philologists'
books.

The philologists and the compilers of dictionaries agree that
there is no difference between tašbīh and tamtīl: both words are

used equally (we saw this in our study of the meaning of taṣbīh and tamtīl in Arabic philology in the previous chapter).

On the other hand, the literary critics differentiate between tamtīl and taṣbīh and make a technical distinction between them.⁸³ Abū 'Ubaida seldom gives the details of the simile's construction. For example, he explains the verse:

"وإذا غشيهم موج كالظلل دعوا الله مخلصين له الدين" ⁸⁴ (68)

"واحدتها ظلة ومجازه: من شدة سواد كثرة الماء ومعظمه. قال النابغة الجعدي وهو يصف البحر:

يماشين أخضر ذو ظلال على حافات فلق الدنان" ⁸⁵

Sometimes he calls the metaphor a simile. For example he says about the verse:

"فمنهم من يمشي على بطنه" ⁸⁶ (70)

"فهذا من التشبيه لان المشي لا يكون على البطن انما يكون لمن له قوائم" (71)

فاذا خلطوا ما له قوائم بما لا قوائم له جاز ذلك كما يقولون أكلت خبزاً

ولبنا ولا يقال: أكلت لبناً ولكن يقال أكلت الخبز" ⁸⁷

The syntactical matters in his book

He refers to some syntactical aspects of the Qur'ān. But when he comments on the syntax he does not mean the desinential inflection in the verse, but wants to explain the syntax in a way which leads to an understanding of the meaning of the verse, supporting his syntactical view with instances chosen from the speech of the Arabs. He analyses desinential inflection of the word in such a way as to make very clear the meaning of the verse. This happens with the verse:

"والله الذي أرسل الرياح فتثير سحابا فسقناه الى بلد ميت فأحيينا به" (72)

الأرض بعد موتها كذلك النشور" ⁸⁸

where he says:

"فتثير اي تجمع و تجى به و تخرجه و مجاز "فسقناه" مجاز فنسوقه والعرب" (73)

قد تضع "فعلنا" في موضع "نفعل" قال الشاعر:
 انه يسمعون ريبة طاروا بها فرحا مني وما يسمعون من صالح دفنوا
 في موضع "يطيرون" و "يدفنوا" . المنشور: مصدر الناشر قال الاعشى:
 حتى يقول الناس مما رأوا يا عجباً للبيت الناشر⁸⁹

Abū 'Ubaida and the variant readings

Abū 'Ubaida looks at the variant readings of some words of the Qur'ān as a philological matter, (as do all the others who mention this subject). He agrees that the variant readings of the Qur'ān are a reflection of the variant forms of speech among the Arabs.

Ibn Ginnī , the philologist, also agrees with Abū 'Ubaida. He mentions in his book al-Ḥaṣā'is that the variant readings are a result of variant forms of speech (accent) and supports his view with the speech of the Messenger Moḥammad. He says:

(74) "الا ترى أن لغة التميميين في ترك أعمال (ما) يقبلها القياس ولغة الحجازيين في أعمالها كذلك لان لكل واحد من القومين ضربا من القياس يؤخذ به و يخلد الى مثله وليس لك أن ترد احدى اللغتين بصاحبتهما لانها ليست أحق بذلك من وسيلتهما أو لا ترى الى قول النبي صلى الله عليه و سلم "نزل القرآن بسبع لغات كلها كاف شاف" .⁹⁰

Abū 'Ubaida does not give details of this point in his book. He mentions it only when he wants to explain the different meanings of its variant readings. As he says in the introduction:

(75) "ومن مجاز ما جاءت له معاني غير واحد مختلفة فتأولته الائمة بلغاتها فجاءت معانيه على وجهين أو أكثر من ذلك قال "و غَدَّوْا على حَرْدٍ قَادِرِينَ" ففسروه على ثلاثة أوجه: قال بعضهم على قصد وقال بعضهم على منع و قال آخرون على غضب و حقد" .⁹¹

A general view about his book

His interest in the philological aspects of the Qurʾān prevented him from giving details of his interpretation of the verse or explaining the reason for its revelation as all the interpreters do.

We cannot consider his book as a rhetorical book either (as one might imagine from the title of the book) because he does not pay any attention to the rhetoric of the Qurʾān.

His book is purely philologic in approach rather than explanatory or rhetorical. He usually supports his view with the poetry of the Arabs and their speech, and seldom does he support his interpretation with an ordinary prophetic tradition or reports from a follower of the prophet Moḥammad.

Al-Farrāʾ and his book Maʿānī al-Qurʾān

Maʿānī al-Qurʾān is the most important book written by Yaḥya b. Yazīd al-Farrāʾ, who was the head (imām) of a school of syntax which was known during the third century of the Heḡira (Muslim Calendar) as the Kufa School.

Al-Farrāʾ wrote his book in order to explain the verses which need some interpretation. Some of the historiographers wrote about al-Farrāʾ's book. For example, al-Ḥaṭīb in his book Tārīḡ Bagdād says when he talks about maʿānī al-Qurʾān by Abū ʿUbaida:

(76) "أن أول من صنف في ذلك - أي في معاني القرآن - من أهل اللغة
أبو عبيدة معمر بن العثنى ثم قطرب بن المستنير ثم الاخفش وصنف من
الكوفيين الكسائي ثم الفراء". 92

In al-Fihrist , Ibn al-Nadīm tells us the reason why Farrā' wrote Ma'ānī al-Qur'ān. He says:

(77) "كان السبب في املاء كتاب الفراء في المعاني أن عمر بن بكير كان من أصحابه وكان منقطعاً الى الحسن بن سهل فكتب الى الفراء : ان الامير الحسن بن سهل ربما سألتني عن الشيء بعد الشيء في القرآن فلا يحضرنى فيه جواب فان رأيت أن تجمع لي أصولاً أو تجعل في ذلك كتاباً أرجع اليه فعلت . فقال الفراء لأصحابه : اجتمعوا حتى أملى عليكم كتاباً في القرآن ."⁹³

Anyone who reads Farrā's book can see that his concern with syntactical and philological matters dominates the book.

We have seen that al-Farrā' was the head of a school which had a special method of study, that was the 'syntax school' in the city of Kufa in Iraq. Therefore his education was affected by this concern with syntax and this was reflected in his book.

The simile in al-Farrā's book

Al-Farrā' mentions in his book some aspects of rhetoric such as simile. The two words "taṣbīḥ" and "tamtil" are synonymous in his mind as we see with all the philologists and all the interpreters of the Qur'ān. He says about the verse:

(78) "و مثل الذين كفروا كمثل الذي ينعق"⁹⁴

(79) "أضاف المثل الى الذين كفروا ثم شبههم بالراعي ولم يقل : كالغنم و المعنى - والله أعلم - مثل الذين كفروا كمثل البهائم التي لا تفقه ما يقول الراعي أكثر من الصوت فلو قال لها : ارعى أو اشربي لم تدر ما يقول لها فكذلك مثل الذين كفروا فيما يأتيهم من القرآن وانذار الرسول . فأضيف التشبيه الى الراعي والمعنى - والله أعلم - في المرعى . وهو ظاهر في كلام العرب أن يقولوا : فلان يخافك كخوف الأسد والمعنى كخوف الأسد لان الاسد هو المعروف بانه المخوف ."⁹⁵

Sometimes al-Farrā' mentions what the other interpreters say about the meaning of the comparative verses without giving further explanations of the simile in these verses as philology or rhetoric. As he says about the verse:

(80) "كأنهم حمر مستفزة ، فرت من قسورة" .⁹⁶

(81) "القسورة: يقال انها الرماة ، وقال الكلبي بإسناده: هو الاسد" .⁹⁷

But at other times al-Farrā' gives a detailed explanation of the simile and describes the relationship between the thing being compared and the thing with which the other is compared and the basis of the comparison.

After he has explained the philological meaning of the words in the verse:

(82) "مثلهم في التوراة ومثلهم في الانجيل كزرع أخرج شطأه فآزره فاستغلظ فاستوى على سوقه" .⁹⁸

he says:

(83) "وفي الانجيل: أيضا كمثلهم في القرآن ويقال: ذلك مثلهم في التوراة ومثلهم في الانجيل كزرع أخرج شطأه وشطؤه: السنبيل تنبت الحبة عشرا وثمانيا وسبعا فيقوى بعضه ببعض فذلك قوله: "فآزره" فأعانه وقواه . فاستغلظ ذلك: فاستوى ولو كانت واحدة لم تقم على ساق ، وهو مثل ضربه الله عز وجل للنبي صلى الله عليه وسلم إذ خرج وحده ثم قواه بأصحابه كما قوى الحبة بما نبت منها" .⁹⁹

On another occasion he explains the simile in a way which is similar to its explanation by the rhetoric specialists who come after him. He says about the verse:

(84) "أو كصيب من السماء فيه ظلمات ورعد وبرق" .¹⁰⁰

(85) "فشبه الظلمات بكفرهم والبرق اذا أضاء لهم فمشوا فيه بايمانهم والرعد ما أتى في القرآن من التخويف" .¹⁰¹

We can consider this attempt to understand the simile in the Qurʾān as a second step after Abū ʿUbaida, who mentions only a few points about the comparison without giving so much detail as al-Farrāʾ.

The philology and the syntax in his book

We see that when al-Farrāʾ wants to explain the verses containing similes he explains them from his special syntactical view point. He mentions the desinential inflection of the words in the verse. For example, he says about the verse:

(86) "ان مثل عيسى عند الله كمثل آدم" ¹⁰²

(87) "اي لا أب له ولا أم فهو أعجب أمرا من عيسى ثم قال "خلقه" لا أن قوله "خلقه" صلة لآدم وانما تكون الصلات للنكرات كقولك رجل خلقه من تراب وانما فسر أمر آدم حيث ضرب به المثل فقال "خلقه" على الانقطاع والتفسير" ¹⁰³

Then he supports his syntactical view with another verse which is:

(88) "مثل الذين حملوا التوراة ثم لم يحملوها كمثل الحمار يحمل أسفارا" ¹⁰⁴

He says:

(89) "الاسفار كتب العلم يحملها ولا يدي ما فيها وان شئت جعلت "يحمل" صلة للحمار كأنك قلت: كمثل حمار يحمل أسفارا لان ما فيه الالف واللام قد يوصل فيقال: لا أمر الا بالرجل يقول ذلك كقولك بالذي يقول ذلك" ¹⁰⁵

Elsewhere he explains the form of the simile in the verse such as whether the thing with which the other is compared is singular or plural. He says about the verse:

(90) "مثلهم كمثل الذي استوقد نارا" ¹⁰⁶

(91) "فانما ضرب المثل - والله أعلم - للفعل لا لاعيان الرجال ، وانما هو مثل للنفاق ، فقال : "مثلهم كمثل الذي استوقد نارا" ولم يقل: الذين استوقدوا . ولو كان التشبيه للرجال لكان مجموعا كما قال : "كأنهم خشب مستدة" أراد القيم والاجسام ، وقال : "كأنهم أعجاز نخل خاوية" فكان مجموعا اذا أراد تشبيه أعيان الرجال ، فأجر الكلام على هذا" ¹⁰⁷

In most of his interpretations of the verses we can see that he gives the philological meaning of the word in the verse, as he says about the word salsāl (clay) in this verse:

(92) "خلق الانسان من صلصال كالفخار" ¹⁰⁸

(93) "هو طين خلط برمل فصلصل كما يصلصل الفخار و يقال: من صلصال منتن يريدون به: صلّ فيقال: صلصال كما يقال: صرّ الباب عند الاغلاق ، و صرصر . والعرب تردد اللام في التضعيف فيقال: كركرت الرجل يريدون: كرزته وكبكبته يريدون: كببته ." ¹⁰⁹

If we look at any Arabic dictionary such as Lisān al-ʿArab for the word "clay", we find that Ibn Manẓūr explains the word in line with al-Farrā's explanation. He says:

(94) "الصلصال من الطين ما لم يجعل خزفا سمي به لتصلصه و كل ما جف من طين او فخار فقد صلّ صليلا ." ¹¹⁰

and he adds:

(95) "ان الاخفش قال كل شيء له صوت فهو صلصال من غير الطين . وفي حديث ابن عباس في تفسير الصلصال هو الصالّ الماء الذي يقع على الارض فتتشق فيجف فيصير له صوت فذلك الصلصال ." ¹¹¹

So we can consider al-Farrā's book to be a kind of small dictionary as it contains sound philological material.

His book and the speech of the Arabs

He is keen to give the words of the verse which he wants to explain the meaning known in the language of the Arabs at the time of the revelation of the Qurʾān.

After he has given all the philological meanings of the words in the verse he tries to state his preference for one philological meaning which is familiar in the speech of the Arabs. For example, he says about the verse:

(96) "ويطوف عليهم ولدان مخلدون اذا رأيتهم حسبتهم لؤلؤا منثورا" ¹¹²

(97) "مُخْلَدُونَ: مُحَلَّلُونَ مُسَوَّرُونَ ، ويقال: مُقَرَّبُونَ ، ويقال: مُخْلَدُونَ دائم شبابهم لا يتغيرون عن تلك السن ، وهو أشبهها بالصواب - والله أعلم - وذلك ان العرب اذا كبر الرجل ، وثبت سواد شعره قيل: انه لمُخلد ، وكذلك يقال اذا كبر ونبت له أسنانه وأضراسه قيل: انه لمُخلد ، ثابت الحال . كذلك الولدان ثابتة أسنانهم . " 113

But he is keen also to mention what other interpreters have said, although he gives priority to the philological interpretation. He

says about the verse:

(98) "مثل نوره كمشكاة فيها مصباح المصباح في زجاجة الزجاج كأنها كوكب دري" 114

(99) "دُرِّيٌّ" و "دُرِّيٌّ" - بهمز وغير همز - وهو من قولك: درأ الكوكب اذا انحط

كأرجم رُجم به الشيطان فدمغه . ويقال في التفسير: انه واحد من الخمسة: المشتري وزحل وعطارد والزهرة والمريخ . والعرب قد تسمي الكواكب العظام التي لا تعرف اسماءها الداربي بغير همز . " 115

Al-Farrāʾ, as a philologist, sometimes explains the different morphology of the word in the speech of the Arabs. He mentions the singular and the plural and the feminine and the masculine forms. As he says about the word him in the verse:

(100) "فشاربون عليه من الحميم فشاربون شرب الهيم" 116

(101) "الهيم": الابل التي يصيبها داء فلا تروى من الماء ، واحداها: أهيم ،

والانثى هيما . ومن العرب من يقول: هائم ، والانثى هائمة ، ثم يجمعونه على هيم ، كما قالوا: عائط وعيط ، وحائل وحيل وهو في المعنى: حائل حول الا أن الضمة تركت في هيم لئلا تصير الياء واوا . " 117

Al-Farrāʾ and the variant readings of the Qurʾān

Al-Farrāʾ, like others, mentions the variant readings of the words in some verses and explains the philological meaning of each reading according to its use by the Arabs. Thus he says about the verse:

(102) "يوم يخرجون من الاجداث سراعا كأنهم الى نصب يوفضون" 118

(103) "قرأ الاعمش وعاصم: "الى نَصَبٍ" الى شئ منسوب يستبقون اليه . وقرأ زيد ابن ثابت: "الى" نَصَبٍ يوفضون " فكان النَّصَبُ الآلهة التي كانت تعبد من دون الله وكل صواب وهو واحد والجمع: أنصاب ."¹¹⁹

Al-Mubarrid and his book al-Kāmil

Al-Kāmil by al-Mubarrid is considered to be one of the significant philological books because of the range of the philological material. It is also regarded as a literary work as it contains a lot of poetry and prose of the Arabs.

The book includes a chapter about the simile.¹²⁰ We can regard al-Mubarrid as one of the first to detail the simile in a special chapter.

Although he does not devote his chapter solely to the simile of the Qurʾān, we have to study this chapter because he mentions from time to time some verses of the Qurʾān which contain similes.

Al-Mubarrid talks of the comparison being on the lips of all Arabs. He says:¹²¹ (104) "والتشبيه كثير وهو باب كأنه لا آخر له" and he exaggerates when he says about the comparison:

(105) "لو قال قائل هو أكثر كلامهم لم يبعد"¹²²

He divides the comparison into four parts. He says:

(106) "والعرب تشبه على أربعة أضرب فتشبيه مفرط وتشبيه مصيب وتشبيه مقارب وتشبيه بعيد يحتاج الى التفسير ولا يقوم بنفسه وهو أخشن الكلام."¹²³

But we notice that he does not care to pay attention to the notification or to the limitation of each part of the comparison. He is interested only in giving the evidence. Most of his evidence is drawn from

Arabic poetry and occasionally from the

comparative verses of the Qur'ān, like these two verses:

- 124 "كأماثل اللؤلؤ المكنون" (107) and "الزجاجة كأنها كوكب دري" (108)

He follows the last verse with its philological explanation. He says:

- (109) "والمكنون المصون يقال كنت الشيء إذا صُنِّعَ وأَكْنَنْتُهُ إذا أَخْفَيْتُهُ فهذا المعروف قال الله تبارك وتعالى "أو اكنتم في أنفسكم" وقد يقال كُنْتَهُ أَخْفَيْتَهُ".¹²⁶

His attention to rhetoric appears in his book from time to time.

He mentions a lot of Arabic poetry and prose and explains it philologically and syntactically and also refers to the rhetorical content of this verse of poetry or that statement of prose, such as allusion, conciseness, lengthiness, inversion.

Sometimes he gives a detailed explanation of a simile and

explains its beauty. As he says about the verse:

- "طلعها كأنه رؤوس الشياطين" (110)¹²⁷

- (111) "وقد اعترض معترض من الجهلة الملحدين في هذه الآية فقال انما يمثل الغائب بالحاضر و رؤوس الشياطين لم ترها فكيف يقع التمثيل بها"

He answers this as follows:

- (112) "وهؤلاء في هذا القول كما قال الله جل وعز "هل كذبوا بما لم يحيطوا بعلمه ولما يأتهم تأويله"¹²⁸

He mentions two different interpretations of the previous verse. He

explains the first one saying:

- (113) "احدهما أن شجرا يقال له الأستن منكر الصورة يقال لشعره رؤوس الشياطين وهو الذي ذكره النابغة في قوله :
تحيد من أستن سود أسافلُهُ"

But he prefers the second interpretation and gives the following reason for his preference:

(114) "هو الذي يسبق الى القلب ان الله جل ذكره شتّع صورة الشياطين في قلوب العباد وكان ذلك أبلغ من المعاينة ثم مثل هذه الشجرة بما تنفر منه كل نفس." 129

Then he explains the philological meaning of the word ṣayṭān saying:

(115) "وزعم أهل اللغة ان كل متمرد من جن أو أنس يقال له شيطان و أن قولهم تَشَيْطَنَ انما معناه تَخَبَّثَ وتكرّر وقد قال الله جل وعز "شياطين الانس و الجن" وقال الراجز: أبطرتها تَأْتَهُمُ الثَّعْبَانَا شيطانة تزوجت شيطانا و قال امرؤ القيس: أتعدني والمشرقي مضاجعي 130 ومسئونة زرق كانياب أغوال والغول لم يُخبر صادق قط أنه رآها." 130

He mentions the verse:

(116) "مثل الذين حملوا التوراة ثم لم يحملوها كمثل الحمار يحمل أسفارا" 131

when he explains one kind of comparison which he alludes to. He says:

(117) "وهذا البين الواضح" مثل الذين حملوا التوراة ثم لم يحملوها كمثل الحمار يحمل أسفارا" في أنهم قد تعاموا عنها وأضربوا عن حدودها وأمرها ونهيها حتى صاروا كالحمار الذي يحمل الكتب ولا يعلم ما فيها." 132

Then he refers to two verses of the poetry of the Arabs which have the same meaning as the verse and the same simile:

(118) زوامل للشعار لا علم عندهم بجيّدِها الا كعلم الاباعر
لعمرك ما يدري البعير اذا غدا باوساقه اوراح ما في الغرائر" 133

We notice that his idea about the division of the simile into four parts depends on his artistic sense without any reason being given for his approval or his disapproval.

He gives examples of a lot of poetry or statements which contain similes, prefacing each with his idea about each one with one

of these phrases:

135 134
or "ومن عجيب التشبيه" or "ومن التشبيه المصيب" or "المستحسن" 136 (119)

Al-Mubarrid talks about the connection between the thing being compared and the thing with which the other is compared. He says that sometimes each one is likened to another in one aspect and not all aspects. He says:

- (120) "واعلم أن للتشبيه حدًا فالأشياء تشابه من وجوه وتباين من وجوه فانما يُنظر الى التشبيه من حيث وقع فانما شُبَّ الوجه بالشمس فانما يراد الضياء والرونق ولا يراد العِظَم والاحراق" ¹³⁹

In another place we see that he mentions some comparative verses in order to explain that this type of simile was known among the Arabs and that the pre-Islamic poets used the same simile. He says about the verse:

- (121) "كانهن بيض مكنون" ¹⁴⁰
- (122) "والعرب تشبه النساء ببيض النعام تريد نقاه ونعمة لونه قال الراعي:
 كأن بيض نعام في ملاحفها اذا اجتلاهن قيظ ليله ومد" ¹⁴¹
- and also:
- (123) "والعرب تشبه المرأة بالشمس والقمر والغصن والغزال والبقرة الوحشية والسحابة البيضاء والدرة والبيضة وانما تقصد من كل شىء الى شىء" ¹⁴²

With reference to the verse:

- (124) "وترى الجبال تحسبها جامدة وهي تمر مر السحاب" ¹⁴³

he mentions that the comparative phrase, which is "flying with the flight of clouds" (marra al-sahāb) was known among the Arabs and they usually likened the women to the cloud because:

- (125) "لتهاديها وسهولة مرها قال الاعشى:
 كأن مشيتها من بيت جارتها مر السحابة لا ريث ولا عجل" ¹⁴⁴

He wants to say, as all others say, that the simile in the Qur'ān is in complete accord with the simile of the speech of the Arabs.

If we look at Ibn Qutaiba's book we can see clearly that he is affected by philologists like Abū ʿUbayda and al-Farrāʾ in two points:

Firstly, their influence can be seen in the attention he pays to some rhetorical matters throughout his commentary on the Qurʾān as they do. We also see that he reports their views and their statements on most verses which he interprets. He also quotes the views of other philologists.

Secondly, the effect of the philologists can also be seen when he supports his interpretation with the evidence of samples of the speech of the Arabs and their poetry in order to prove that this word or that use of a word was familiar to the Arabs before and after the revelation of the Qurʾān.

He declares his opinion when he says:

(126) "وانما يعرف فضل القرآن من كثر نظره و اتسع علمه وفهم مذاهيب العرب
وافتنائها في الأساليب." ¹⁴⁵

As an example of his interpretation, he says about the verse:

(127) "انها ترمي بشرر كالقصر كأنه جمالة صفر." ¹⁴⁶

(128) "فمن قرأ بتسكين الصاد أراد القصر من قصور مياه الاعراب ومن قرأ القصر بكسر الصاد شبهه باعناق النخل ويقال باصوله اذا قطع ووقع شبه الشرر بالقصر في مقاديره ثم شبهه في لونه بالجماليات الصفر وهي السود والعرب تسمي السود من الابل صفرا قال الشاعر:

تلك خيلي منه وتلك ركابي هن صفرا اولادها كالزبيب

اي هن سود وانما سميت السود من الابل صفرا لانه يشوب سوادها شي من صفرة كما قيل لبيض الظباء آدم لان بياضها تعلوه كدرة." ¹⁴⁷

We see all the philologists support the interpretation of this verse with this same verse of poetry to prove that the Arabs described the black camels as 'yellow' because their black colour is mixed with yellow.

The figure of speech in his book

Ibn Qutaiba devotes a special chapter to the use of figurative expression in his book. He calls it "The usage figurative." He talks about the mistakes of some interpreters who misinterpret the figurative verses in the Qurʾān. He says:

(129) "أما المجاز فمن جهته غلط كثير من الناس في التأويل وتشعبت بهم
الطرق واختلفت النحل." ¹⁴⁸

Then he quotes many figurative verses and explains the way they have been misinterpreted, then he gives what he believes to be the right interpretation.

Ibn Qutaiba does not understand the figure as an interpretation or explanation or a way to the meaning of a verse as Abū ʿUbaida does before him. But he understands the maḡāz as the opposite of fact. He interprets it in the same way as the rhetorical specialists do.

The figure of speech means that the connection of the sentence is based on a comparison or a metaphor.

Ibn Qutaiba mentions the figurative statements of the other holy Books like the Torah (Old Testament) and the Bible. He wants to explain that the maḡāz is not new in the Qurʾān but was known from ancient times.

For example, he says about this verse of the Torah:

(130) "وفي التوراة "ان الله تبارك وتعالى برك اليوم السابع وطهره من أجل أنه استراح فيه من خليقته التي خلق" واصل الاستراحة أن تكون في معاناة شيء ينصبك ويتعبك فتستريح ثم قد ينتقل ذلك فتصير الاستراحة بمعنى الفراغ." ¹⁴⁹

The simile in his book

His remarks about the simile in the Qurʾān are general and scattered throughout his book. He does not collect all his remarks in a special chapter, nor does he give any details on this subject.

Although he devotes special chapters to the maḡāz, metaphor, inversion, allusion, etc. he does not do the same with the simile. But we see references to the simile scattered in all these chapters. As we see in his interpretation of the verse:

(131) "ومثل الذين كفروا كمثل الذي ينعق بما لا يسمع الا دعاء ونداء" ¹⁵⁰
in the chapter on inversion, where he says:

(132) "وكان بعض أهل اللغة يذهب في قول الله عز وجل "ومثل الذين كفروا كمثل الذي ينعق بما لا يسمع الا دعاء ونداء" الى ان هذا من المقلوب. ويقول وقع التشبيه بالراعى في ظاهر الكلام والمعنى للمنعوق به وهو الغنم." ¹⁵¹

Ibn Qutaiba quotes some verses which contain similes without analysing the form of the simile or explaining the basis of the comparison or stating its kind. He says about the verse:

(133) "ومن يشرك بالله فكأنما خرّ من السماء." ¹⁵²

(134) "هذا مثل ضربه الله تعالى لمن أشرك به في هلاكه وبعده عن الهدى" ¹⁵³

He considers that tamtīl and tašbīh are the same thing, as all the philologists do. We see how he explains the two words when he says:

(135) "تقول هذا مثل الشيء ومثله كما تقول هذا شبه الشيء وشبهه ثم قد يصير المثل بمعنى صورة الشيء وصفته وكذلك المثل ... وقد مثلت لك كذا أي صورته ووصفته" ¹⁵⁴

But we see that his comment on the verse: "طلعها كأنه رؤوس الشياطين" (136)

is a purely material interpretation. He explains the word "al-ṣayātīn" as a kind of snake. He says:

"والشياطين حيّات خفيفات الأجسام قبيحات المنظر... وقال الراجز:
عَجِيرٌ تحلفُ حينَ احلفُ كمثلِ شيطانِ الحمّاطِ أعرُفُ
والحمّاط شجرٌ والعرب تقول إذا رأت منظراً قبيحاً كأنه شيطان الحمّاط
يريدون حية تأوي في الحمّاط." (137)

On this point he differs from al-Ḡāhiz who explains the simile in this verse as an imaginary simile, because we can not see or touch the ṣaytān but we can imagine them. Most of the interpreters mention both types of interpretation although they attach more importance to the second one (the imaginary simile).

I do not agree with Ibn Qutaiba on this point, but with al-Ḡāhiz and other interpreters, because wherever we hear the word ṣaytān the mind quickly imagines the devil himself, an ugly thing, and I think there is no plant or snake as ugly as the devil.

Allāh wants to compare the ugliness of the tree which grows at the bottom of hell to the ugliness of the devils in order to encourage the people to believe in God and forsake their disbelief.

The second point, in my view, is that the word ṣaytān is mentioned in the Qurʾān in many verses and all of them mean the devil himself, who leads a person to a bad deed. As in these two verses:

"و ما تنزلت به الشياطين" (138) and "واتبعوا ما تتلوا الشياطين" (139)

My view on the first point is supported by the philologist al-Zaḡḡagī where he says:

"ان الشيء اذا استقيح شبه بالشياطين فيقال كأنه وجه شيطان وكأنه رأس شيطان والشيطان لا يُرى ولكنه يستشعر أنه أقبح ما يكون من الاشياء ولو رُؤي لَرُؤي في أقبح صورة." (140)

Ibn Qutaiba explains some of the verses containing similes from a philological point of view only, without mentioning anything about the simile as a form of rhetoric. As he says about the verse:

(141) "كَمْشَلْ غَيْثٌ أَعْجَبَ الْكَفَّارَ نَبَاتُهُ" ¹⁵⁸

(142) "يُرِيدُ بِالْكَفَّارِ الزَّرَاعَ سَعَاهُمْ كَفَّارًا لِأَنَّهُمْ إِذَا الْقَوَا الْبَذَرَ فِي الْأَرْضِ كَفَرُوهُ
أَيَّ غَطَوَهُ وَسَتَرُوهُ فَكَأَنَّ الْكَافِرَ سَاتَرَ لِلْحَقِّ أَوْ سَاتَرَ لِنَعْمِ اللَّهِ عِزَّ وَجَلَّ" ¹⁵⁹

Once in a while he explains verses containing simile from a syntactical viewpoint, without touching on their rhetorical aspect.

As he says about the verse:

(143) "كَرَّمَادٌ اشْتَدَّتْ بِهِ الرِّيحُ فِي يَوْمٍ عَاصِفٍ" ¹⁶⁰

(144) "أَرَادَ فِي يَوْمٍ عَاصِفٍ الرِّيحَ فَحَذَفَ لِأَن ذَكَرَ الرِّيحَ تَقَدَّمَ فَكَانَ فِيهِ دَلِيلٌ" ¹⁶¹

His chapter about the metaphor is no less gratifying and beneficial than his chapter on figures. Most of his explanations of the metaphor continued to be used after him by the writers on rhetoric.

For example, he says:

(145) "الْعَرَبُ تَسْتَعِيرُ الْكَلِمَةَ فَتَضَعُهَا مَكَانَ الْكَلِمَةِ إِذَا كَانَ الْمُسَمَّى بِهَا بِسَبَبٍ مِنَ الْآخِرِ أَوْ مُجَاوِرًا لَهُ أَوْ مُشَاكِلًا فَيَقُولُونَ لِلنَّبَاتِ نَوْءٌ لِأَنَّهُ عَنِ النَّوءِ يَكُونُ عِنْدَهُمْ قَالِ رُؤْيَا :

وَجَفَّ أَنْوَاءُ السَّحَابِ الْمُرْتَزِقِ
أَي جَفَّ الْبَقْلُ . وَيَقُولُونَ لِلْمَطَرِ سَمَاءٌ لِأَنَّهُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ يَنْزِلُ يُقَالُ مَا زَلْنَا نَطَأَ السَّمَاءَ حَتَّى أَتَيْنَاكُمْ . قَالَ الشَّاعِرُ :

إِذَا سَقَطَ السَّمَاءُ بِأَرْضٍ قَوْمٍ رَعِيْنَاهُ وَ إِنْ كَانُوا غَضَابَا
وَيَقُولُونَ ضَحَكَتِ الْأَرْضُ إِذَا أَنْبَتَتْ لِأَنَّهَا تَبْدِي عَنْ حَسَنِ النَّبَاتِ وَتَنْفَتِقُ عَنِ الزَّهْرِ كَمَا يَفْتَرِ الضَّاحِكُ عَنِ الشَّجَرِ وَلِذَلِكَ قِيلَ لَطَلَعَ النَّخْلُ إِذَا انْفَتَقَ عَنْهُ كَافُورُهُ الضَّحْكُ لِأَنَّهُ يَبْدُو مِنْهُ لِلنَّاظِرِ كِبْيَاضَ الشَّجَرِ . . . وَيَقُولُونَ لَقِيتُ مِنْ فُلَانٍ عِرْقَ الْقَرِيَةِ أَيَّ شِدَّةٍ وَمَشَقَّةٍ وَاصِلَ هَذَا أَنَّ حَامِلَ الْقَرِيَةِ يَتَعَبُ فِي نَقْلِهَا حَتَّى يَحْرِقَ جَبِينَهُ فَاسْتَعِيرَ عِرْقَهَا فِي مَوْضِعِ الشَّدَةِ وَيَقُولُ النَّاسُ لَقِيتُ مِنْ فُلَانٍ عِرْقَ الْجَبِينِ . " ¹⁶²

and so he continues to explain some verses containing metaphors in about forty pages of his book.

A general view of his book

The book Muṣkil al-Qurʾān is not an ordinary interpretative book as it might seem to be from the title, because Ibn Qutaiba does not follow the method of interpreters who interpret the verses of the Qurʾān in sequence and explain the meaning of each word which they contain, or explain its message, or tell a story about the revelation of the verse. His method is to interpret the verses which the people do not understand correctly or explain a phrase which is difficult to understand, or to interpret verses which are misunderstood by some less orthodox people who ask many questions about some verses. Ibn Qutaiba answers them by explaining these verses, supporting his view with statements from the Arabs and sometimes with statements from the Prophet Muḥammad or His followers. But mainly he supports his view with the poetry of the Arabs, as we see in his answer to the doubters who denied the existence of the maḡāz. He says:

(146) "ولو قلنا للمنكر لقوله قائلًا في جدار رأيت علي شفا من انهيار رأيت جدارًا ماذا؟ لم يجد بدا من أن يقول يهيم أن ينقض أو يكاد أن ينقض أو يقارب أن ينقض وآيا ما قال فقد جعله فاعلا ولا احسبه يصل الى هذا المعنى في شيء من لغات العجم الا بمثل هذه الالفاظ والعرب تقول بارض بني فلان شجر قد صاح از طال لملتس الشجر للناس بطوله ودل على نفسه جعله كأنه صائح لان الصائح يدل على نفسه بصوته" 163

Another time we see that Ibn Qutaiba answers those people who ask what Allāh means by revealing verses in the Qurʾān which are not clearly intelligible and why some of the Qurʾān is not immediately obvious. He answers them as follows:

(147) "ان القرآن نزل بألفاظ العرب ومعانيها ومذاهبها في الإيجاز والاختصار والاطالة للتوكيد والاشارة الى الشيء، واغماض بعض المعاني حتى لا يظهر عليه الا اللقن واظهار بعضها وضرب الأمثل لما خفي ولو كان القرآن كله ظاهرا مكشوفاً حتى يستوي في معرفته العالم والجاهل لبطل التفاضل بين الناس وسقطت المحنة وماتت الخواطر ومع الحاجة تقع الفكرة والحيلة ومع الكفاية يقع العجز والبلادة".¹⁶⁴

His answer to those people who doubt some verses of the Qurʾān is affected by al-Ġāhiz because we see the same method in al-Ġāhiz's book, when he interprets in detail some verses by explaining the figurative style and the metaphor in them in line with the Arab method of expression.

Ibn Qutaiba strongly defends the use of maḡāz in the Qurʾān and accuses those people who doubt some verses of misunderstanding the meaning of the figures of speech in the Qurʾān. He says:

(148) "واما الطاعنون على القرآن بالمجاز فانهم زعموا أنه كذب لان الجدار لا يريد والقرية لا تقصم في قوله "وكم قصمنا من قرية" وهذا من أشنع جهالاتهم وأدلهاعلى سوء نظرهم وقلة افهامهم ولو كان المجاز كذبا و كل فعل ينسب الى غير الحيوان باطلا كان أكثر كلامنا فاسدا لانا نقول نبت البقل وطالت الشجرة وأينعت الثمرة وقام الجبل ورخص السعر و نقول كان هذا الفعل منك في وقت كذا والفعل لم يكن وانما كَوْن ... والله يقول "فاذا عزم الامر" وانما يعزم عليه ويقول "فما ربح تجارتهم" وانما يربح فيها ويقول "وجاؤا على قميصه بدم كذب" وانما كذب به".¹⁶⁵

Ibn Qutaiba says that the reason for this plentiful use of maḡāz in the Qurʾān is because the Qurʾān was revealed in conformity with the speech of the Arabs. The frequent use of figurative expression is very common in their speech. He says:

(149) "وللعرب المجازات في الكلام ومعناها طرق القول وماأخذها فمنها الاستعارة والتمثل والقاب والتقديم والتأخير والحذف والتكرار والاختفاء والظهار والتعريض والامصاح والكناية والايضاح ومخاطبة الواحد مخاطبة الجميع والجميع خطاب الواحد والواحد خطاب الاثنين والقصد بلفظ الخصوص لمعنى العموم ولفظ العموم لمعنى الخصوص".¹⁶⁶

Then he adds:

(150) "وبكل هذه المذاهب نزل القرآن ولذلك لا يقدر أحد من ذوي التراجم على أن ينقله الى شيء من الألسنة كما نقل الانجيل عن السريانية الى الحبشية والرومية وترجمت التوراة والزيور وسائر كتب الله الكريمة بالعربية لان العجم لم تتسع في العجاز اتساع العرب".¹⁶⁷

Ibn Qutaiba and the variant readings

He talks about the variant readings of words in some verses in the Qurʾān. In his view this happened as a result of the different language uses of the Arabs because each tribe had a special dialect.

He says:

(151) ".... فكان من تيسيره أن أمره أن يقرأ كل قوم بلغتهم وما جرت عليه عادتهم فالهذلي يقرأ - عتي حين - يريد حتى حين لأنه هكذا يلفظ بها ويسعها . والاسدي يقرأ تعلمون وتعلم ويسود وجوه وألم إغنهذ اليكم . و التميمي يهمز والقريشي لا يهمز والآخر يقرأ وأنا قيل وغيض باشمام الضم الكسر - وبصاعتنا ردت الينا - باشمام الكسر مع الضم - وما لك لا تأمنا - باشمام الضم مع الإدغام وهذا ما لا يطوع به كل لسان".¹⁶⁸

He adds an explanation of why Allāh leaves the Arab tribes to read these words in the Qurʾān as they used to read it in their language.

He says:

(152) "ولو أراد كل فريق من هؤلاء أن يزول عن لغته وما جرى عليه اعتياده طفلا وناشئا وكهلا اشتد ذلك عليه وعظمت المحنة فيه ثم لم يمكنه ذلك الا بعد رياضة للنفس طويلة وتذليل للسان وقطع للعادة فأراد الله عز وجل بلطفه ورحمة أن يجعل لهم متسعاً في اللغات ومتصرفاً في الحركات".¹⁶⁹

The last notable feature of the book is the accuracy of its division into chapters. We consider Ibn Qutaiba to be the first man to devote a special chapter to some rhetorical matters such as the metaphor, maḡāz, and allusion throughout his interpretation of the Qurʾān.

CHAPTER THREE

OTHER PHILOLOGICAL MATTERS IN THE VERSES OF SIMILE IN THE QUR'ĀN

The homophonous-antonyms

The meaning of didd:

Before we enter into the subject we have to know the philological meaning of didd. Al-Didd in the Lisān al-ʿArab is defined as:

(153) "كل شيء ضاّ شيا ليغلبه والسواد ضد البياض والموت ضد الحياة والليل ضد النهار." 170

He also says:

(154) "وقال ابن سيدة ضد الشيء وضديده خلافه والجمع أضداد . وقال ابن الاعرابي ندّ الشيء مثله وضده خلافه." 171

The philologists mean by homophonous-antonyms (Al-Addād) words which sound the same but have opposite meanings. The Arabs used these words in their language. They used one word for two opposite things in order to convey vagueness of expression and to grace their speech. Ibn Fāris says about this subject:

(155) "من سنن العرب في الأسماء أن يُسمّوا المتضادين باسم واحد نحو الجون للأسود والجون للأبيض" 172

In any case, this kind of usage is infrequent in the speech of the

Arabs as al-Anbārī tells us. He says:

(156) "وهذا الضرب من الألفاظ هو القليل الظريف في كلام العرب." 173

The philologists' view about the homophonous-antonyms

This subject caused controversy among the philologists. One group denies its existence in Arabic and says that the Arabs never used one word for two opposite things. They try to interpret what they have from the speech of the Arabs which has the homophonous-antonyms. The best known proponent of this view is Ibn Durustawaih. He wrote a book called Ibtāl al-aqdād. He denies the existence of the homophonous-antonyms.

Another group takes the opposite view, like Ibn Fāris, who wrote a book proving the existence of the homophonous-antonyms in Arabic language. He replied to Ibn Durustawaih.

(157) "وأنتكر ناس هذا المذهب وأن العرب تأتي باسم واحد لشيء وضده وهذا ليس بشيء. وذلك أن الذين رَوَوْا أن العرب تسمي السيف مَهْنَدًا والفرس طرفًا هم الذين رَوَوْا أن العرب تسمي المتضادين باسم واحد. وقد جردنا في هذا كتابًا ذكرنا فيه ما احتجوا به وذكرنا رد ذلك ونقضه"¹⁷⁴

Other philologists, like Qutrūb, Abū Bakr b. al-Anbārī, al-Tawzī, say it is possible that the Arabs use the homophonous-antonyms in their speech and they also wrote special books about the subject.

Sibawaih does not deny it in the speech of the Arabs. He talks very briefly about it in the chapter "اللفظ للمعاني"⁽¹⁵⁸⁾. He says: (158)

(159) "اعلم أن في كلامهم اختلاف اللفظين لاختلاف المعنيين واختلاف اللفظين والمعنى واحد واتفاق اللفظين واختلاف المعنيين... ومن الأخير قولك وجدت عليه من الموجدة وجدت إذا أردت وجدان الضالة وأشبه هذا كثير."¹⁷⁵

There is yet another view about the existence of the homophonous-antonyms in the speech of the Arabs. One group says:

(160) "إذا وقع الحرف على معنيين متضادين فالأصل لمعنى واحد ثم تداخل الاثنان على جهة الاتساع فمن ذلك "الصريم" يقال لليل صريم و للنهار صريم لان الليل ينصرف من النهار والنهار ينصرف من الليل فأصل المعنيين من باب واحد وهو القطع." ¹⁷⁶

This statement does not deny the existence of the homophonous-
antonyms, in my view, but considers it to be a cause of developing
the addad in the Arabic language. Others take a different view of
the subject. They say:

(161) "إذا وقع الحرف على معنيين متضادين فمحال أن يكون العربي أوقعه عليها بمساواة منه بينهما ولكن أحد المعنيين لحي من العرب والمعنى الآخر لحي غيره ثم سمع بعضهم لغة بعض فأخذ هؤلاء عن هؤلاء و هؤلاء عن هؤلاء قالوا: فالجون الأبيض في لغة حي من العرب والجون الأسود في لغة حي آخر ثم أخذ أحد الفريقين من الآخر." ¹⁷⁷

I agree with this view because it is the most reasonable. It
is unbelievable that one tribe gave one name to two opposite things,
but it is possible that by chance one tribe called one thing by the same
word which another tribe used for the opposite and then in the course
of time one tribe mixed with another and the same word was then used
for two opposite meanings at the same time.

Ibn Sīda also has the same idea about the subject. He says:
(162) "ينبغي أن لا يكون قصدا في الوضع ولا أصلا ولكنه من لغات تداخلت أو
تكون كل لفظة تستعمل بمعنى ثم تستعار لشيء فتكثر وتغلب فتصير بمنزلة
الأصل." ¹⁷⁸

He explains for example the word al-ṣarīm. He says:

(163) "هي الصبح والليل فمن الصباح قوله:
فبات يقول أصبح ليل حتى تجلّى عن صريمته الظلام
ومن الليل قوله تعالى: فأصبحت كالصريم" ¹⁷⁹ اي احترقت فصارت سوداء مثل
الليل." ¹⁸⁰

I think that these explanations do not deny the homophonous-antonyms but give another cause for the development in the speech of the Arabs. Another group say that the homophonous-antonym exists in the speech of the Arabs but they consider it a sign of shortcoming. They use this indication to prove the lack of rhetoric among the Arabs.

Al-Anbārī talks about this group on the first page of his book and he calls them "أهل البدع والزيج والازدراء بالعرب" (164). He says: (164)

"ويظن أهل البدع والزيج والازدراء بالعرب أن ذلك كان منهم لنقصان حكمتهم وقلة بلاغتهم وكثرة الالتباس في محاوراتهم" (165)

He replies that the word which has the two opposite meanings is never used in the same sentence or gives the two meanings at the same time.

But we have to read the previous sentence and the later sentence to

know which meaning this word intends to convey. He says:

"أن كلام العرب يصحح بعضه بعضا ويرتبط أوله بآخره ولا يعرف معنى الخطاب منه إلا باستيفائه واستكمال جميع حروفه فجاز وقوع اللفظة على المعنيين المتضادين لأنها يتقدمها ويأتي بعدها ما يدل على خصوصية أحد المعنيين دون الآخر ولا يراد بها في حال التكلم والاختبار إلا معنى واحد. فمن ذلك قول الشاعر:

كل شيء ما خلا الموت جَلَلٌ والفتى يسعى ويلهيه الأمل
فدل ما تقدم قبل "جَلَلٌ" وتأخر بعده على أن معناه: كل شيء ما خلا الموت يسير ولا يتوهم ذو عقل وتمييز أن الجلل ها هنا معناه عظيم" (166)

He also supports his explanation with the verses of the Qur'ān to show

that the meaning of the word emerges from the whole verse. He says:

"وقال الله عز وجل: الَّذِينَ يَظُنُّونَ أَنَّهُمْ مُلَاقُوا اللَّهَ" (167)

ذلك فلم يذهب وهم عاقل إلى أن الله عز وجل يمدح قوما بالشك في لقائه. وقال تعالى حاكيا عن يونس: "وَذَا النُّونِ إِذْ ذَهَبَ مُغَاضِبًا فَظَنَّ أَن لَنْ نَقْدِرَ عَلَيْهِ" (184) أراد: رجا ذلك وطمع فيه ولا يقول مسلم أن يونس تيَقَّن أن الله لا يقدر عليه" (185)

The homophonous-antonyms in the verses of simile

Al- Anbārī says that the word Iṣṭaraw in the verse:

(168) "اولئك الذين اشتروا الضلالة بالهدى فما ربحت تجارتهم" ¹⁸⁶

has the two opposite meanings: "sell" and "buy". He says:

(169) "يقال اشتريت الشيء على معنى قبضته وأعطيت ثمنه وهو المعنى المعروف عند الناس ويقال اشتريته اذا بعته." ¹⁸⁷

He mentions what the interpreters say about the word and what the philologists say. He says:

(170) "قال جماعة من المفسرين: معناه باعوا الضلالة بالهدى. وقال بعض أهل اللغة كل من آثر شيئا على شيء فاعرب تجعل الايثار له بمنزلة شرائه واحتجوا بقول الشاعر:

أخذت بالجمعة رأسا أنزرا وبالثنايا الواضحات الدردرا
وبالطويل العمرعمرأ أنزرا كما اشترى المسلم ان تنصرا ¹⁸⁸

We see that each group explains the word in opposite ways, although

both of them give the same meaning. The interpreters explain the

word 'Iṣṭaraytu as bi'tu. Otherwise the philologists explain the

word as al-ṭar which is close to the meaning of ṣira.

Another word which is given two opposite explanations is miškāt in

the verse: (171) "مثل نوره كمشكاة فيها مصباح" ¹⁸⁹

Some interpreters say that miškāt means "niche" in Abyssinian

language. ¹⁹⁰ But the philologists, like Abū 'Ubaida, say it means

niche in Arabic language, and he supports his view with this verse:

(172) تديرعين لها كحلاوين كمثل مصباحين في مشكاتين ¹⁹¹

We also see the opposite explanation in the verse:

(173) "يوقد من شجرة مباركة زيتونة لا شرقية ولا غربية" ¹⁹²

Philologists like al- Anbārī explain ⁽¹⁷⁴⁾ "لا شرقية ولا غربية" by saying: (174)

(175) "معناه هي شرقية غربية وليست بشرقية لا غربية ولا غربية لا شرقية لكنها تجمع

الأمرين جميعا تلحقها الشمس في وقت الطلوع وفي وقت الغروب وذلك

أصفى لنزيتها وأجود له" ¹⁹³

(Abū Ubaida gives this verse the same interpretation).¹⁹⁴ Al-Anbārī

mentions the opposite interpretation of the verse by some interpreters.

He says:

(176) "وقد قال بعض المفسرين: وصف الله عز وجل شجرة خضراء ناعمة قد حفت
بها الاشجار وأظلتها فهي تمنع الشمس من أن تلحقها في وقت الطلوع او
في وقت الغروب."¹⁹⁵

Then he adds:

(177) "فهذا التفسير يضاد التفسير الاول لان اصحابه يذهبون الى أن الشمس لا
تلحق هذه الشجرة في واحد من هذين الوقتين."¹⁹⁶

Another word which al-Anbārī mentions is al-sarīm in the verse:

(178) "فطاف عليهم طائف من ريك وهم نائمون فأصبحت كالصرم"¹⁹⁷

which has the two opposite meanings "day" and "night". He says:

(179) "يقال لليل صريم وللنهار صريم لان كل واحد منهما ينصم من صاحبه"¹⁹⁸

Then he explains the word in this verse as "night" supporting that with
an Arabic poem. He says:

(180) "فأصبحت كالصرم" كالليل الأسود وقال زهير:
غدوت عليه غداة فوجدته قعودا لديه بالصرم عوانله
أراد بالليل قبل أن تبدو معالم الصبح."¹⁹⁹

Al-Taʿālībī also says about the word sarīm in the chapter
(181)

(181) "تسمية المتضادين باسم واحد" in his book:

(182) "الصرم الليل وهو أيضا الصبح لان كل منهما ينصم عن صاحبه"²⁰⁰

He adds that the Arabs used this in their speech. He says:

(183) But Abū ʿAlī al-Qālī does not consider the
(183)

word sarīm as did. He says:

(184) "الصرم الصبح سمي بذلك لأنه انصم عن الليل والصرم الليل لأنه انصم
عن النهار وليس هو عندنا ضدا"²⁰²

Another word is sufr in the verse:

(185) "انها ترمي بشرر كالقصر كأنه جمالة صفر" ²⁰³

The Arabs called yellow asfar and at the same time called the black colour asfar as in this verse. Some interpreters interpret the word

sufr as black.²⁰⁴ All the philologists like al-Farrā' and Abū 'Ubaida do the same.²⁰⁵ As we see al-Farrā' says:

(186) "الصفير سود الابل لا ترى أسود من الابل الا وهو مشرب بصفرة فلذلك سميت العرب سود الابل صفرا كما سموا الظباء أذما لما يعلوها من الظلمة في بياضها" و أنشد أبو عبيد للأعشى:
تلك خيلي منه وتلك ركابي فمن صفراً ألوانها كالزبيب
أراد هن سود ²⁰⁶

Abū al-Tayyib agrees with them too. But he adds a description of the camel to be called yellow, that its body is black but its ears, nostrils and armpits are yellow. This type of camel only was called sufr.

He says:

(187) "صفر معناه سود ويقال جمل أصفر اذا كان جسده أسود واذناه ومنخره وابطاه وارفاه صفرا فهذا هو الاصفر من الابل." ²⁰⁷

Another word is taḥabbuṭ in the verse: ²⁰⁸ "الذي يتخبطه الشيطان من العن" (188)

Abū al-Tayyib says

(189) "الخابط النائم والخابط الذي يخبط بيديه . يقال : خبط الطين يخبط خبطا اذا اضطرب فيه وخبط البعير بيديه اذا ضرب بهما وكل شيء ضربته بيدك فقد خبطته وتخبطته" ²⁰⁹

The substitution

Another philological aspect in the verses of simile that we have to explain is substitution. First we have to know what the badal means in the philologists' usage.

If we look at the Arabic dictionary we see that Ibn Manẓūr says:

(190) "بدل الشيء غيره وأبدل الشيء من الشيء . وبدله تخذه منه بدلا وتبديل

الشيء تغييره واستبدال الشيء بغيره وتبدله به اذا أخذه مكانه والاصل
في التبدل تغيير الشيء عن حاله والاصل في الابدال جعل شيء مكان
شيء آخر.²¹⁰

(191) "حدّ البدل وضع الشيء مكان غيره".²¹¹ Ibn Sida says about it:

But the philologists mean by al-badal "the use of one letter in place of another while all the other letters of the word retain their place.

Some philologists talk about this subject. Ibn Fāris considers it as a habit of speech of the Arabs. He says:

(192) "من سنن العرب ابدال الحروف واقامة بعضها مقام بعض: مَدَحَهُ وَمَدَّهَهُ وَ
فَرَسَ رِفْلًا وَرَفَنَ وهو كثير مشهور قد ألف فيه العلماء".²¹²

But Abū al-Tayyib has another view about the substitution which is different from Ibn Fāris' view. He says that the Arabs (one tribe) did not use one letter instead of another intentionally, but it is a different mode of speech in the different tribes. Each one used a letter in a word differently from the other tribe, but all of these words have one meaning. He says:

(193) "ليس المراد بالابدال أن العرب تتعمد تعويض حرف من حرف وانما هي لغات
مختلفة لمعاني متفقة تتغارب اللفظتان في لغتين لمعنى واحد حتى لا يختلفا
الا في حرف واحد".²¹³

His evidence for his view that one tribe did not use one word in two different ways, but these words were used by two tribes is:

(194) "والدليل علي ذلك ان قبيلة واحدة لا تتكلم بكلمة طورا مهموزة وطورا غير
مهموزة ولا بالصاد مرة وبالسین أخرى وكذلك ابدال لام التعريف ميمًا والهجرة
المصرّة عينا كقولهم في نحو أن عن ، لا تشترك العرب في شيء من ذلك
انما يقول هذا قوم وذاك آخرون".²¹⁴

As I agree with this view regarding the subject of homophonous -

antonyms, I also agree with this view about substitution in the speech of the Arabs. I cannot believe that one tribe should use two different letters in the same word and with the same meaning at the same time,

but that each tribe used a letter which is different from the other. We can see this habit of speech at present. For example each town pronounces a word in a different way by changing one or two letters in that word.²¹⁵ Ibn Sīda's view about the subject is that he considers each letter which is used instead of another as substitution but both letters must have the same point of articulation. He says:

(195) "فأما ما لم يتقارب مخرجاه البتة فقل على حرفين غير متقاربين فلا يسمى بدلا وذلك كابدال حرف من حروف الفم من حرف من حروف الحلق." ²¹⁶

Sibawaih also mentions substitution very briefly in his book. He says:

(196) "هذا باب ما شُدَّ فابدل مكان اللام الياء لكرهية التضعيف وليس يعطرد و ذلك قولك تسرّيت وتظنّيت وتقصّيت من القصّة وأملت كما أن التاء في أسنّتوا مبدلة من الياء أرادوا حرفا أخف عليهم منها." ²¹⁷

Instances of substitution in the verses of simile

A few words in a few verses of simile have this philological aspect, like the word firq in the verse:

(197) "انا أوحينا الى موسى ان اضرب بعصاك البحر فانفلق فكان كل فرق كالطود العظيم." ²¹⁸

Ibn Fāris says about this word:

(198) "اللام والراء متعاقتان كما تقول العرب فلُق الصبح وفرقه." ²¹⁹

Also the word siggil in the verse:

(199) "ترميمهم بحجارة من سجيل فجعلهم كعصف مأكول." ²²⁰

Abū al-Tayyib says in his book about this word under the subject of

(Ibdāl al-lām wa al-nūn):

(200) "ضرب سجيل وسجين أي شديد . وأنشد ابن مقبل:
وَرَجَلَةٌ يَضْرِبُونَ الْهَامَ عَنْ غُرْضٍ ضَرَبًا تَوَاصَتْ بِهِ الْأَبْطَالُ سَجِينًا
وَأَنْشَدَ غَيْرُهُ:

²²¹ ضَرَبًا طَلَخْنَا فِي الْوَعْيِ سَجِيلًا

The word tadrūhu which is mentioned in the verse:

(201) "واضرب لهم مثل الحياة الدنيا كماء أنزلناه من السماء فاختلط به نبات الأرض فأصبح هشيما تذروه الرياح" 222

was sometimes read as wāw and sometimes as yā. Abū al-Tayyib

says about this word under the subject of Ibdāl al-wāw yā in

his book :

(202) "يقال ذرت الريح التراب تذروه ذروا وتذريه ذريا . وقرأ ابن مسعود و ابن عباس رضى الله عنهما "تذريه الريح" 223

And al-Farrā' also says about this word:

(203) "تذروه الرياح" من ذروت وذريت لغة 224

Also the word gufa in the verse:

(204) "كذلك يضرب الله الحق والباطل فأما الزبد فذهب جفاً وأما ما ينفع الناس فيكث في الأرض كذلك يضرب الله الأمثال" 225

was read as gufa and guta. Abū al-Tayyib says about the

metathesis in this word under the article of Ibdāl al-fā tā in his book:

(205) "جفاً قرأها رؤية "جشاء" . يقال جثلت الريح الورق تجثله جثلا وجفلته تجفله جفلا وجثالة الشجر وجفالاته ما سقط من ورقه" 226

Footnotes to Part One

1. Ibn Manzūr, Lisān al-ʿArab, Vol. 20, p.118. See also Ibn Sīda, ʿAlī b. Ismāʿīl, al-Muḥaṣṣas, Vol. 1, p.6. Ibn Ǧinnī, Abū al-Faṭḥ, ʿUtmān, al-Ḥaṣāʾiṣ, Vol. 1, p.33. And al-Fayrūz Ābādī, Maǧd al-Dīn, al-Qāmūs al-muḥīt, Vol. 4, p.386.
2. Ibn Manzūr, loc. cit.
3. Ibidem.
4. Ibid., p.116.
5. Ibid., p.118.
6. Ibn Fāris, Abū al-Ḥusain Aḥmad, Muʿǧam maqāyīs al-luǧā, Vol. 5, p.255. See also Ibn Ǧinnī, loc. cit. al-Fayrūz Ābādī, loc. cit.
7. Al-Suyūṭī, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Ġalāl al-Dīn, al-Muzhir, Vol. 1, p.8.
8. Ibn Ǧinnī, Vol. 1, p.40.
9. Ibn Fāris, al-Šāḥibī fī fiqh al-luǧā, p.31. See also Suyūṭī, loc. cit.
10. Suyūṭī, loc. cit., p.9.
11. Ibid., pp.345-346.
12. Ibidem.
13. Ibn Ǧinnī, Vol. 1, p.41.
14. Ibn Sīda, Vol. 1, p.3.
15. Q.2, 31.
16. Ibn Sīda, loc. cit, and see also Ibn Ǧinnī, loc. cit.
17. Ibn Ǧinnī, Vol. 1, pp.46-47.
18. Ibn Abī ʿAwn, al-Tašbīḥāt, p.3.
19. Al-Ǧawharī, Ismāʿīl b. Ḥammad, al-Šiḥah, Vol. 6, p.2236. See also Ibn Manzūr, Vol. 17, p.398.
20. Ibn Sīda, Vol. 3, p.153.
21. Ibidem.
22. Ibn Manzūr, Vol. 17, p.397.
23. Ibid., p.399.
24. Ibid., pp.399-400.
25. Ibidem.
26. Ibn Fāris, Muʿǧam, Vol. 4, p.243.
27. Ibn Manzūr, loc. cit.
28. Ibid., Vol. 14, p.131. Also al-Ǧawharī, Vol. 5, p.1816.

29. Al-Fayrūz Ābādī, Vol. 4, p.49.
30. Al-Ğawharī, loc. cit. Also Ibn Manzūr, Vol. 14, p.131.
31. Ibn Fāris, Muğam, Vol. 5, p.296.
32. Ibn Manzūr, loc. cit., p.132. See also Ibn Fāris, loc. cit. and al-Ğawharī, loc. cit.
33. Suyūṭī, Vol. 1, p.355.
34. Ibidem.
35. Ibidem.
36. Ibn Ğinnī, Vol. 2, p.442, and Ibn Manzūr, Vol. II, p.336.
37. Al-Fayrūz Ābādī, Vol. 3, p.221.
38. Ibid., Vol. 2, p.170.
39. Suyūṭī, Vol. 1, p.355.
40. Ibn Ğinnī, loc. cit., p.447.
41. Ibid., Vol. 3, p.245.
42. Suyūṭī, loc. cit., p.364.
43. Ibid., pp.364-365.
44. Ibidem.
45. See p. 42.
46. Suyūṭī, loc. cit., pp.355-356.
47. Ibn Ğinnī, loc. cit., p.442, also Ibn Manzūr, loc. cit.
48. Suyūṭī, loc. cit., p.359.
49. Ibn Rašīq, Abū ʿAlī al-Hasan, al-Qayrawānī, al-ʿUmda, Vol. 1, p.268.
50. Ğurğānī, op.cit., p.209.
51. One of the Arabic philologists (d.655 A.H.)
52. Al-Zarkašī, Badr al-Dīn Muḥammad b. ʿAbdullāh, al-Burhān fī ʿulūm al-Qurʾān, Vol. 3, p.415.
53. Ibidem.
54. Suyūṭī, Vol. 2, p.470.
55. Ibid., p.325.
56. Ibid., pp.325-327.
57. Ibid., p.404.
58. Ibid., Vol. 1, pp.294-295.
59. Ibidem.
60. Q.57, 20.

61. Ibn Qutaiba, Abū Muḥammad ʿAbdullāh b. Muslim al-Dīnawarī, Muškil al-Qurʾān wa ḡarībuhu, Vol. 1, pp.13-14. Also Vol. 2, p.164.
62. Ibn Manẓūr, Vol. 6, pp.461-462.
63. Abū ʿUbaida, the introduction, p.2.
64. Q.2, 264-265.
65. Q.2, 264-265.
66. Abū ʿUbaida, Vol. 1, p.82.
67. Q.2, 266.
68. Ibn Sīda, al-Muḥkam wa al-muḥīt fī al-luḡa, Vol. 1, p.266.
69. Abū ʿUbaida, loc. cit.
70. Q.48, 29.
71. Abū ʿUbaida, Vol. 2, p.218.
72. Ibn Taimiyya, Taqī al-Dīn, Abū al-ʿAbbas Aḥmad, al-Īmān, p.34.
73. Abū ʿUbaida, the introduction, p.8.
74. Q.2, 19.
75. Abū ʿUbaida, Vol. 1, p.33.
76. Al-Anbārī, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad, Nuzhat al-alibbāʾ fī ṭabaqāt al-udabāʾ, pp.107-108.
77. Q.2, 223.
78. Abū ʿUbaida, loc. cit., p.73.
79. Q.56, 55.
80. Abū ʿUbaida, Vol. 2, p.251.
81. Q.2, 7.
82. Abū ʿUbaida, Vol. 1, p.31.
83. See p.173.
84. Q.31, 32.
85. Abū ʿUbaida, Vol. 2, p.128.
86. Q.24, 45.
87. Abū ʿUbaida, loc. cit., p.68. See also Vol. 1, p.375.
88. Q.35, 9.
89. Abū ʿUbaida, Vol. 2, p.152.
90. Ibn ʿĠinnī, Vol. 2, p.10. See also al-Suyūṭī, Vol. 1, p.257.
91. Abū ʿUbaida, the introduction, p.13.
92. Al-Ḥaṭīb al-Baḡdādī, Abū Bakr Aḥmad b. ʿAlī, Tārīḥ Baḡdād, Vol. 12, p.405.

93. Ibn al-Nadīm, Muḥammad b. Abī Yaʿqūb Ishāq al-Baḡdādī, al-Fihrist, p.99.
94. Q.2, 171.
95. Al-Farrāʾ, Abū Zakariyyāʾ Yahya b. Ziyād, Maʿānī al-Qurʾān, Vol. 1, p.99.
96. Q.74, 50-51.
97. Farrāʾ, Vol. 3, p.206.
98. Q.48, 29.
99. Farrāʾ, loc. cit., p.69.
100. Q.2, 19.
101. Farrāʾ, Vol. 1, p.17.
102. Q.3, 59.
103. Farrāʾ, loc. cit., p.219.
104. Q.62, 5.
105. Farrāʾ, loc. cit.
106. Q.2, 17.
107. Farrāʾ, loc. cit., p.15.
108. Q.55, 14.
109. Farrāʾ, Vol. 3, p.114.
110. Ibn Manẓūr, Vol. 13, p.405.
111. Ibid., p.406.
112. Q.76, 19.
113. Farrāʾ, Vol. 3, p.218.
114. Q.24, 35.
115. Farrāʾ, Vol. 2, p.252.
116. Q.56, 54-55.
117. Farrāʾ, Vol. 3, p.128.
118. Q.70, 43.
119. Farrāʾ, loc. cit., p.186.
120. Mubarrid, Vol. 2, pp.35-101.
121. Ibid., p.100.
122. Ibid., p.69.
123. Ibid., p.87.
124. Q.24, 35.
125. Q.56, 23.

126. Mubarrid, loc. cit., p.49.
127. Q.37, 65.
128. Mubarrid, loc. cit., p.69.
129. Ibidem.
130. Ibid., p.74.
131. Q.62, 5.
132. Mubarrid, loc. cit., p.89.
133. Ibid., pp.89-90.
134. Ibid., see pp.36-37.
135. Ibid., see pp. 40-44.
136. Ibidem.
137. Ibid., pp.43-44.
138. Ibidem.
139. Ibid., p.47.
140. Q.37, 49.
141. Mubarrid, loc. cit.
142. Ibid., p.48.
143. Q.27, 88.
144. Mubarrid, loc. cit.
145. Ibn Qutaiba, Vol. 2, p.157.
146. Q.77, 32-33.
147. Ibn Qutaiba, loc. cit., p.199.
148. Ibid., p.107.
149. Ibid., p.108.
150. Q.2, 171.
151. Ibn Qutaiba, Vol. 1, p.33.
152. Q.22, 31.
153. Ibn Qutaiba, Vol. 2, p.30. See also pp.40, 41, 47, 73.
154. Ibid., Vol. 1, p.235.
155. Q.37, 65.
156. Ibn Qutaiba, Vol. 2, p.94.
157. Ibn Manzūr, Vol. 17, p.104.
158. Q.57, 20.
159. Ibn Qutaiba, Vol. 1, p.14. See also Vol. 2, p.164.

160. Q.14, 18.
161. Ibn Qutaiba, Vol. 1, p.52.
162. Ibid., pp.121-122.
163. Ibid., pp.269-270.
164. Ibid., pp.90-91.
165. Ibid., p.269.
166. Ibid., Vol. 2, p.162.
167. Ibidem.
168. Ibid., Vol. 1, p.222.
169. Ibid., pp.222-223.
170. Ibn Manẓūr, Vol. 4, p.251.
171. Ibid., p.252.
172. Suyūṭī, Vol. 1, p.387.
173. Al-Anbārī, Muḥammad b. al-Qāsim, al-Addād, p.6.
174. Suyūṭī, loc. cit.
175. Sibawaih, Abu Biṣr ʿAmr, al-Kitāb, Vol. 1, pp.7-8.
176. Anbārī, loc. cit., p.8.
177. Ibid., pp.11-12.
178. Ibn Sīda, al-Muḥaṣṣas, Vol. 4, p.259.
179. Q.68, 20.
180. Ibn Sīda, loc. cit., p.262.
181. Anbārī, p.1.
182. Ibid., p.2.
183. Q.2, 249.
184. Q.21, 87.
185. Anbārī, p.3.
186. Q.2, 16.
187. Anbārī, p.72.
188. Ibidem.
189. Q.24, 35.
190. al-Buḥārī, Abū ʿAbdullāh Muḥammad b. Ismaʿīl b. Ibrāhīm b. al-Muḡīra, Ṣaḥīḥ al-Buḥārī, Vol. 6, p.124.
191. Anbārī, loc. cit., p.424. See also Abū ʿUbaida, Vol. 2, p.66.
192. Q.24, 35.
193. Anbārī, loc. cit., p.260.

194. Abū ʿUbaida, Vol. 2, p.66.
195. Anbārī, p.260.
196. Ibidem.
197. Q.68, 20.
198. Anbārī, pp.84-85.
199. Ibidem.
200. Al-Ṭaʿalibī, Abū Maṣṣūr ʿAbd al-Malik b. Muḥammad, Fiḥ al-luḡa, p.468.
201. Ibid., p.565.
202. Al-Qālī, Abū ʿAlī Ismaʿīl b. al-Qāsim, al-Amālī, Vol. 2, p.318.
203. Q.77, 33.
204. Al-Anbārī, loc. cit., p.160.
205. Abū ʿUbaida, Vol. 2, p.281.
206. Al-Farrāʾ, Vol. 3, p.225.
207. Abū al-Ṭayyib al-luḡawī, ʿAbd al-Wāḥid b. ʿAlī al-Ḥalabī, al-ʿAḍdād fī Kalām al-ʿArab, Vol. 1, p.260.
208. Q.2, 275.
209. Abū al-Ṭayyib, loc. cit., pp.260-261.
210. Ibn Maṣṣūr, Vol. 13, p.50.
211. Ibn Sīda, al-Muḥassas, Vol. 4, p.267.
212. Al-Suyūṭī, Vol. 1, p.460.
213. Ibidem.
214. Ibidem.
215. See the introduction, p.17.
216. Ibn Sīda, loc. cit., p.274.
217. Sibawaih, Vol. 2, p.401.
218. Q.26, 63.
219. Al-Suyūṭī, loc. cit.
220. Q.105, 4.
221. Abū al-Ṭayyib, Vol. 2, pp.406-407.
222. Q.18, 46.
223. Abū al-Ṭayyib, loc. cit., p.509.
224. Al-Farrāʾ, Vol. 2, p.146.
225. Q.13, 17.
226. Abū al-Ṭayyib, Vol. 1, p.196.

PART TWO

THE QUR'ĀNIC SIMILE IN THE WORK OF THE COMMENTATORS

Al-Ṭabarī and his book *Ġāmi' al-bayān 'an ta'wīl āy al-Qur'ān*

Al-Ṭabarī's interpretation of the Qur'ān represents a special approach, i.e. the exegesis dependent upon the Tradition, (hadīth). Thus, in the forefront Ṭabarī places reports handed down from the earlier generations, - preferably where they are available, reports coming down from the Prophet himself. Thus, reports handed down from the previous generations of the Muslims form the most important basis of his discussion of the verses. These are chiefly reports transmitted as from the Companions and their Successors, (the Ṭabi'ūn). Reports from later figures are also accepted, provided in all cases they are supported by isnāds acceptable to the critics. Such reports establish what, for Ṭabarī, is ḥuḍḡa - i.e. undoubted evidence.

Occasionally, and especially in the absence of report-evidence, Ṭabarī will employ evidence drawn from the sciences of the Arabic language, chiefly the results of the grammarians' analysis of the language of the Arab poets. In addition, he adduces the evidence of normal Arab prose usage. For the meanings of individual words used in the Qur'ān, frequent comparison is made with the use of the same terms in other verses of the Qur'ān itself - Qur'ānic usage.

Thus, Ṭabarī's approach differs from that of more specialist exegetes, such as Farrā' and Abū 'Ubayda, who are more narrowly concentrated in their studies on the specifically linguistic aspects of the

Qurʾān's expression, emphasising, as does Tabarī, the need to explain the Qurʾān in terms of the usage of those in whose tongue it was revealed, but, unlike Tabarī, making relatively little use of the traditional interpretations. They tend to regard the evidence drawn from the poets as at least equal to that traditionally handed down, if not, indeed, even independent of it.

In his introduction, Tabarī explains his approach:

The mufasssir most likely to attain to the correct interpretation of the Qurʾān, insofar as that is attainable by the Muslim, is the scholar who shows greatest reliance upon the reports reaching him from the Prophet that have been regarded as soundly transmitted from him, as opposed to the reports coming from all other persons. The Prophet's reports reach us either as widespread traditions coming down on many sides, or as reports transmitted by thoroughly trustworthy persons, where the widespread type of report is not to hand. Scholars may rely on other sources of sound information, the most satisfactory of which is that provided by the usage of the language users themselves, as illustrated by their verse, or by their regular speech practice, providing again, that one uses general, well-known idiomatic usage. But, above all, such interpretations as may be achieved by this last method will be judged by the degree to which it accords with the interpretation of the pious predecessors, the Prophet's Companions, their Successors and the general views expressed by the recognised scholars of the community."¹

His general method in the book

Al-Tabarī mentions the statements of the earliest interpreters such as Ibn ʿAbbās and Muḡāhid and many others. He reports the interpretations handed down from one person to another until he reaches back to the Messenger Muḡammad, or to one of His immediate followers. Then where he prefers one statement to the others he gives the reasons for his preference. But if there is only one statement to explain the verse he mentions it and follows it with the phrase: "The specialists in Qurʾān

interpretation held the view we have here expressed." Al-Ṭabarī in his interpretation of the verses of the Qurʾān mentions the cause of revelation of that verse, if there is any such report and states concerning whom it was revealed and relates the story as handed down.

The philological aspect of al-Ṭabarī's interpretation of the verses containing similes

Al-Ṭabarī explains in the introduction of his book the importance of philology to every one who wants to interpret Allāh's book (the Qurʾān). He declares that he would start each verse by considering its interpretation in the light of Arabic philology. Ignoring that aspect leads only to confusion and misunderstanding of the meaning of that verse:

(1) "وان أول ما نبدأ به من القيل في ذلك الابانة عن الأسباب التي البداية بها أولى وتقديمها قبل ما عداها أخرى و ذلك البيان عما في آي القرآن من المعاني التي من قبلها يدخل اللبس على من لم يعان رياضة العلوم العربية ولم تستحكم معرفته بتعاريف وجوه منطق الألسن السليقة الطبيعية"²

In his interpretation of the verses involving comparisons, al-Ṭabarī explains the linguistic meaning word by word in each verse. But this is not his method only in verses containing similes. He does the same with all the verses. We can see him explaining the meaning of each word of this verse:

(2) "يا أيها الذين آمنوا لا تبطلوا صدقاتكم باليمن والأذى كالذي ينفق ماله رياء الناس ولا يؤمن بالله واليوم الآخر فمثل كمثل صفوان عليه تراب فأصابه وابل فتركه صلدا"³

he says:

(3) "الصفوان واحد و جمع فمن جعله جمعا فالواحدة صفوانة بمنزلة ثمرة و تمر و نخلة و نخل و من جعله واحدا جمعه صفوان و صَفَّى و صَفَّى كما قال الشاعر:

مواقع الطير على الصَّفَى

والصفوان: هو الصفا وهي الحجارة الملس. وابل وهو المطر الشديد العظيم كما قال امرؤ القيس:

ساعة تم انتحائها وابلٌ ساقطُ الاكثاف وامٍ منهبر

يقال منه: وبلت السماء فهي تبل وبلا وقد وبلت الارض فهي تَوَبَّلَ .
صلدا: الصلد من الحجارة: الصلب الذي لا شيء عليه من نبات ولا غيره
وهو من الارضين ما لا ينبت فيه شيء. وكذلك من الرؤوس، كما قال رؤبة:
لما رأيتي خلَقَ الممَّوَرُ بَرَّاقَ أَعْلَادِ الجَبِينِ الأَجْلَمِ⁴

In this manner, when explaining the individual words of the verses, on the linguistic level, Tabarī would stress the meanings with which the Arabs were familiar. Again for example, of the word naṣr, used in the verse:

(4) "وهو الذي يرسل الرياح نشرًا بين يدي رحمته حتى إذا أَقَلَّتْ سَحَابًا ثَقَالًا
سَقَنَاهُ لِبَلَدٍ مَّيِّتٍ فَأَنْزَلْنَا بِهِ الْمَاءَ فَأَخْرَجْنَا بِهِ مِنْ كُلِّ الثَّمَرَاتِ كَذَلِكَ نَخْرِجُ
الْمَوْتَى"⁵

He explains the meaning of the word al-naṣr supporting this interpretation with the statement of the Arabs' speech and a verse of their poetry:

(5) "النشر بفتح النون وسكون الشين في كلام العرب: من الرياح الطيبة اللينة
الهبوب التي تنشى. السحاب وكذلك كل ريح طيبة عندهم فهي نشر ومنه
قول امرؤ القيس:
كَأَنَّ الْمَدَامَ وَصُوبَ الْغَمَامِ وَرِيحَ الْخَزَامِيِّ وَنَشْرَ الْقَطْرِ"⁶

We see him another time in connection with this verse:

(6) "وكانت الجبال كثيبًا مهيلًا"⁷

mentioning all the known Arabic pronunciations of the word 'mahilan' saying:

- (7) "والمهيل مفعول في قول القائل هِلْتُ الرمل فأنا أهيله وذلك اذا حرك أسفله فانها ل عليه من أعلاه ، وللعرب في ذلك لغتان تقول: مهيل ومهيل ومكيل ومكيل ومنه قول الشاعر:
- قد كان قومك يحسبونك سيّدا وإخال أنك سيّد مَنِيُون" ⁸

In addition to his interest in Arabic philology he was interested in morphology as well. He mentioned a word's inflection and its etymology, as he says about the word 'Istahwathū' in this verse:

- (8) "قل أندعوا من دون الله ما لا ينفعنا ولا يضرنا ونردّ على أعقابنا بعد ان هدانا الله كالذي استهوته الشياطين في الارض حيران" ⁹
- (9) "وقوله استهوته استفعلته من قول القائل هوى فلان الى كذا يهوي اليه واما حيران فانه فعلان من قول القائل قد حار فلان في الطريق فهو يحار فيه حيرة وحيرانا وحيرة و حيرة و حيرة اذا ضل فلم يهتد للمحجة وترك اجرا حيران لأنه فعلان وكل اسم كان على فعلان مما انشاء فعلى فانه لا يجرى في كلام العرب في معرفة ولا نكرة." ¹⁰

With his interest in philology, al-Tabarī was not satisfied with giving one meaning to each word but he sometimes digresses by mentioning all the linguistic meanings of the word. He lets us imagine when we read it as if we were reading an Arabic philological dictionary, not an interpretation of the Qurʾān. For example, we see him saying about this word 'al-riba' in this verse:

- (10) "الذين يأكلون الربا لا يقومون الا كما يقوم الذي يتخبطه الشيطان من المس" ¹¹
- (11) "الربا: الزيادة على الشيء يقال منه: أربى فلان على فلان اذا زاد عليه يُربي اربا، والزيادة هي الربا، وربا الشيء اذا زاد على ما كان عليه فعظم فهو يربو ربوا وانما قيل للرابية لزيادتها في العظم والاشراف على ما استوى من الأرض مما حولها من قولهم: ربا يربو، ومن ذلك قيل: فلان في

ربا قومه ، يراد أنه في رفعة وشرف منهم فأصل الربا الانافة والزيادة ثم يقال: أرى فلان: أي أناف ، صيره زائدا وانما قيل للمربي مُربٍ لتضعيفه المال الذي كان له على غريمه حالا او لزيادته عليه فيه لسبب الأجل الذي يؤخره اليه فيزيده الى أجله الذي كان له قبل حل دينه عليه .¹²

Would it be possible to find a better interpretation of the word al-riba than in the explanation by al-Ṭabarī and would any philological dictionary contain more information than al-Ṭabarī's book about this word? Most of al-Ṭabarī's philological explanations of the words of the verses have been taken from philologists like Abū ʿUbayda and al-Farrāʾ as we see him explaining this verse:

(12) "يوم يخرجون من الأجداث سراعا كأنهم الى نصب يوفضون"¹³

He says when he explains the philological meaning of the word Yufidūn :

(13) "واما قوله "يوفضون" فان الايفاض هو الاسراع ومنه قول الشاعر:
لأنعتن نعامة ميفاضا خرجا تغدو تطلب الإضاضا
يقول: تطلب ملجأ تلجأ اليه والايفاض السرعة . وقال رؤبة:
تمشي بنا الجد على أفاض"¹⁴

Having read the philologists' books , we know that al-Farrāʾ supports his argument with the first verse in his book Maʿānī al-Qurʾān when he says:

(14) "وقوله "الى نصب يوفضون" الايفاض الاسراع وقال الشاعر:¹⁵
لأنعتن نعامة ميفاضا خرجا ظلت تطلب الاضاضا

The second verse used by al-Ṭabarī to support his thesis is taken from

Abū ʿUbayda's book Maḡāz al-Qurʾān , where he says about this verse:

(15) "يوسفون": يسرعون . قال رؤبة:
يمشي بنا الجد على أفاض"¹⁶

Sometimes al-Tabarī attributes the statements to their original authors, as we see him explain this verse:

(16) "كَانَهُمْ حَمْرٌ مُسْتَفْرَةٌ فَرَّتْ مِنْ قَسْوَةٍ" 17

He says about the different recital of the word mustanfara :

(17) "وَالصَّوَابُ مِنَ الْقَوْلِ فِي ذَلِكَ عِنْدَنَا أَنَّهُمَا قَرَأَتَانِ مَعْرُوفَتَانِ صَحِيحَتَا الْمَعْنَى فَبَأَيَّتَهُمَا قَرَأَ الْقَارِئُ فَمَصِيبٌ وَكَانَ الْفَرَاءُ يَقُولُ الْفَتْحَ وَالْكَسْرَ فِي ذَلِكَ كَثِيرَانِ فِي كَلَامِ الْعَرَبِ وَأَنْشُدُ :

18 أَمْسَكَ حِمَارَكَ إِنَّهُ مُسْتَفِرٌّ فِي إِثْرِ أَحْمَرَةٍ عَمَدَنْ لِيَغْرِبَ

The last verse is mentioned also in Ibn Manẓūr Lisān al-ʿArab in the article "Nafara" and is seen also in Maʿānī al-Qurʾān by al-Farrā'. 19

Al-Tabarī's support of his argument with a verse or a statement of Arabic speech

As we have said before, the first choice of interpretation in al-Tabarī's book is the "Naqlī" explanation, if it is available to him.

He does not resort to the philological explanation if he has the first

one, as we see in this verse: (18) "وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ الْجَوَارِ فِي الْبَحْرِ كَالْأَعْلَامِ" 20

He says: (19) "الْجَوَارِي" جمع جارية وهي السفن السائرة في البحر" 21

supporting his view with the oral transmission of prophetic traditions.

He did not need to support his view with a verse or a statement from

Arabic speech because he has the "Naqlī" proof regarding this verse.

But if there has been handed down more than one possibility, he

attributes the oral tradition to the Messenger Muḥammad or one of His

followers regarding the meaning of a word resorting in this case to the

philological explanation, he prefers one meaning to the others,

supporting his preference with a verse or a statement of Arabic speech

as he did with this verse:

22 "انها ترمي بشر كالقصر كانه جمالة صفر" (20)

So he mentions the meaning attributed to the word al-qasr . The first meaning is singular of qusur (palace) and the second meaning is the "strong wood" such as the root of a palm tree.

He mentions all the people who have given both meanings. But he prefers the first meaning which means "palace" because this meaning is well-known in Arab speech as they frequently would compare the camel to the palace. He supports his interpretation with a verse by the poet al-Aḥṭal who describes a female camel:

23 "كانها برج رومي يشيده لزر بجس واجز واحجار" (21)

Then he mentions the different meanings attributed to "As it might be camels of bright yellow hue" and prefers the one which means the "black camels" because this meaning is also well-known in the language of the ancient Arabs.²⁴

The syntax in al-Ṭabari's explanation

Al-Ṭabari seldom mentions the syntax of a verse or its desinential inflection. He does not mention anything about the syntax of the verses containing similes except one of them which is:

25 "مثل الذين كفروا برههم أعمالهم كرماد اشتدت به الريح في يوم عاصف" (22)

He talks about the differences between the specialists on the Iṣṭab of the final consonant with matal , saying:

23 "اختلف أهل العربية في رافع "مثل" فقال بعض نحوي البصرة انما هو كانه" (23)

قال: ومما نقس عليكم "مثل الذين كفروا" ثم أقبل يفسر كما قال "مثل الجنة" وهذا كثير. وقال بعض نحويي الكوفيين: انما المثل للأعمال ولكن العرب تقدم الاسماء لانها أعرف ثم تأتي بالخبر الذي تخبر عنه مع صاحبه ومعنى الكلام: مثل أعمال الذين كفروا برسهم كرماد. * 26

Al-Tabarī and the reported variant readings of the Qur'ān

• The precise punctuation and vocalization of the text of the Qur'ān introduces the philological aspect of tafsīr. We have seen al-Tabarī mention the different readings of the words of the Qur'ān. He says that this difference relates to the difference in accent (dialect) of the ancient Arabs. He gives the different meanings for each reading" then he gave the correct view in his opinion, as he does with regard to this verse:

"واذا رأيتهم تعجبك أجسامهم وان يقولوا تسمع لقولهم كأنهم خشب مستندة" * 27 (24)

He talks about the different reading of the word huṣub he says:

"اختلفت القراء في قراءة "خشب" فبعضهم قرأها "خشب" بضم الخاء و الشين كأنهم وجهوا ذلك الى جمع الجمع جمعوا الخشبة خشابا ثم جمعوا الخشاب خشبا كما جمعت الشعرة شمارا ثم شمارا وقد يجوز أن يكون "الخشب" بضم الخاء والشين اي انها جمع خشبة فتضم الشين منها مرة وتسكن أخرى كما جمعوا الأكمة أكما وأكما * 28 (25)

Tabarī concludes this discussion by stating that these are two well-known readings (based upon) two approved pronunciations. Thus, which ever the Reader prefers to recite is correct.

"انهما قراءتان معروفتان ولغتان فصيحتان وبأيتهما قرأ القارىء فمصيب و تسكين الاوسط فيما جاء من جمع فُعْلة على فُعْل في الاسماء على ألسن العرب اكثر وذلك كجمعهم البدنة بدنا والأجمة أجما * 29 (26)

Al-Tabarī talks about figurative expression and what is included therein, such as simile and metaphor, by referring to similar statements in Arabic speech. We have seen that al-Tabarī uses a simple and very easy to understand explanation of the similes of the Qur'ān. He did not go into detail as to its particulars and divisions and explain the similes, as we see him explaining the simile in this verse:

(27) "مثل ما ينفقون في هذه الحياة الدنيا كمثل ريح فيها صرّ أصابت حرث قوم ظلموا أنفسهم فأهلكته" ³⁰

He says:

(28) "شبه ما يتصدق به الكافر من ماله فيعطيه من يعطيه على وجه القرية الى ربّه وهو لوحداية الله جاحد ولحمد صلى الله عليه وسلم مكذب في أن ذلك غير نافع مع كفره وانه مضحّل عند حاجته اليه زاهب بعد الذي كان يرجو من عائدة نفعه عليه كسبه ريح فيها برد شديد أصابت هذه الريح التي فيها البرد الشديد حرث قوم يعني زرع قوم قد أقلوا ادراكه ورجوا ريعه وعائدة نفعه." ³¹

But we have seen occasionally that al-Tabarī explains the verses containing similes in more detail than we are accustomed to see him doing, as when he explains this verse:

(29) "انها شجرة تخرج في أصل الجحيم ، طلعتها كأنه رؤوس الشياطين" ³²
in terms of rhetoric.

He mentions the thing being compared, the thing with which the other

is compared and the basis of the comparison. He says:

(30) "كان طلع هذه الشجرة يعني شجرة الزقوم في قبحة وسماجته برؤوس الشياطين في قبحتها" ³³

Then he imagines that someone had asked him about the basis of the comparison in this verse. He says:

(31) "فان قال قائل وما وجه تشبيه طلع هذه الشجرة برؤوس الشياطين في القبح

ولا علم عندنا بمبلغ قبح رؤوس الشياطين وانما يمثل الشئ بالشئ تعريفاً من
 الممثل الممثل له قرب اشتباه الممثل أحدهما بصاحبه مع معرفة الممثل له
 الشئين كليهما أو أحدهما ومعلوم ان الذين خطبوا بهذه الآية من المشركين
 لم يكونوا عارفين بشجرة الزقوم ولا برؤوس الشياطين ولا كانوا رأوها ولا واحداً
 منهما ."

Al-Ṭabarī answers this question as follows:

(32) "أما شجرة الزقوم فقد وصفها الله تعالى ذكره لهم وبيّنها حتى عرفوها ما
 هي وما صفتها فقال لهم "شجرة تخرج في أصل الجحيم طلعتها كأنه رؤوس
 الشياطين" فلم يتركهم في عما منها . وأما في تمثيله طلعتها برؤوس الشياطين
 فأقول :

أحدها : أن يكون مثل ذلك برؤوس الشياطين على نحو ما قد جرى به استعمال
 المخاطبين بالآية بينهم وذلك ان استعمال الناس قد جرى بينهم في مبالغتهم
 اذا أراد أحدهم المبالغة في تقبيح الشئ قال كأنه شيطان ³⁴

Then he mentions the second interpretation of the meaning of

ṣayātīn , which reportedly means a "snake's head", familiar among
 Arabs . He supports this interpretation with this poet's verse:

عنجرٍ تحلف حين أحلفُ كمثل شيطان الحماط أعرف (33)

The third interpretation of the word ṣaytān is that of an "ugly
 plant" which was known among the Arabs as ruʿūs al-ṣayātīn . ³⁵

We have seen from his interpretation of the last verse that al-Ṭabarī
 did not differentiate between the taṣbīh and tamtīl . Indeed, he
 called the simile "comparison" when he said:

(34) "وأما في تمثيله طلعتها برؤوس الشياطين"

We have seen this intermingling of al-taṣbīh and al-tamtīl in
 philological books too, such as those of al-Farrāʿ and Abū ʿUbayda .

It occurs also in the works on rhetoric until the time of ʿAbd al-Qāhir

al-Ġurġānī, who differentiates between them for the first time.

Al-Tabarī supports his interpretation of the verses containing similes in the Qurʾān with instances drawn from Arab speech and their poetry to show that this or that simile was well-known and familiar among the Arabs when the Qurʾān was revealed as we see him do with these two verses:

(35) "ولقد ذرأنا لجهنم كثيرا من الجن والانس لهم قلوب لا يفقهون بها ولهم أعين لا يبصرون بها ولهم أذان لا يسمعون بها اولئك كالانعام بل هم أضل" 36

And:

(36) "صم بكم عني فهم لا يعقلون" 37

He says:

(37) "والعرب تقول ذلك للتارك استعمال بعض جوارحه فيما يصلح له ومنه قول مسكين الدارمي:

أعمى اذا ما جارتني خرجت حتى يوايى جرتي الستر
وأصم عما كان بينهما سمعي وما بالسمع من وقر
فوصف نفسه لتركة النظر والاستماع بالعمى والصم.
وذلك كثير في كلام العرب وأشعارها" 38

But al-Tabarī in most of his comments about the verses containing similes quotes from Maḡāz al-Qurʾān by Abū ʿUbayda and indeed, cites the same verses of poetry as he says about the verse:

(38) "والذين يدعون من دونه لا يستجيبون لهم بشئ الا كباسط كفيه الى الماء ليبلغ فاه وما هو ببالغه" 39

He explains the simile as:

(39) "لا ينفع داعي الآلهة دعاؤه اياها الا كما ينفع باسط كفيه الى الماء بسطه اياها اليه من غير أن يرفعه اليه في انا. ولكن ليرتفع اليه بدعائه اياه و اشارته اليه وقبضه عليه والعرب تضرب لمن سعى فيما لا يدركه مثلا بالقابض على الماء وقال بعضهم:

فاني وإياكم وشوقا إليكم كقابض ماءٍ لم تسقه أنامله
يعني بذلك أنه ليس في يده من ذلك إلا كما في يد القابض على الماء لان
القابض على الماء لا شيء في يده وقال آخر:
فأصبحت مما كان بيني وبينها من الودِّ مثل القابض الماء باليد " 40

These two verses of poetry are the same verses in the Mağāz al-Qur'ān by Abū 'Ubaida where he comments on the figurative features of this verse:

(40) "ان الذي يبسط كفه ليقبض على الماء حتى يؤديه الى فيه لا يتم له ذلك و
لم تسقه أنامله اي تجمعه " 41

Then he mentions the two previous verses.

Al-Zamahšarī and his Book al-Kaššāf

Al-Zamahšarī's fame spread throughout the Islamic world because of his book al-Kaššāf. His interpretation of the Qur'ān represents a new style of assessment because of his explanation of the rhetoric and syntax throughout his interpretation of the verses. He presents his interpretation in the form of questions and answers.

We can learn many things from his interpretation, but the most important things are the philological and rhetorical aspects of his book.

The philology in al-Zamahšarī's interpretation

Al-Zamahšarī mentions in his book the origin of language. He believes in the theory which states that the language is a revelation of Allāh and it is "توقيف من الله". (41)

Abū 'Alī al-Fārisī, the philologist, supports this theory.

Al-Zamahṣarī talks about this subject when he explains the verse:

(42) "وعلم آدم الاسماء كلها" ⁴²

He says:

(43) "الاسماء كلها أي أسماء المسميات... فان قلت فما معنى تعليمه أسماء المسميات قلت: أراه الاجناس التي خلقها وعلمه ان هذا اسمه فرس وهذا اسمه بعير وهذا اسمه كذا وهذا اسمه كذا وعلمه أحوالها وما يتعلق بها من المنافع الدينية والدنيوية." ⁴³

Al-Zamahṣarī sees the effect of the different phonetics of a word on the meaning. He sees the effect of the different tenses on the meaning of the word. Sometimes the word in the verse is changed from one tense to another for a philological reason as with this verse:

(44) "والله الذي أرسل الرياح فتثير سحابا فسقناه الى بلد ميث فأحيينا به الارض بعد موتها كذلك النشور" ⁴⁴

He says:

(45) "فان قلت لم جاء "فتثير" على المضارعة دون ما قبله وما بعده. قلت ليحكي الحال التي تقع فيها اثاره الرياح السحاب وتستحضر تلك الصورة البديعة الدالة على القدرة الربانية وهكذا يفعلون بفعل فيه نوع تمييز وخصوصية بحال تستغرب او تهتم المخاطب او غير ذلك كما قال تأبط شرا: باني قد لقيت الغول تهوى بسهب كالصحيفة صحصحان فأضربها بلا دهش فخرت صريعا لليدين وللجران" ⁴⁵

We see that al-Zamahṣarī, throughout his philological explanation of the words, is interested in argumentation. This point is recognised clearly all through his book. He says about the verse:

(46) "ثم قست قلوبكم من بعد ذلك فهي كالحجارة أو أشد قسوة" ⁴⁶

(47) "لم قيل أشد قسوة وفعل القسوة مما يخرج منه أفعل التفضيل وفعل التعجب قلت: لكونه أبين وأدل على فرط القسوة ووجه آخر وهو أنه لا يقصد معنى الأقسى ولكن قصد وصف القسوة بالشدّة كأنه قيل أشدت قسوة الحجارة و قلوبهم أشد قسوة." ⁴⁷

Al-Zamaḥṣarī also explains the condition of the thing with which the other is compared and mentions the reason for the use of the definite noun or the indefinite noun and its effect on the comparison as a whole, as he says about the verse:

"أنزل من السماء ماء فسالت أودية بقدرها فاحتمل السيل زيدا" ⁴⁸ (48)

"فان قلت لما نكرت الاودية قلت لأن المطر لا يأتي الا عن طريق المناوبة (49)

بين القاع فيسيل بعض اودية الارض دون بعض" ⁴⁹

He mentions as well the reason for the use of an indefinite noun with the word sayyib in the verse:

"أو كصيب من السماء فيه ظلمات ورعد وبرق" ⁵⁰ (50)

He says:

"وتكثير "صيب" لانه اريد نوع من المطر شديد هائل" ⁵¹ (51)

and he explains the choice of an indefinite noun with the other words in the previous verse (darkness, thunder, flash of lightning) saying:

"انما جاءت هذه الاشياء منكرات لان المراد أنواع منها كأنه قيل فيه ظلمات (52)

داجية ورعد قاصف وبرق خاطف" ⁵²

He also gives the reason for the use of the definite noun in the case of the word al-sama in the previous verse, saying:

"انه جاء بالسماء معرفة فنفي أن يتصوّب من سماء أي من افق واحد من بين (53)

سائر الآفاق لان كل أفق من آفاقها سماء كما أن كل طبقة من الطباق

سماء... والمعنى أنه غمام مطبق آخذ بآفاق السماء كما جاء بصيب وفيه

مبالغات من جهة التركيب والبناء والتكثير." ⁵³

Lastly, we can see in this part of al Zamaḥṣarī's interpretation (the philology) that he exhausts the reader's mind to try to understand the meaning of the verse and he attributes many meanings to each word in the Qurʾān.

His adducing in support of his argument the speech of the Arabs

Al-Zamahṣārī supports his argument with the speech of the Arabs and their poetry. He states that the style of the Qurʾān conforms with the style of speech of the Arabs. So the simile of the Qurʾān accords with the simile of Arabic speech. He says this about the verse:

(54) "الذين يأكلون الربا لا يقومون الا كما يقوم الذي يتخبطه الشيطان من المس" 54

(55) "وتخبط الشيطان من زعمات العرب يزعمون ان الشيطان يخبط الانسان

فيصرع والخبط الضرب على غير استواء كخبط العشواء فورد على ما كانوا
يعتقدون" 55

and also about the verse:

(56) "كانهم حمر مستنفرة فرت من قسورة" 56

(57) "ولا ترى مثل نفار حمير الوحش واطرادها في العدو اذا رابها رائب و
لذلك كان اكثر تشبيهات العرب في وصف الابل وشدة سيرها بالحر وعدوها
اذا وردت ماء فاحسنت عليه بقانص" 57

But generally al-Zamahṣārī's introduction in support of an argument of examples of the speech of the Arabs and their poetry in order to explain the philological meaning of the words of the verses is much less than that of the philologists and other interpreters of the Qurʾān, such as al-Tabarī.

His concentration upon the verses containing similes is concerned with details of the nature of the simile and with the basis of the comparison. So we can see the rhetorical approach is most common in his interpretation of the Qurʾān. Once in a while we see al-Zamahṣārī follow the method of the first philologists who heard the speech of the Arabs from their mouths and maintained that what they heard helped them to interpret the verses of the Qurʾān, as we see in this verse:

(58) "ومثل الذين كفروا كمثل الذي ينعق بما لا يسمع الا دعاء و نداء" 58

He says:

(59) "النعيق التصويت يقال نعى المؤذن ونعى الراعي بالضأن قال الاخطل:
فأنعى بضأنك يا جرير فانما منتك نفسك في الخلاء ضللا" 59

He says also about the verse:

(60) "ومن آياته الجوار في البحر كالاعلام" 60

(61) "كالاعلام" كالجبال قالت الخنساء:

كأنه علم في رأسه نار" 61

On the other hand he differs from the philologists in the scope of the material he adduces in support of an argument. Most of the philologists support their argument only by the pre-Islamic poets. They never support their philological interpretation with the Muwalladīn poets (the poets of the Abbasid period) like Abū Tammām and al-Buḥturī and al-Mutanabbī whose poetry was not used by them as evidence. But we see that al-Zamaḥṣarī supports his argument with these poets, especially with Abū Tammām. He explains his theory regarding Abū Tammām's poetry as follows:

(62) "وهو وان كان محدثا لا يستشهد بشعره في اللغة فهو من علماء العربية
فاجعل ما يقوله بمنزلة ما يرويه الا ترى الى قول العلماء الدليل عليه بيت
الصاسة فيقتنعون بذلك لو ثوقهم بروايته واتقانه" 62

This point is seen clearly in his book. We can consider it as a special feature of his philological interpretation of the Qurʾān. Even al-Suyūṭī refers in his book al-Muzhir to al-Zamaḥṣarī's practice of supporting his argument with citation from the poets of the Abbasid period, saying:

(63) "وقع في كلام الزمخشري وغيره الاستشهاد بشعر أبي تمام بل في الايضاح

للفارسي ووجه بان الاستشهاد بتقرير النقلة كلامهم وأنه لم يخرج عن
قوانين العرب. 63

We see that one philologist Ibn Ġinnī agrees with al-Zamahšarī,
supporting his view, saying:

"يُسْتَشْهَدُ بِشَعْرِ الْمَوْلَدِينَ فِي الْمَعَانِي كَمَا يُسْتَشْهَدُ بِشَعْرِ الْعَرَبِ فِي الْأَلْفَافِ" 64 (64)

But I do not agree with al-Zamahšarī on this point because the Arabic
language in that late period (Abbasid period) was not so pure and true
Arabic as the pre-Islamic Arabic language. They were living with many
other nations at that time whose mother tongue was not Arabic (like the
Greeks and the Persians) and they were dealing with them. So their
Arabic language was not as pure as that of the pre-Islamic poets, who
lived in the desert and had not seen any other nations except Arabs.

Al-Zamahšarī and the variant readings

Sometimes al-Zamahšarī explains the philological differentiation
according to the variant readings of the word in the verse, which leads
to the different philological meanings of that word, as happens in the
case of the verse:

"فشاربون عليه من الحميم فشاربون شرب الهيم" 65 (65)

when he says:

"شرب الهيم" قرئ بالحركات الثلاث فالتح والضم مصدران وأما المكسور (66)
فبمعنى المشروب أي ما يشربه الهيم وهي الأبل التي بها الهيم وهودا
تشرب منه فلا تُروى جمع أهيم وهيما، قال ذو الرمة:
فأصبحت كالهيماء لا الماء مبرد صداها ولا يقضي عليها هيماها
وقيل الهيم الرمال ووجهه أن يكون جمع الهيماء بفتح الهاء وهو الرمل الذي
لا يتماسك جمع على فُعْل كسحاب وسُحْب ثم خفف وفعل به ما فعل بجمع
أبيض. 66

The rhetorical aspects of his book

Al-Zamahṣarī's book is different from the other interpretations of the Qur'ān because the rhetorical aspect overshadows everything else. His book is full of much that is concerned with rhetoric. In al-Zamahṣarī's view, al-ma'ānī and al-bayān are the most important sciences which the interpreter of the Qur'ān should know. He says:

(67) "ولا يغوص على شيء من تلك الحقائق الا رجل قد برع في علمين مختصين بالقرآن وعما علم المعاني وعلم البيان." 67

From this point of view he resembles the rhetoric expert 'Abd al-Qāhir al-Ġurġānī who also mentions in his book Dalā'il al-I'gāz that the interpreter of the Qur'ān should have a proper command of rhetoric.

He says:

(68) "ومن عادة قوم ممن يتعاطى التفسير بغير علم أن توهموا أبدا في الالفاظ الموضوعه على المجاز والتشيل انها على ظواهرها فيفسدوا المعنى بذلك و يبطلوا الغرض ويضعوا أنفسهم والسامع منهم العلم بموضوع البلاغة وبمكان الشرف" 68

We see also that al-Suyūṭī in his book al-Itqān agrees with al-Zamahṣarī and al-Ġurġānī on this point. He says:

(69) "المعاني والبيان والبدیع... هذه العلوم الثلاثة هي علوم البلاغة وهي من أعظم أركان المفسر لأنه لا بد له من مراعاة ما يقتضيه الا عجاز وانما يدرك بهذه العلوم" 69

Al-Zamahṣarī has a good grasp of rhetoric, and everything relating to rhetoric is very clear in his mind. We see for the first time this separation between al-ma'ānī and al-bayān, the main subjects of rhetoric. He interprets the verses of the Qur'ān from his knowledge of rhetoric in great detail.

Al-Zamaḥṣarī and the simile

We see that al-Zamaḥṣarī in all his interpretations of the simile repeats what ʿAbd al-Qāhir al-Gurḡānī says about it in his book ʿAsrār al-balāḡa and Dalāʾil al-Iʿgāz. The only difference between them is that al-Zamaḥṣarī does not differentiate between the simile and comparison.

We see him describe al-taṣbīḥ as al-tamṭīl, as if he does not see any difference between them in the verses of the Qurʾān. The first

simile occurs in the verse: ⁷⁰ "مثلهم كمثل الذي استوقد نارا" (70)

saying:

(71) لما جاء بحقيقة صفتهم عقبها بضرب المثل زيادة في الكشف وتتميمًا للبيان و
لضرب العرب الامثال واستحضار العلماء المثل والنظائر شأن ليس بالخفي
في ابراز خبيئات المعاني ورفع الاستار عن الحقائق حتى تترك المتخيل في
صورة المحقق والمتوهم في معرض المتيقن والغائب كأنه مشاهد ولأمر ما أكثر
الله في كتابه المبين وفي سائر كتبه أمثاله وفشت في كلام رسول الله صلى
الله عليه وسلم وكلام الانبياء والحكماء. ⁷¹

The reason he calls al-taṣbīḥ tamṭīl, in my opinion, is that the basis of the comparison in the verses of the Qurʾān is mostly intellectual.

He considers the simile which is the basis of the comparison to be intellectual as tamṭīl, even if it is a compound simile or a part-to-part simile. He says that the simile in the verse:

(72) "او كصيب من السماء فيه ظلمات ورعد وبرق" ⁷²

does not liken one to another (multiple simile), but it is a compound comparison :

(73) "الصحيح الذي عليه علماء البيان لا يتخطونه ان التمثيلين جميعا من جملة
التمثيلات المركبة دون المفارقة لا يتكلف الواحد واحد شي* يقدر شبهه به
وهو القول الفحل والمذهب الجزل." ⁷³

But I think that the main reason for his considering al-tamtil and al-tasbīh as the same thing in his view (as in the case with all the other interpreters) is the philological meaning of the two terms. We see that he says:

(74) "المثل في أصل كلامهم بمعنى المثل وهو النظير يقال مثل ومثل ومثيل كشبه وشبه وشبيه ثم قيل للقول السائر الممثل مضربه بمورده مثل" ⁷⁴

He divides the simile into two: a word to word and a compound simile, saying:

(75) "ان العرب تأخذ أشياء فرادى معزولا بعضها من بعض فتشبهها بنظائرها كما فعل امرؤ القيس وجاء في القرآن وتشبه كيفية حاصلة من مجموع أشياء قد تضامنت وتلاصقت حتى عادت شيئا واحدا باخرى مثلها . كقوله تعالى "واضرب لهم مثل الحياة الدنيا كماء أنزلناه من السماء" المراد قلة بقاء زهرة الدنيا كقلة بقاء الخضر فأما أن يراد تشبيه الأفراد بالأفراد غير منوط بعضها ببعض ومصيره شيئا واحدا فلا" ⁷⁵

He adds, supporting his argument with a verse of the poetry of the Arabs:

(76) وما الناس الا كالديار وأهلها بها يوم جلوها وغدوا بلاقع ⁷⁶

When al-Zamahṣarī interprets the verses containing the simile, he always repeats that this simile is considered a word to word or a compound simile. He is interested in analysing the particular aspects of the simile.

I think this interesting procedure is a result of his studies of syntax and philology. Because this kind of study gives rise to a desire for accuracy and for careful investigation of the particular aspects of the simile. For example, he says about the verse:

(77) "ومن يشرك بالله فكأنما خر من السماء فتخطفه الطير أو تهوي به الريح في مكان سحيق" ⁷⁷

(78) "يجوز في هذا التشبيه أن يكون من المركب والفرق فان كان تشبيها مركبا

فكانه قال من أشرك بالله فقد أهلك نفسه اهلاكا ليس بعده نهاية بأن
صوّر حاله بصورة حال من خرّ من السماء فاختطفته الطير فتفرق فرعا في
حواصلها او عصفت به الريح حتى هوت به في بعض المطامح البعيدة وان
كان مفرقا فقد شبه الايمان في علوّه بالسماء والاهواء التي تتوزع أفكاره
بالطير المختطفة والشیطان الذي يطوّح به في وادي الضلالة بالريح التي
تهوي بما عصفت به في بعض المهابي المتلفة.⁷⁸

Sometimes he compares the simile of the Qurʾān to a simile from Arab poetry, both have the same function explaining the superiority of the Qurʾān over the best Arabic poets and explaining their inability to imitate the style of the Qurʾān. As we see when he interprets the verse:

(79) "انها ترمي بشر كالقصر كأنه جمالة صفر"⁷⁹

he criticizes Abū al-ʿAlāʾ al-Maʿarrī for one of his verses. Accusing him of trying to imitate the Qurʾānic simile. He says:

(80) "جماليات" جمع جمال أو جمالة "جمع جمل شبهت بالقصور ثم بالجمال لبيان التشبيه الا تراهم يشبهون الابل بالافدان والمجادل... وقال أبو العلاء: حمراء ساطعة الذوائب في الحجي ترمي بكل شرارة كطراف فشبهها بالضراف وهو بيت الأدم في العظم والحمرة وكأنه قصد بخبثه أن يزيد على تشبيه القرآن ولتبيحجه بما سؤل له من توهم الزيادة جاء في صدر بيته بقوله "حمراء" توضئة لها ومناداة عليها وتنبيهها للسامعين على مكانها ولقد عى جمع الله له عى الدارين عن قوله عزوعلا "كأنه جمالات صفر" فانه بمنزلة قوله كبيت أحمر وعلى أن في التشبيه بالقصر وهو الحصن تشبيهها من جهتين من جهة العظم ومن جهة الطول في الهواء وفي التشبيه بالجماليات وهي القلوس تشبيه من ثلاث جهات من جهة العظم والطول والصفرة فأبعد الله اغرابه في طرافه وما نقخ شدقيه من استطرافه."⁸⁰

I think that al-Zamahṣarī is not being just in his attack on one who says a verse nearly in the same way as the simile of the Qurʾān. And al-Maʿarrī does not mention that he aims to imitate the style of the Qurʾān.

Sometimes we see al-Zamahṣarī analyse the verses in a syntactical way in addition to his rhetorical analysis, as happens with the verse:

(81) "وَأَمَّا عَادُ فَاهْلَكُوا بِرِيحٍ صَرْصَرٍ عَاتِيَةٍ سَخَّرَهَا عَلَيْهِمْ سَبْعَ لَيَالٍ وَثَمَانِيَةَ أَيَّامٍ حُسُومًا فَتَرَى الْقَوْمَ فِيهَا صَرْعَى كَأَنَّهُمْ أُعِجَازٌ نَخْلٌ خَاوِيَةٌ" 81

he says:

(82) "الحسوم لا يخلو من أن يكون جمع حاسم كشهود وقعود أو مصدرا كالشكور والكفور فإن كان جمعا فمعنى قوله حُسُومًا نحسات حسمت كل خير واستأصلت كل بركة أو متتابعة هبوب الرياح ما خفت ساعة حتى أتت عليهم تشيلا لتتابعها بتتابع فعل الحاسم في إعادة الكتي على الداء مرة بعد أخرى حتى ينحسم وإن كان مصدرا فاما أن ينتصب بفعله مضمرا أي تحسم حُسُومًا بمعنى تستأصل استئصالا أو يكون صفة كقولك ذات حُسم أو يكون مفعول له أي سخرها عليهم للاستئصال وقال عبد العزيز بن زرارَةَ الكلبي :

ففرّق بين بينهم زمان تتابع فيه أعوام حُسم
وقرأ السدي حُسُومًا بالفتح حالا من الريح أي سخرها عليهم مستأصلة" 82
Al-Zamahṣarī deals with the syntax in his interpretation of the Qurʾān.

He explains the syntactical aspects of the verses, and sometimes mentions the different desinential inflection of the individual word.

He deals with the syntax of the Qurʾān in a way which helps the interpretation of the Qurʾān and clarifies its meaning. He says about the verse:

(83) "مثل الذين كفروا بربهم أعمالهم كرماد اشتدت به الريح في يوم عاصف" 83

(84) "المثل مستعار للصفة التي فيها غرابه وقوله "أعمالهم كرماد" جملة مستأنفة على

تقدير سؤال سائل يقول كيف مثلهم فتيل "أعمالهم كرماد" ويجوز أن يكون المعنى مثل أعمال الذين كفروا بربهم أو هذه الجملة خبر للمبتدأ أي صفة الذين كفروا أعمالهم كرماد أو يكون أعمالهم بدلا من "مثل الذين كفروا" على تقدير مثل أعمالهم كرماد الخبر" 84

Al-Rāzī and his book al-Tafsīr al-kabīr

We can recognise a particular style in al-Rāzī's interpretation of the Qur'ān, that is the ability of al-Rāzī to diversify the subject-matter into many divisions, and he goes into explanatory details with each division. He never leaves out anything (about each one) even if it is far removed from the subject. So we see each verse in his book is full of many parts, and each part has many sections.

A general view of al-Rāzī's book

The general characteristic of al-Rāzī's book is the philosophical, intellectual and logical style. But we should not be surprised at this when we know that al-Rāzī was a philosopher, much influenced by the introduction into Islam of the concepts and techniques employed in the mental and physical studies of late Hellenism, so this kind of educational interest might well dominate his interpretation of the Qur'ān.

Most of the time he supports his view of the verses with the statement of philosophers with saying:

(85) "قالت الفلاسفة" قال الحكماء من أهل الفلسفة⁸⁵

He depends on philosophy and logic much more than on reporting from the first interpreters, as we see when he explains this verse:

(86) "فمن يرد الله أن يهديه يشرح صدره للإسلام ومن يرد أن يضله يجعل صدره ضيقا حرجا كأنما يصعد في السماء"⁸⁶

He digresses to show the meaning of the words error, guidance, faith and belief in a philosophical way for about four pages. Then he remembers to give the philological meaning of each word in the verse.⁸⁷

And also about this verse:

(87) "وهو الذي يرسل الرياح نشر بين يدي رحمته حتى اذا أقلت سحابا ثقالا
سقناه لبلد ميت فأنزلنا به الماء فأخرجنا به من كل الثمرات كذلك نخرج الموتى
لعلكم تذكرون." 88

with much digression about what the philosophers have said about the reasons for moving the winds, their origin, their development, and their advantages. 89

The philology in al-Rāzī's book

Al-Rāzī, in his interpretation of the verses containing similes comments on the philological meaning of the words of the verse, but he does not go into detail in this part of his explanation, as we have been accustomed to see him do. He explains this verse:

(88) "يا أيها الذين آمنوا لا تبطلوا صدقاتكم باليمن والأذى كالذي ينفق ماله
رثاء الناس ولا يؤمن بالله واليوم الآخر فمثل صفوان عليه تراب فأصابه
وابل فتركه صلدا" 90

as:

(89) "الصفوان الحجر الأملس وحكى أبو عبيد عن الأصمعي ان الصفوان والصفوا
والصفوا واحد وكل ذلك مقصور. وقال بعضهم الصفوان جمع صفوانه كمرجان
ومرجانه وسعدان وسعدانة. والوابل المطر الشديد يقال: وبت السماء تبل
وبلا وارض موبولة اي اصابها وابل. الصلدا الاملس اليابس يقال حجر صلدا
وجبل صلدا اذا كان براقا أملس وارض صلدة أي لا تثبت شيئا كالبحر الصلدا
وصلد الزند اذا لم يورنارا" 91

But he occasionally mentions the different philological meanings of a word and explains the rhetorical aspect according to this difference in meaning, as he says about this verse:

(90) "الذين كذبوا شعييا كأن لم يغنوا فيها" 92

He refers to what the philologists say about the meaning of "as though they had not dwelt there", that one of these statements was:

(91) "يقال غنى القوم في دارهم اذا طال مقامهم فيها" ⁹³

and the second statement was:

(92) "المنازل التي كان بها أهلوها واحدها مغنى . قال الشاعر:
ولقد غنوا فيها بأنعم عيشة في ظل ملك ثابت الاوتار" ⁹⁴

The other statement was:

(93) "قال الزجاج "كان لم يغنوا فيها" كان لم يعيشوا فيها مستغنين يقال غنى الرجل يغنى اذا استغنى وهو من الغنى الذي هو ضد الفقر" ⁹⁵

Then he explains the basis of the comparison under the auspices of all these philological statements, saying:

(94) "على التفسيرين شبه الله حال هؤلاء المكذبين بحال من لم يكن قط في تلك الديار"

He adduces in support of his arguments these two verses:

(95) كان لم يكن بين الجحون الى الصفا أنيس ولم يسمر بمكة سامر
بلى نحن كنا أهلها فأبادنا صروف الليالي والجدود العواثر" ⁹⁶

In my opinion I prefer the first explanation or a statement to the verse which was:

(96) "يقال غنى القوم في دارهم اذا طال مقامهم فيها"

because this meaning explains to us the exact meaning of the verse.

The verse tells us what happened to the town of Su'ayb after his folk denied his belief. It was destroyed completely, by the Will of Allāh, as if they never lived in it for a long time before.

We have seen that al-Rāzī seldom supports his explanation with a verse of poetry or a quotation from the speech of Arabs, or imparts words of wisdom uttered by them. In his philological explanation of the words of the verses, al-Rāzī quotes from philologists like Farrā' and Abū 'Ubaida or quotes the statement of the other interpreters of the Qur'ān without giving his opinion of what he quotes, as he says about this verse:

(97) "والذين كفروا أعمالهم كسراب بقيعة يحسبه الظمآن ماء" ⁹⁷

(98) "قال الازهري "السراب" ما يترامى للعين وقت الضحى الاكبر في الفلوات شبيه الماء الجاري وليس بماء ولكن الذي ينظر اليه من بعيد يظنه ماء جاريا يقال سرب الماء يسرب سروباً اذا جرى فهو سارب، واما "القيعة" فقال الفراء هو جمع قاع مثل جار وجيرة والقاع المنبسط المستوى من الارض وقال الزجاج "الظمآن" قد يخفف همزة وهو الشديد العطش" ⁹⁸

The rhetoric in al-Rāzī's book

We see al-Rāzī talk about the tamtil in the Qur'ān and its effect on the heart of the reader of the Qur'ān, and why Allāh employed it in a great many verses in HIS BOOK. He says when he explains this verse:

(99) "مثلهم كمثل الذي استوقد نارا" ⁹⁹

(100) "ان المقصود من ضرب الامثال انها تؤثر في القلوب ما لا يؤثره وصف الشئ" ¹⁰⁰
 في نفسه وذلك لان الغرض من المثل تشبيه الخفي بالجلي والغائب بالشاهد فيتأكد الوقوف على ما هيته ويصير الحس مطابقا للعقل وذلك في نهاية الايضاح ، الا ترى ان الترتيب اذا وقع في الايمان مجردا عن ضرب مثل له لم يتأكد وقوعه في القلب كما يتأكد وقوعه اذا مثل بالنور واذا زهد في الكفر بمجرد الذكر لم يتأكد قبحه في العقول كما يتأكد اذا مثل بالظلمة واذا اخبر بضعف أمر من الامور وضرب مثله بنسج العنكبوت كان ذلك ابلغ في تقرير صورته من الاخبار بضعفه مجردا ولهذا اكثر الله تعالى في كتابه المبين وفي سائر كتبه أمثاله" ¹⁰⁰

Al-Rāzī defined the matal as:

"المثل في أصل كلامهم بمعنى المثل وهو النظير ويقال مثل ومثل ومثل
كشبه وشبه وشبيه ثم قيل للقول السائر الممثل مضربه بمورده مثل وشرطه أن
يكون فيه غرابة من بعض الوجوه" ¹⁰¹ (101)

In this definition of the tamtīl, al-Rāzī agreed with al-Zamahšarī,
but he added one stipulation that it must be:

"أن يكون فيه غرابة من بعض الوجوه" (102)

He also did not differentiate between al-tašbīh and al-tamtīl.

But the word al-tamtīl was most frequent in his interpretation.

Al-Rāzī in his explanation of the rhetoric of the verses containing
similes says that the simile is divided into two: part-to-part simile
and compound simile as he says:

"المثل قسمان منه ما حصلت فيه المشابهة بين ما هو المقصود من الجملتين
وان لم تحصل المشابهة بين أجزاء الجملتين وهذا هو المسمى بالتشبيه المركب
ومنه ما حصلت المشابهة فيه بين المقصود من الجملتين وبين أجزاء كل واحدة منهما" ¹⁰² (103)

Al-Rāzī is interested in secondary things and sections, so his
explanation of the verses containing similes has many divisions, as
he says of this verse:

"انما مثل الحياة الدنيا كما أنزلناه من السماء فاختلط به نبات الارض مما يأكل
الناس والانعام" ¹⁰³ (104)

He says that the basis of the comparison in this verse might lie in five
elements, then he begins to explain each case in much detail. ¹⁰⁴

Al-Rāzī concludes from the verses of the simile in the Qurʾān
that the likeness of belief to light and the likeness of disbelief to
darkness were very much in evidence in the Qurʾān. He explains the
reasons for that comparison saying:

"تشبيه الايمان بالنور والكفر بالظلمة فهو في كتاب الله تعالى كثير، والوجه
فيه ان النور قد بلغ النهاية في كونه هاديا الى المحجة والى طريق المنفعة" (105)

وازالة الحيرة وهذا حال الايمان في باب الدين فشبه ما هو النهاية في ازالة الحيرة ووجدان المنفعة في باب الدين بما هو الغاية في باب الدنيا وكذلك القول في تشبيه الكفر بالظلمة لان الضال عن الطريق المحتاج الى سلوكه لا يرد عليه من أسباب الحرمان والتحير أعظم من الظلمة ولا شك كذلك في باب الدين أعظم من الكفر فشبه تعالى احدهما بالآخر.¹⁰⁵

We see that when al-Rāzī talks about the advantages of comparison in the Qurʾān he talks in an intellectual way. He shows us the benefits of comparison in the Qurʾān by the likeness of the intellectual meaning to the material meaning in order to let the reader know what it means and understand it properly. He says:

(106) "ان في ضرب الامثال زيادة افهام وتذكير وتصوير للمعاني وذلك لان المعاني العقلية المحضة لا يقبلها الحس والخيال والوهم فاذا ذكر ما يساويها من المحسوسات ترك الحس والخيال والوهم تلك المنازعة وانطبق المعقول على المحسوس وحصل به الفهم التام والوصول الى المطلوب."¹⁰⁶

Al-Rāzī in his explanation of the basis of the comparison explains too the magnificent and expert representation in the verses of simile by linking each part of the material comparison to another of the same kind as he says about the comparison in the verse:

(107) "انها ترمي بشرر كالقصر كانه جمالة صفر"¹⁰⁷

(108) "اعلم أنه تعالى شبه الشرر في العظم بالقصر وفي اللون والكثرة والتتابع و سرعة الحركة بالجماليات الصفر وقيل أيضا ان ابتداء الشرر يعظم فيكون كالقصر ثم يفترق فتكون تلك القطع المتفرقة المتتابعة كالجماليات الصفر."¹⁰⁸

Then he digresses to show us the universality between the thing being compared with the thing with which the other is compared. He explains the likeness of the word al-šarar to the words Ġimālatun Sufru in

about twelve aspects of similarity between them.¹⁰⁹ Al-Rāzī, in addition to his interest in division, is interested also in the argumentation and the reasons for every aspect of the meaning of the verse. For example why Allāh mentioned this one and not that one. Thus we see that he asks himself, after he has explained this verse:

(109) "مثل الذين حملوا التوراة ثم لم يحملوها كمثل الحمار يحمل أسفارا" ¹¹⁰

about the wisdom of mentioning the donkey among all other animals, such as camels, mules, etc. He answers himself by giving many reasons for this choice and explains each one in detail, as he says:

(110) "ان الحمار في معنى الحمل أظهر وأغلب بالنسبة الى الخيل والبغال وغيرهما من الحيوانات ومنها ان هذا التمثيل لا يظهر الجهل والبلادة وذلك في الحمار أظهر ومنها ان في الحمار من الذل والحقارة ما لا يكون في الغير والغرض من الكلام في هذا المقام تعيير القيم بذلك وتحقيرهم ومنها ان حمل الاسفار على الحمار أتم وأعم وأسهل وأسلم لكونه ذلولاً سلس القياد لين الانقياد ومنها ان رعاية الالفاظ والمناسبة بينها من اللوازم في الكلام وبين لفظي الاسفار والحمار مناسبة لفظية لا توجد في الغير من الحيوانات فيكون ذكره أولى". ¹¹¹

The Syntax in al-Rāzī's book

Sometimes al-Rāzī explains the verse by a syntactical aspect in addition to his interpretation of the rhetorical aspect. But this does not apply to all the verses. We see that he says about this verse:

(111) "مثل الذين كفروا بربهم أعمالهم كرماد اشتدت به الريح في يوم عاصف" ¹¹²

He divides the explanation into three parts: the first concerns the syntax in the verse, and the second is about the rhetoric, and the third is about the variant readings of the word al-riḥ. ¹¹³

Sometimes we see that al-Rāzī could not escape from his thinking, and his complexity even when he is explaining the syntax in the verse. He tries to philosophise about the syntax, as he says about this verse:

(112) "والله الذي أرسل الرياح فتثير سحابا فسقناه الى بلد ميت فأحيينا به الارض بعد موتها كذلك النشور." 114

He asks why Allāh mentioned arsala in a past tense and followed it by the word tutiru in a present tense. He gives the reason for that by saying in a philosophic way:

(113) "وذلك لأنه لما أسند فعل الارسال الى الله وما يفعل الله يكون بقوله كن فلا يبقى في العدم لا زمانا ولا جزءا من الزمان فلم يقل بلفظ المستقبل لوجوب وقوعه وسرعة كونه كأنه كان وكأنه فرغ من كل شيء فهو قدر الارسال في الاوقات المعلومة الى المواضع المعينة والتقدير كالارسال ولما أسند فعل الاثارة الى الريح وهو يؤلف في زمان فقال "تثير" اي على هيئتها" 115

While we have seen that the philologists explained the same matter in this verse by saying that this use was well-known and familiar among the Arabs and they sometimes changed from a past tense to a present tense in their speech, supporting their view with a verse of Arab poetry or a statement of their speech in order to explain that this use was not a new style in the Qurʾān but that the Arabs had known it before its revelation.

Lastly we can recognise clear signs in al-Rāzī's book that most of his reports were taken from al-Zamahṣarī's book al-Kaṣṣāf. Sometimes he quotes from al-Kaṣṣāf using the same sentences and the same phrases, mentioning al-Zamahṣarī by name¹¹⁶, but at other times he does not mention his name. He agrees with him in most cases, as

we see in this interpretation of this verse:

(114) "أو كصيب من السماء فيه ظلمات ورعد و برق" ¹¹⁷

Al-Rāzī details the comparison in this verse and divides it into seven parts. All his examples were taken from al-Zamahšarī's book. ¹¹⁸

Abū Hayyān and his book al-Bahr al-muḥīt

A general view of his book:

Abū Hayyān pays a great deal of attention to syntax when he interprets the Qurʾān. His book is full of a great many matters relating to syntax, but once we understand that Abū Hayyān was a syntactical expert and had written several books on syntax, then this approach to interpreting the Qurʾān is less surprising.

Abū Hayyān refers to the importance of syntax in the introduction of his book, where he states that every interpreter of the Qurʾān must read the book by Sibawaih, the "most famous book on syntax". He says:

(115) "فجدير لمن تانت نفسه الى علم التفسير وترقت الى التحقيق فيه والتحرير
أن يعتكف على كتاب سيبويه فهو في هذا الفن المعول عليه والمستند في
حل المشكلات اليه." ¹¹⁹

But although he devoted so much care and attention to syntax, we see that he places philology above all the other sciences required to give the best possible interpretation of the Qurʾān. He says:

(116) "النظر في تفسير كتاب الله تعالى يكون من وجوه: الوجه الاول علم اللغة
اسما و فعلا و حرفا." ¹²⁰

In his opinion, the most important works on philology are al-Muḥaṣṣas and al-Muḥkam wa al-muḥīt by Ibn Sida, and al-Ṣiḥāḥ by al-Ġawharī. ¹²¹

He considers syntax to be the second most important science essential for the interpreter of the Qurʾān, stating:

(117) "الوجه الثاني معرفة الاحكام التي للكلم العربية من جهة افرادها ومن جهة تركيبها و يؤخذ ذلك من علم النحو." ¹²²

The third science needed by a commentator on the Qurʾān, in

Abū Ḥayyān's view, is rhetoric. He says :

(118) "الوجه الثالث كون اللفظ او التركيب أحسن و أفصح و يؤخذ ذلك من علم البيان والبدیع." ¹²³

Thus Abū Ḥayyān's approach differs greatly from that of al-Zamāḥṣarī, who believes that rhetoric is the most essential science for the interpreter of the Qurʾān.¹²⁴

Abū Ḥayyān's method

Abū Ḥayyān follows a particular method from the beginning of his book to the end. First of all he discusses the philological and syntactical aspects of each word in a verse. If a word has more than one philological meaning he mentions all of these, then begins to interpret the verse as a whole, referring to the reason for its revelation, if any such reason is known, or its relation to the previous verses. He also refers to the different explanations given by previous interpreters of the Qurʾān. He gives a full syntactical and philological exposition of every single word in the verse. Thereafter he briefly mentions the rhetoric in the verse.

This is Abū Ḥayyān's method in his book, a procedure which he sets out in the introduction, where he says:

(119) "فعكفت على تصنيف هذا الكتاب وانتخاب الصفو و اللباب اجيل الفكر فيما وضع الناس في تصانيفهم وأنعم النظر فيما اقترحوه من تأليفهم فكم حوى من

لطيفة فكري مستخرجها ومن غريبة ذهني منتحها تحصلت بالعكوف على علم
العربية والنظر في التراكيب النحوية والتصرف في اساليب النظم والنثر
والتقلب في أفانين الخطب والشعر. 125

The philology in Abū Hayyān's book

Abū Hayyān's interest in philology can be seen by his method of dealing with each individual word in a verse. He tries to explain fully the philological meaning, and states all that the philologists have said about it. He explains the origin of each word and its etymology. For example, with the verse:

(120) "واضرب لهم مثل الحياة الدنيا كماء أنزلناه من السماء فاختلط به نبات
الارض فأصبح هشيمًا تذروه الرياح." 126

He explains the meaning of the word al-hašīm saying:

(121) "الهشيم اليابس قاله الفراء واحدة هشيمة وقال الزجاج وابن قتيبة كل شيء
كان رطباً وييس ومنه كهشيم المحتظر وأصل الهشيم المتفتت من يابس العشب."

Then he goes on to the second word tadruhu saying:

(122) "ذرى وأذرى لغتان قاله أبو عبيدة وقال ابن كيسان تذروه تجى به
وتذهب وقال الاخفش ترفعه." 127

He quotes what all the philologists have said; not only al-Farrā' and Abū 'Ubaida for example, but also al-Mubarrid in his book al-Kāmil.

He has, in fact, made use of all of them, as when he explains the meaning of the word al-sarīm in the verse:

(123) "... فأصبحت كالصريم" 128

saying:

(124) قال ابن عباس كالرماد الاسود والصريم الرماد الاسود بلغة خزيمة وعنه أيضا الصريم رملة باليمن معروفة لا تثبت فشبه جنتهم بها . وقال الحسن صرم عنها الخير اي قطع فالصريم بمعنى مصروم . وقال الثوري كالصبح من حيث ابيضت كالزرع المحصود وقال مويج كالرملة انصرفت من معظم الرمل والرملة لا تثبت شيئا ينفع . وقال الاخفش كالصبح انصم من الليل . وقال العبري كالنهار فلا شئ فيها . وقال شمر الصريم الليل والصريم النهار اي ينصم هذا عن ذاك و ذاك عن هذا وقال الفراء وجماعة الصريم الليل من حيث اسودت جنتهم .¹²⁹

The other point which leads us to conclude that Abū Hayyān was interested in philology as well as syntax is his philological explanation of even the word tafsīr. He discusses its meaning and its origin in the language, saying:

(125) "التفسير في اللغة الاستبانة والكشف قال ابن دريد ومنه يقال للماء الذي ينظر فيه الطبيب تفسرة وكأنه تسمية بالمصدر لان مصدر فعل جاء أيضا على تفعلة نحو جرب تجربة وكرم تكرمه وان كان القياس في الصحيح من فعل التفعيل كقوله تعالى "وأحسن تفسيراً" وينطلق أيضا التفسير على التعرية للانطلاق قال ثعلب يقول فسرت الفرس عريته لينطلق في حصره وهو راجع لمعنى الكشف فكأنه كشف ظهره لهذا الذي يريد منه في الجري".¹³⁰

Abū Hayyān's interest in Arabs' speech and their poetry

Abū Hayyān says that knowledge of the principles and rules of syntax is not enough to appreciate the beauty and magnificence of the Qurʾān.

The interpreter must also study Arabic speech, poetry, style

and mode of expression. The in-depth study of this will be a great help in interpreting the verses of the Qurʾān correctly and in studying the different sciences involved. He says:

(126) "أنه لا يكفي النحو وحده في علم الفصح من كلام العرب بل لا بد من الاطلاع على كلام العرب والتطبع بطباعها والاستكثار من ذلك." 131

Probably the reason for his attention to Arabic speech and poetry is that the meaning of al-tafsīr in his mind is:

(127) "شرح اللفظ المتعلق عند السامع بما هو واضح عنده مما يرادفه أو يقاربه أوله دلالة عليه بأحدى طرق الدلالات." 132

Abū Ḥayyān supports his explanation with Arabic speech in order to make it clear that this or that use was familiar and well-known among the Arabs in the same way that the philologists did. He says about the verse:

(128) "الله نور السموات والارض مثل نوره كمشكاة فيها مصباح" 133

(129) "النور في كلام العرب الضوء المدرك بالبصر فاسناده الى الله تعالى مجاز واسناده على اعتبارين اما على أنه بمعنى اسم الفاعل اي منور السموات والارض واما على حذف اي ذو نور ويحتمل أن يجعل نورا على سبيل المدح كما قالوا فلان شمس البلاد ونور القبائل وقمرها وهذا مستفيض في كلام العرب وأشعارها قال الشاعر:

كأنك شمس و الملوك كواكب 134

Abū Ḥayyān quotes all his examples of Arabic speech and their poems from the philologists. Because he records what the philologists' said about the meaning of the words in the verses, so he had also to report their supporting arguments, using Arabic speech and poems in order to prove that this meaning was familiar among the true Arabs. He says about the following verse:

(130) "يوم يخرجون من الاجداث سراعا كأنهم الى نصب يوفضون" 135

(131) "النَّصَبُ ما نُصِبَ للانسان فهو يقصده مسرعا اليه من علم أو بنا" او ضم وغلب في الاصنام حتى قيل الانصاب. وقال ابو عمرو هو شبكة يقع فيها الصيد

فيسارع اليها صاحبها مخافة أن ينفلت الصيد منها. وقال مجاهد نَصَبَ علم .
ومن قرأ بضمهما قال ابن دريد اي اصنام منصوبة كانوا يعبدونها . وقال
الاخفش هو جمع نَصَبَ كَرَهْن ورُهْن والانصاب جمع الجمع . يُوفضون يسرعون .
وقال أبو العالية يستبقون الى غايات .

قال الشاعر:

فوارس ذنبيان تحت الحديد كالجن يوفضن من عبقر

وقال آخر في معنى الاسراع:

لأ نعتن نعمة ميفاضا خرجاء ظلت تطلب الاضاضا¹³⁶

These verses of poetry have been quoted before in all the philologists' books, for example Ma'ānī al-Qur'ān by al-Farrā' and Maḡāz al-Qur'ān by Abū 'Ubaida. We see that Abū Ḥayyān supports his explanation with the work of poets mentioned by philologists and experts on syntax. He does not mention the poetry of the Muwalladīn poets as al-Zamahṣarī does. He declares himself against any reference to al-Muwalladīn poetry when he criticises al-Zamahṣarī for mentioning the verse of one of them:

(132) ايا جارتا ما أنصف الدهر بيننا تعالى أقاسمك الهمم تعالى

He says:

(133) "واما قوله في شعر الحمداني لا حجة فيه لانه لا يستشهد بكلام المولدين."¹³⁷

Elsewhere in the book he states:

(134) "واما ما وقع في كلام حبيب فلا يستشهد به . وقد نقد على ابي علي الفارسي الاستشهاد بقول حبيب:

من كان مرعى عزمه و همومه روض الاماني لم يزل مهزولا
وكيف يستشهد بكلام من هو مولد وقد صنف الناس فيما وقع له من اللحن في شعره ."¹³⁸

So Abū Ḥayyān maintains that Abū Tammām's poem was not evidence to support the interpretation of the philology and syntax of the Qur'ān.

While we see that al-Zamahṣārī supports his thesis with Abū Tammām's poem and considers it as evidence in favour of his interpretation.

Abū Hayyān's interest in readings .

Closely related to philology and syntax is readings . So Abū Hayyān is interested in that too. He considers "readings" to be a science which the interpreter of the Qur'ān should know, as he states in the introduction of his book.¹³⁹ His knowledge of the Reader's art helped him to explain the different meanings of the words. He supports his theories about the meaning of a word with reference to the different styles of readings and dialects of the Arab language. Abū Hayyān details the differences between the various forms of readings and the etymology of each one.

He explains the effects of the different forms of readings on the meaning as happened with this verse:

(135) "والذي كفروا أعمالهم كسراب بقيعة يحسبه الظمآن ماء" ¹⁴⁰

He mentions the different readings of the word qī'a , saying:

(136) "قرأ مسلم بن محارب بقيعات بتاء محطوطة جمع قيعة كديعات وقيعات في ديمة وقيمة وعنه أيضا بتاء شكل الهاء ويقف عليها بالهاء فيحتمل ان يكون جمع قيعة ووقف بالهاء على لغة طي كما قالوا البناء والاخواء في الوقف على البنات والاخوات. قال صاحب اللوامح ويجوز أن يريد قيعة كالعامّة اي كالقراءة العامة لكنه أشبع الفتحة فتولدت منها الالف مثل مخربق لينباع. ويجوز أنه جعله مثل سعة وسعلة و ليلة وليلة والقيعة مفرد مرادف للقاع او جمع قاع كثار ونيرة فتكون على هذا قراءة قيعات جمع صحة تناول جمع تكسير مثل رجالات قريش و جمالات عفر." ¹⁴¹

Abū Ḥayyān considers the Ḥiḡāz language to be the most eloquent Arabic language.

The Rhetoric in Abū Ḥayyān's book

As he says in the introduction of his book, rhetoric is one of the most important sciences which the commentator on the Qurʾān should know. Abū Ḥayyān mentions the matter of rhetoric in his interpretation of the verses after mentioning syntactical and philological matters.

The simile in Abū Ḥayyān's interpretation

Because of his interest in rhetoric he also refers to the use of simile, al-taṣbīḥ and al-tamtil as both of them form a part of rhetoric.

The first mention of the simile in Abū Ḥayyān's book is in his explanation of this verse: ¹⁴² (137) "مثلهم كمثل الذي استوقد نارا"

He mentions the philological meaning of matal saying:

(138) "المثل في أصل كلام العرب بمعنى المثل والمثيل كشبه وشبه وشبيه وهو النضير ويجمع المثل والمثل على أمثال. قال اليزيدي الأمثال الاشياء وأصل المثل الوصف. هذا مثل كذا أي وصفه مساو لوصف الآخر بوجه من الوجوه. والمثل القول السائر الذي فيه غرابه من بعض الوجوه وقيل المثل ذكر وصف ظاهر محسوس وغير محسوس يستدل به على وصف مشابه له من بعض الوجوه فيه نوع من الخفاء ليصير في الذهن مساويا للأول في الظهور من وجه دون وجه." ¹⁴³

We can see from what he says about al-matal that he, like most of the interpreters, does not differentiate between the taṣbīh and 'tamtil. Both of them are equal in his mind. He agrees with al-Rāzī that it must be:

(139) "أن يكون فيه غرابة من بعض الوجوه".

The benefits of the simile in the opinion of Abū Ḥayyān are:

(140) "انه يؤثر في القلوب ما لا يؤثره وصف الشئ" في نفسه لان الغرض من ضرب المثل تشبيه الخفي بالجلي والغائب بالشاهد فيتأكد الوقوف على ما هيته ويصير الحسن مطابقا للعقل".¹⁴⁴

In this exposition he reports what al-Zamahṣarī and al-Rāzī have said on the same subject. We have seen that Abū Ḥayyān did not concentrate on the thing being compared or the thing with which the other is compared or the basis of the comparison, but explained the simile in a very simplistic way as in this verse:

(141) "مثل الذين حملوا التوراة ثم لم يحملوها كمثل الحمار يحمل أسفارا".¹⁴⁵
he explained the simile as:

(142) "شبه صفتهم بصفة الحمار الذي يحمل كتابا فهو لا يدري ما عليه اكتب هي ام صخر وغير ذلك وانما يدرك من ذلك ما يلحقه من التعب بحملها".

He supported his interpretation with this verse of poetry:

(143) "زوامل للاشعار لا علم عندهم بجيدها الا كعلم الاباعر
لعمرك ما يدري البعير اذا غدى باوساقه اوراق ما في الخرائر".¹⁴⁶

This is all he has to say about the simile in this verse then he transfers to another subject to give more detail about the syntactical notes in this verse.

Abū Ḥayyān devoted all his attention to the desinential inflection of verses containing similes rather than to what the simile

is or the nature of the simile as the rhetoric people do. But as a syntax man he concentrated on the question of syntax, thus we see him here mentioning all the syntactical references which have been made to the simile in this verse:

(144) "واذا رأيتم تعجبك أجسامهم وان يقولوا تسمع لقولهم كأنهم خشب مسندة
يحسبون كل صيحة عليهم هم العدو"¹⁴⁷

He says:

(145) "شبهوا بالخشب لغروب افهامهم وفراغ قلوبهم من الايمان ولم يكف حتى جعلها مسندة الى الحائط لا انتفاع بها والجملة التشبيهية مستأنفة اوعلى اضمارهم . وقيل الجملة التشبيهية وصف لهم بالجبن والخور ويدل عليهم "يحسبون كل صيحة عليهم" في موضع المفعول الثاني ليحسبون اي واقعة عليهم وذلك لجبنهم وما في قلوبهم من الرعب."¹⁴⁸

But sometimes we see that he explains the simile in the verse with more detail, reporting from al-Zamahšarī's book, as he says about this verse:

(146) "ومن يشرك بالله فكأنما خر من السماء فتخطفه الطير او تهوى به الريح في مكان سحيق."¹⁴⁹

He re-wrote al-Zamahšarī's article about the simile in this verse

which was considered either a part-to-a part simile or a compound simile .¹⁵⁰

His views on the commentary and the commentators

Abū Ḥayyān considers al-Zamahšarī to be the best of all the commentators and thinks his interpretation of the Qur'ān is the best because it covers the most subjects, mostly supporting his arguments with Arabic speech, and it is the most well-known book among the people. He depended on al-Zamahšarī's book and each page of his book has some reference to al-Zamahšarī, even his introduction was not

without a mention of him. He supports his ideas about the commentator's need for a knowledge of eloquence and rhetoric in order to explain the Qurʾān by what al-Zamahṣarī says in the introduction of his book al-Kaṣṣāf.¹⁵¹ But in spite of his dependence on al-Zamahṣarī's book we notice that sometimes he praises al-Zamahṣarī and other times he criticises him. He says about him that:

(147) "يَحْمَلُ لَفْظَ الْقُرْآنِ مَا لَا يَحْتَمِلُهُ وَيَقُولُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى مَا لَمْ يَقُلْهُ وَتِلْكَ عَادَتُهُ فِي تَفْسِيرِهِ وَهُوَ تَكْثِيرُ الْأَلْفَاظِ وَنِسْبَةُ أَشْيَاءَ إِلَى اللَّهِ تَعَالَى لَمْ يَقُلْهَا اللَّهُ تَعَالَى وَلَا دَلَّ عَلَيْهَا اللَّفْظُ دَلَالَةً وَاضِحَةً." ¹⁵²

Abū Ḥayyān also reports from al-Rāzī's interpretation and his opinion about al-Rāzī does not differ from his opinion about al-Zamahṣarī. He says about al-Rāzī that he had collected different sciences in his book, and his book is far from the science commentary. He also says about al-Rāzī that he mentions things far removed from the meaning of the Qurʾān and Arab speech.

He says that what al-Rāzī says is like what the philosophers say. He says about him:

(148) "وَهَذَا الرَّجُلُ كَثِيرًا مَا يُورِدُ كَلَامَ الْفَلَسَفَةِ وَهُمْ مَبَايِنُونَ لِأَهْلِ الشَّرَائِعِ فِي تَفْسِيرِ كَلَامِ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى الْمَنْزِلِ بِلُغَةِ الْعَرَبِ وَالْعَرَبُ لَا تَفْهَمُ شَيْئًا مِنْ مَفَاهِمِ أَهْلِ الْفَلَسَفَةِ فَتَفْسِيرُهُمْ كَاللُّغْزِ وَالْإِحْجَاجِ وَيَسْمِيهِمْ هَذَا الرَّجُلُ حُكَمَاءَ وَهُمْ مِنْ أَجْهَلِ الْكُفَرَةِ بِاللَّهِ تَعَالَى وَبِأَنْبِيَائِهِ." ¹⁵³

Abū Ḥayyān does not like any explanation which the philosophers mention with reference to the verses in the Qurʾān. Although he does not concentrate on matters of rhetoric in the verses, he rejects the philosopher's views if they explain the rhetoric in the verse in a way

which is far removed from Arab speech. For example, we see him here replying to the philosophers about this verse:

"او كظلمات في بحر لحي يغشاه موج من فوقه موج من فوقه سحب ظلمات
بعضها فوق بعض" ¹⁵⁴ (149)

He mentions that it was said that the simile in this verse was part-to-part. This means that the likeness of the first wave is to the ignorance of the disbeliever's heart and the likeness of the second wave is to the doubt of the disbeliever's heart, and the likeness of the cloud is to the idolatry of the disbeliever's heart which prevents him from guidance. (Al-Rāzī mentioned this kind of comparison).¹⁵⁵

Abū Ḥayyān refuses this explanation of the simile because it is not in agreement with Arab speech. He says:

¹⁵⁶ "والتفسير بمقابلة الاجزاء شبه بتفسير الباطنية وعدول عن منهج كلام العرب" (150)

Footnotes to Part Two

1. Al-Ṭabarī, Abū Ḡaʿfar Muḥammad b. Ḡarīr, Ḡāmiʿ al-bayān ʿan taʾwīl āy al-Qurʾān, Vol. 1, p.41.
2. Ibid., p.5.
3. Q.2, 264.
4. Ṭabarī, Vol. 3, pp.65-66. Passim (e.g. Vol. 18, pp.148-163).
5. Q.7, 57.
6. Ṭabarī, Vol. 8, p.209.
7. Q.73, 14.
8. Ṭabarī, Vol. 29, p.136.
9. Q.6, 71.
10. Ṭabarī, Vol. 7, p.235.
11. Q.2, 275.
12. Ṭabarī, Vol. 3, p.101.
13. Q.70, 43.
14. Ṭabarī, Vol. 29, pp.88-89.
15. Farrāʾ, Vol. 3, p.186.
16. Abū ʿUbaida, Vol. 2, p.270.
17. Q.74, 50-51.
18. Ṭabarī, loc. cit., p.168.
19. See Farrāʾ, loc. cit., p.206.
20. Q.42, 32.
21. Ṭabarī, Vol. 25, p.33.
22. Q.77, 32-33.
23. Ṭabarī, Vol. 29, pp.239-243.
24. Ibid., pp.241-242.
25. Q.14, 18.
26. Ṭabarī, Vol. 13, p.196.
27. Q.63, 4.
28. Ṭabarī, Vol. 28, p.108.
29. Ibidem.
30. Q.3, 117.
31. Ṭabarī, Vol. 4, p.58.
32. Q.37, 64-65.

33. Ṭabarī, Vol. 23, p.63.
34. Ibid., p.64.
35. Ibidem.
36. Q.7, 179.
37. Q.2, 171.
38. Ṭabarī, Vol. 9, p.132.
39. Q.13, 14.
40. Ṭabarī, Vol. 13, pp.128-129.
41. Abū ^ʿUbaida, Vol. 1, p.327.
42. Q.2, 31.
43. Al-Zamahṣarī, Ḡarullāh Maḥmūd b. ^ʿUmar, al-Kaššāf, Vol. 1, p.210.
44. Q.35, 9.
45. Zamahṣarī, Vol. 2, pp.571-572.
46. Q.2, 74.
47. Zamahṣarī, Vol. 1, p.223.
48. Q.13, 17.
49. Zamahṣarī, Vol. 2, p.163.
50. Q.2, 19.
51. Zamahṣarī, Vol. 1, p.165.
52. Ibid., p.166.
53. Ibid., p.165.
54. Q.2, 275.
55. Zamahṣarī, loc. cit., p.301.
56. Q.74, 50-51.
57. Zamahṣarī, Vol. 2, p.291.
58. Q.2, 171.
59. Zamahṣarī, Vol. 1, p.250.
60. Q.42, 32.
61. Zamahṣarī, Vol. 3, p.85.
62. Ibid., Vol. 1, p.170.
63. Suyūṭī, Vol. 1, pp.58-59.
64. Ibidem.
65. Q.56, 54-55.
66. Zamahṣarī, loc. cit., pp.195-196.
67. Ibid., Vol. 1, p.14.

68. Al-Ğurğānī, Dalā'il al-iğāz, p.236.
69. Suyūṭī, al-Itqān, Vol. 2, p.181.
70. Q.2, 17.
71. Zamahṣarī, Vol. 1, p.149.
72. Q.2, 19.
73. Zamahṣarī, loc. cit., pp.162-163.
74. Ibid., p.149.
75. Ibid., p.163.
76. Ibid., p.164.
77. Q.22, 31.
78. Zamahṣarī, Vol. 2, p.348.
79. Q.77, 32-33.
80. Zamahṣarī, Vol. 3, p.303.
81. Q.69, 6-7.
82. Zamahṣarī, loc. cit., p.263.
83. Q.14, 18.
84. Zamahṣarī, Vol. 2, p.175.
85. Al-Rāzī, al-Faḥr, al-Tafsīr al-Kabīr, Passim (e.g. Vol. 14, p.139).
86. Q.6, 126.
87. Rāzī, See Vol. 13, p.178.
88. Q.7, 57.
89. See Rāzī, Vol. 14, p.139.
90. Q.2, 264.
91. Rāzī, Vol. 7, p.54.
92. Q.7, 92.
93. Rāzī, Vol. 14, p.182.
94. Ibidem.
95. Ibidem.
96. Ibidem.
97. Q.24, 39.
98. Rāzī, Vol. 24, p.7.
99. Q.2, 17.
100. Rāzī, Vol. 2, pp.72-73.
101. Ibidem.
102. Ibid., Vol. 8, p.194.

103. Q.10, 25.
104. Rāzī, Vol. 17, pp.73-74.
105. Ibid., Vol. 2, p.74.
106. Ibid., Vol. 19, pp.120-121.
107. Q.77, 32-33.
108. Rāzī, Vol. 30, p.277.
109. Ibidem.
110. Q.62, 5.
111. Rāzī, loc. cit., pp.5-6.
112. Q.14, 18.
113. Rāzī, Vol. 19, p.105.
114. Q.35, 9.
115. Rāzī, Vol. 26, p.7.
116. Rāzī, Passim (e.g. Vol. 19, p.120. Vol. 30, p.212).
117. Q.2, 19.
118. Rāzī, Vol. 2, p.77, and see Zamahṣarī, Vol. 1, pp.161-165.
119. Ibn Ḥayyān, Aṭīr al-Dīn, Abū ‘Abdullāh Muḥammad b. Yūsuf b. ‘Alī, al-Baḥr al-muḥīṭ, Vol. 1, p.3.
120. Ibid., pp.5-6.
121. Ibidem.
122. Ibidem.
123. Ibidem.
124. Zamahṣarī, See Vol. 1, p.14.
125. Ibn Ḥayyān, Vol. 1, p.3.
126. Q.18, 46.
127. Ibn Ḥayyān, Vol. 6, p.131.
128. Q.68, 20.
129. Ibn Ḥayyān, Vol. 8, p.312. Passim, e.g. pp.181, 195.
130. Ibid., Vol. 1, p.13.
131. Ibid., Vol. 2, p.409.
132. Ibid., Vol. 3, p.282.
133. Q.24, 35.
134. Ibn Ḥayyān, Vol. 6, pp.454-455.
135. Q.70, 43.
136. Ibn Ḥayyān, Vol. 8, p.336.

137. Ibid., Vol. 3, p.280.
138. Ibid., Vol. 1, p.91.
139. Ibid., p.7.
140. Q.24, 39.
141. Ibn Ḥayyān, Vol. 6, p.460.
142. Q.2, 17.
143. Ibn Ḥayyān, Vol. 1, p.74.
144. Ibidem.
145. Q.62, 5.
146. Ibn Ḥayyān, Vol. 8, p.266.
147. Q.63, 4.
148. Ibn Ḥayyān, loc. cit., p.272.
149. Q.22, 31.
150. Ibn Ḥayyān, see Vol. 6, p.366.
151. Ibid., Vol. 1, p.9.
152. Ibid., Vol. 3, p.282, also Vol. 8, p.210.
153. Ibid., Vol. 5, p.416.
154. Q.24, 40.
155. Rāzī, Vol. 24, p.8.
156. Ibn Ḥayyān, Vol. 6, p.462.

PART THREE

CHAPTER ONE

THE QUR'ĀNIC SIMILE IN WORK OF THOSE WHO STUDY THE INIMITABLE STYLE OF THE QUR'ĀN

Al-Rummānī and his study of al-Nukat fī i'gāz al-Qur'ān

This study is found in the book "Talāt rasā'il fī i'gāz al-Qur'ān" by al-Rummānī and al-Ḥaṭṭābī and al-Ġurġānī. Al-Rummānī studied rhetoric through his study of the inimitable style of the Qur'ān. He talks about the rhetoric of the Qur'ān because he considers it to be one of the seven proofs of the miraculous style of the Qur'ān. He is the first one to talk in detail about the rhetoric of the Qur'ān.

He adds new comments about rhetoric and gives other full and extensive explanations of such stylistic features as brevity, simile, and metaphor. But throughout all his explanation of the subject of rhetoric¹ he does not go outside his main subject, which is the inimitable style of the Qur'ān. He gives only the relevant verses of the Qur'ān to support each topic, explaining the wonderful rhetoric of these verses. He means by rhetoric that it is the way to deliver the meaning into the heart in beautiful words. He says:

(1) "البلاغة ايصال المعنى الى القلب في أحسن صورة من اللفظ."²

and it is divided into three layers. He says:

(2) "منها ما هو في أعلى طبقة ومنها ما هو في أدنى طبقة ومنها ما هو في
الوسائط بين أعلى طبقة وأدنى طبقة."³

He adds that the first layer is not possible of human achievement, this is the rhetoric of the Qur'ān and the other two layers are humanly possible which are the rhetoric of the rhetorical specialists. He says:

- (3) "فما كان في اعلاها طبقة فهو معجز وهو بلاغة القرآن وما كان منها دون ذلك فهو ممكن كبلغة البلغاء من الناس." ⁴

The simile of the Qur'an in his view

He talks about the simile as a second kind of rhetoric. He defines it as:

- (4) "العقد على أن أحد الشئيين يسد مسد الآخر في حس أو عقل." ⁵

He divides the simile into sensory simile and intellectual simile. He calls the first one tašbīh ḥaqīqa and the second one tašbīh balāga. Then he details the second one (the intellectual simile) and its forms of beauty. He says that the first kind of it is:

- (5) "اخراج ما لا تقع عليه الحاسة الى ما تقع عليه الحاسة"

like the likeness of disbeliever's deed to the mirage in this verse:

- (6) "والذين كفروا أعمالهم كسراب بقيعة يحسبه الظمآن ماء حتى إذا جاءه لم يجده شيئا" ⁶

He explains the basis of the comparison by saying:

- (7) "قد اجتمعا في بطلان المتوهم مع شدة الحاجة وعظم الفاقة... لان الظمآن أشد حرصا عليه وتعلق قلبه به ، ثم بعد هذه الخيبة حصل على الحساب الذي يصيره الى عذاب الابد في النار." ⁷

Then he mentions all the verses containing simile which have this kind of simile explaining the thing being compared and the thing with which the other is compared and the basis of the comparison and mentions the beauty of each verse. The verses which he mentions are these:

- (8) "مثل الذين كفروا بربهم أعمالهم كرماد اشتدت به الريح في يوم عاصف"

لا يقدرون مما كسبوا على شيء⁸

He says that the basis of the comparison in it is:

(9) "اجتمع المشبه والمشبه به في الهلاك وعدم الانتفاع والعجز عن الاستدراك"⁹

And the verse:

(10) "واتل عليهم نبأ الذي آتيناه آياتنا فانسلخ منها... فمثله كمثله الكلب ان تحمل عليه يلهث او تتركه يلهث"¹⁰

He says about it:

(11) "قد اجتمعا في ترك الطاعة على وجه من وجوه التدبير وفي التخصيس فالكلب لا يطيعك في ترك اللهث حملت عليه او تركته وكذلك الكافر لا يطيع بالايمان على رفق ولا على عنف"¹¹

and of the verse:

(12) "والذين يدعون من دونه لا يستجيبون له بشيء الا كباسط كفيه الى الماء ليبلغ فاه وما هو ببالغه"¹²

He says:

(13) "قد اجتمعا في الحاجة الى نيل المنفعة والحسرة بما يفوت من درك الطلبة وفي ذلك الزجر عن الدعاء الا لله عز وجل الذي يملك النفع والضرر ولا يضيع عنده ميثاق الذر"¹³

Then he mentions the second kind of the intellectual simile, which is:

(14) "اخراج ما لم تجربه العادة الى ما جرت به العادة"

mentioning all the verses which have this kind of simile in his view.

Like this verse:

(15) "وان نتقنا الجبل فوقهم كأنه ظلة"¹⁴

He says about the basis of the simile in it:

(16) "قد اجتمعا في معنى الارتفاع في الصورة"¹⁵

And of the verse:

(17) "انا أرسلنا عليهم ريحا صرصرا في يوم نحس مستمر تنزع الناس كأنهم أعجاز نخل منقعر"¹⁶

He says:

(18) "قد اجتمعا في قلع الريح لهما واهلاكها اياهما وفي ذلك الآية الدالة على عظيم القدرة والتخويف من تعجيل العقوبة"¹⁷

and about the verse:

- (19) "فإذا انشقت السماء فكانت وردة كالدهان" ¹⁸ (20) "قد اجتمعوا في الحمرة" ¹⁹ (20)

and about the verse:

- (21) "اعلموا انما الحياة الدنيا لعب ولهو وزينة وتفاخر بينكم وتكاثر في الاموال

- والاولاد كمثل غيث أعجب الكفار نباته" ²⁰ (22) "قد اجتمعوا في شدة الاعجاب ثم في التغيير بالانقلاب" ²¹ (22)
Then he mentions other verses which have the third kind of

intellectual simile in his view, which is:

- (23) "اخراج ما لا يُعلم بالبدية الى ما يُعلم بالبدية"

The first verse he mentions in this category is:

- (24) "وجنة عرضها كعرض السماء والارض" ²²

He says:

- (25) "وفي ذلك البيان العجيب بما قد تقرّر في النفس من الامور و التشويق الى الجنة بحسن الصفة مع ما لها من السعة وقد اجتمعوا في العِظَم" ²³

Then he mentions the verse:

- (26) "مثل الذين حملوا التوراة ثم لم يحملوها كمثل الحمار يحمل أسفارا" ²⁴

- the verse: ²⁵ "كأنهم أعجاز نخل خاوية" and the verse: ⁽²⁷⁾ (27)

- (28) "مثل الذين اتخذوا من دون الله اولياء كمثل العنكبوت" ²⁶

- (29) "اخراج ما لا قوة له" Then he transfers his attention to the fourth kind,

- mentioning the verses which fall into this category, such as the verse: ²⁷ (30) "وله الجوار المنشآت في البحر كالأعلام"

- the verse: ²⁸ (31) "خلق الانسان من صلصال كالفخار"

- and the verse: ²⁹ (32) "اجعلتم سقاية الحاج وعمارة المسجد كمن آمن بالله"

- (33) "فهذا تشبيه قد أخرج ما لا قوة له في" He says about the first verse:

- الصفة الى ما له قوة فيها وقد اجتمعوا في العِظَم الا ان الجبال أعظم" ³⁰

He gives the same kind of detail for the metaphor as he does with the

simile. He makes comparisons between them. He says that the words in the simile still have their own philological meaning, but the words in

the metaphor lead to meanings which differ from their own philological meaning. Then he refers to all the verses of the Qurʾān which contain a metaphor.

Al-Bāqillānī and his book iʿgāz al-Qurʾān

Al-Bāqillānī is another writer, who devoted a book to the subject of the inimitable style of the Qurʾān. The important thing for us in these books is the rhetoric of the Qurʾān. They talk about rhetoric because they consider it to be one important aspect of the supernatural character of the Qurʾān.

Al-Bāqillānī thinks that the philologists and the syntactical specialists should write about the miraculous style of the Qurʾān. He blames them for talking about the philological interpretation of the words of the Qurʾān and the explanation of the desinential inflection of the words of the Qurʾān. These subjects, in his view, are not as important as the first one.³¹ His view about the rhetorical miraculous style of the Qurʾān is:

"أنه بديع النظم عجيب التأليف متناه في البلاغة الى الحد الذي يعلم
عجز الخلق عنه." 32 (34)

Al-Bāqillānī does not think that the inimitability of the Qurʾān is due to its rhetoric. He maintains that rhetoric is a science which could be learnt:

"أنه لا سبيل الى معرفة اعجاز القرآن من البديع الذي أدعوه في الشعر
وصفوه فيه . وذلك أن هذا الفن ليس فيه ما يخرق العادة ويخرج عن
العرف بل يمكن استدراكه بالتعلم والتدرب به والتصنع له كقول الشعر
ورصف الخطب وصناعة الرسالة والحدق في البلاغة... فأما شأو نظم القرآن
فليس له مثال يحتذى عليه ولا امام يقتدى به ولا يصح وقوع مثله اتفاقا كما
يتفق للشاعر البيت النادر والكلمة الشاردة والمعنى الفذ الغريب... 33 (35)

He says in another part of the book, after he has talked about the kind of rhetoric found in the Qurʾān:

(36) "وقد قدر مقدرون أنه يمكن استفادة اعجاز القرآن من هذه الابواب التي نقلناها وان ذلك مما يمكن الاستدلال به عليه . وليس كذلك عندنا لان هذه الوجوه اذا وقع التنبيه عليها أمكن التوصل اليها بالتدريب والتعوي والتصنع لها وذلك كالشعر الذي اذا عرف الانسان طريقة صح منه العمل له وأمكنه نظمه . والوجوه التي نقول : ان اعجاز القرآن يمكن أن يعلم منها فليس مما يقدر البشر على التصنع له والتوصل اليه بحال ."³⁴

In this point he opposes al-Rummanī's view who considers rhetoric as one aspect of the īḡāz of the Qurʾān. Al-Bāqillānī thinks that one could not appreciate the īḡāz of the Qurʾān unless he knows everything about the speech of the true Arabs in order to differentiate between the excellence and the weaknesses of the speech. He says:

(37) "فأما من كان قد تناهى في معرفة اللسان العربي ووقف على طرقها ومذاهبها فهو يعرف القدر الذي ينتهي اليه وسع المتكلم في الفصاحة ويعرف ما يخرج عن الوسع ويتجاوز حدود القدرة فليس يخفى عليه اعجاز القرآن كما يميز بين جنس الخطب والرسائل والشعر وكما يميز بين الشعر الجيد والردئ والفصيح والبديع والنادر والبارع والغريب ."³⁵

Then he mentions the speech of the Prophet Muhammad and His followers in order to explain the difference between their speech and the speech of the Qurʾān. He says afterwards that anyone who reads this speech would easily recognise that this is the language of human beings. He says:

(38) "سيقع لك الفضل بين كلام الناس وكلام رب العالمين وتعلم أن نظم القرآن يخالف نظم كلام الآدميين وتعلم الحد الذي يتفاوت بين كلام البليغ والبالغ والخطيب والخطيب والشاعر والشاعر وبين نظم القرآن جملة ."³⁶

Then he talks about the oldest collection of complete ancient Arabic Qasīdas. He explains the difference between their style and the style of the Qurʾān, and maintains that they could not reach the standard of

the Qurʾān's style. He mentions most Islamic poets as well, such as al-Buḥturī, Abū Nuwās, Ibn al-Rūmī ... etc. in order to say:

(39) "الشعر قبيل ملتصق مستدرك وأمر ممكن مطيع ٠٠٠ أما نظم القرآن عال عن
 37 أن يعلق به الوهم أو يسموا إليه الفكر أو يطمع فيه طامع أو يطلبه طالب."

However, I find that it is very difficult for the student who wants to study al-Bāqillānī's book to deduce from all these various collections of speech and a large number of poets a clear idea about the rhetorically miraculous style of the Qurʾān. He takes some ideas from al-Rummānī, although he does not mention him by name. For example, when he introduces the simile, he says:

(40) "وأما التشبيه فهو العقد على أن أحد الشئيين يسد مسد الآخر في حس
 أو عقل." 38

This is exactly what al-Rummānī says about it. Then he mentions 14 verses containing similes from the Qurʾān without any comment or analysis of them.

I think he is far removed from pure Qurʾānic studies such as al-Rummānī's study and what one would imagine from the title of his book. We can consider his book as a literary study because he mentions a lot of poets and speech under the pretext of making a comparison between them and the Qurʾān. On the subject of rhetoric he gives more evidence from the speech of the Arabs and their poets than from the Qurʾān.

The simile of the Qurʾān in his view

Al-Bāqillānī denies that the inimitable style of the Qurʾān could be due to the similes in it. He thinks that it could be learnt. He gives an example of this, the poetry of Ibn al-Muʿtazz. He says:

(41) "ان قلنا ما وقع من التشبيه في القرآن معجز عرض علينا من التشبيهات الجارية في الأشعار ما لا يخفى عليك ، وانت تجد في شعر ابن المعتز من التشبيه البديع الذي يشبه المحر وقد تتبع في هذا ما لم يتتبع غيره واتفق له ما لم يتفق لغيره من الشعراء . وكذلك كثير من وجوه البلاغة قد بينا أن تعلمها يمكن وليس تقع البلاغة بوجه واحد منها دون غيره ."³⁹

He does not think that one kind of rhetoric could account for the inimitability of the Qurʾān. The simile is not the only miracle in the Qurʾān nor is any other kind of rhetoric. He says:

(42) "ننكر أن يقول قائل: ان بعض هذه الوجوه بانفرادها قد حصل فيه الاعجاز من غير أن يقارنه ما يصل به من الكلام و يفضي اليه مثل ما يقول: ان ما أقسم به وحده بنفسه معجز وان التشبيه معجز وان التجنيس معجز والمطابقة بنفسها معجزة ."⁴⁰

He thinks that any verse containing a simile is a miracle for the connection between its words and the organization and the union between the sentences, not for the particular simile in it. He says:

(43) "فأما الآية التي فيها ذكر التشبيه فان ادعي اعجازها لألفاظها ونظمها وتأليفها فاني لا أدفع ذلك واصححه ولكن لا أدعي اعجازها لموضع التشبيه ."⁴¹

I do agree with him on this point, because I think that the miraculous style of the Qurʾān is not due to one particular kind of rhetoric, but there are many causes which collectively make up the inimitability of the Qurʾān.

But in spite of his saying that the iʿgāz of the Qurʾān is not due to the use of simile, he considers the cunning metaphors to be the miracle of the Qurʾān. He says:

(44) "والتصرف في الاستعارة البديعة يصح أن يتعلق به الاعجاز كما يصح مثل ذلك في حقائق الكلام لان البلاغة في كل واحد من البابين تجري مجرى واحدا وتأخذ مأخذا مفردا". 42

He considers it to be the miracle of the Qur'ān because it could not be learnt as he says:

(45) "والاستعارة والبيان في كل واحد منهما ما لا يضبط حده ولا يقدر قدره ولا يمكن التوصل الى ساحل بحره بالتعلم ولا يتطرق الى غوره بالتسبب وكل ما يمكن تعلمه و يتهاى تلقنه ويمكن تحصيله ويستدرك أخذه فلا يجب أن يطلب وقوع الاعجاز به". 43

CHAPTER TWO

THE QUR'ĀNIC SIMILE IN WORKS OF RHETORIC AND LITERARY EXPERTS

Ibn Abī Awn and his book al-Taṣbīhāt

Originally his book was written about the famous pre-Islamic and Islamic poems, but he begins his book with the simile in the Qur'ān and makes it an introduction to his book, calling it

"تشبيهات خالق الاشياء عز وجل". He does not detail the simile (46) of the Qur'ānic verses, but gives a general view, the division of the comparison in the Qur'ān into two kinds; the simile of form as he calls it:

"فمما شبه به الاشخاص المماثلة قوله عز وجل "والقمر قدرناه منازل حتى عاد كالعرجون القديم" وقوله عز وجل "طلعها كأنه رؤوس الشياطين" وقوله "كأنهن الياقوت والمرجان" و"كأنهن بيض مكنون" 44

and the simile of action,

"وقوله في تشبيه الافعال "والذين كفروا أعمالهم كسراب بقيعة يحسبه الظامآن ماء حتى اذا جاءه لم يجده شيئا" وقوله "مثل الذين كفروا بربهم أعمالهم كرماد اشتدت به الريح في يوم عاصف" ومثل هذا كثير في القرآن. 45

Perhaps in this introduction he encourages other people who followed him to explain the comparison in the Qur'ān in more detail such as Ibn Nāqiya al-Baghdādī, who wrote a special book about the comparison of the Qur'ān in his book al-Ġumān fī taṣbīhāt al-Qur'ān. We shall examine his book in detail later.

Al-Ġāḥiẓ and his two books al-Haiyawān and al-Bayān wa al-tabyīn

Al-Ġāḥiẓ says more about rhetorical matters in his book al-Haiyawān than in his other book al-Bayān wa al-tabyīn. Perhaps al-Ġāḥiẓ can be considered to be the first person who interprets al-maḡāz in the Qurʾān as something which is the opposite of fact. This meaning is very close to what the late rhetorical specialists mean by it. So we can consider al-Ġāḥiẓ as the first Arabic writer who interprets figurative expression and the metaphor as rhetorical devices. He does not mean by al-maḡāz what Abū ʿUbayda means by it, namely the explanation of the words of the Qurʾān. Al-Ġāḥiẓ means by it something which is the opposite of fact. We see him in many places of his two books mention figurative expression and metaphor. These references are considered to be the first rhetorical matters which have been recorded in the history of Arabic criticism. The first reference to rhetoric by al-Ġāḥiẓ in his book al-Haiyawān is when he says:

(49) "باب آخر في العجاز والتشبيه بالأكل وهو قول الله عز وجل "ان الذين يأكلون أموال اليتامى ظلما" وقوله تعالى عز اسمه "أأكلون للسحت" وقد يقال لهم ذلك وان شربوا بتلك الاموال الانبذة ولبسوا الحلل وركبوا الدواب ولم ينفقوا منها درهما واحدا في سبيل الأكل وقد قال الله عز وجل "انما يأكلون في بطونهم نارا" وهذا مجاز آخر." 46

Then he goes on with details, adding some other verses of the Qurʾān and some verses of the Arabic poems which have the same subject. Then he says:

(50) "فهذا كله مختلف وهو كله مجاز." 47

The simile in al-Ġāḥiẓ's books

He talks about the simile in its conventional meaning.⁴⁸ But he

considers al-tamīl and al-tašbīh as one thing, as the philologists

did. He comments about the verse: 49 "صم بكم عني فهم لا يرجعون" (51)

"وقد قال الله لناس يسمعون صم بكم عني فهم لا يرجعون" وذلك على المثل. 50 (52)

Al-Ġāhiz is aware of imaginary simile, which is one type of simile.

This kind of the simile is found in this verse:

"انها شجرة تخرج في أصل الجحيم طلعتها كأنه رؤوس الشياطين" 51 (53)

Al-Ġāhiz says:

"ليس ان الناس رأوا شيطانا قط على صورة ولكن لما كان الله قد جعل في (54)

طباع جميع الامم استقبح جميع صور الشياطين واستسماجه وكراهته وأجرى على

ألسنة جميعهم ضرب المثل في ذلك رجع بالايحاش والتنفير وبالاخافة

والتقريع الى ما قد جعله الله في طباع الاولين والآخرين وعند جميع الامم

على خلافه طبائع جميع الامم. 52

Most of the interpreters mention this interpretation of the verse, such

as al-Ṭabarī, al-Zamaḥṣarī, Ibn Ḥayyān, al-Rāzī. Ibn-Qutaiba, on the

other hand, interprets the ṣaytān as a kind of snake. Al-Ġāhiz mentions

some verses containing simile also like this verse:

"واتل عليهم نبأ الذي آتيناه آياتنا فانسلخ منها فأتبعه الشيطان فكان من (55)

الغاوين ولو شئنا لرفعناه بها ولكنه أخلد الى الارض واتبع هواه فمثل كمثل

الكلب ان تحمل عليه يلهث او تتركه يلهث" 53

replying to the heretical people, who say about this verse that the thing

being compared is not in agreement or conformity with the thing with

which the other is compared. They say:

"ان هذا المثل لا يجوز ان يضرب لهذا المذكور في صدر هذا الكلام... (56)

فمما يشبه حال من اعطي شيئا فلم يقبله ولم يذكر غير ذلك بالكلب الذي ان حملت

عليه نج وولّى ذاهبا وان تركته شدّ عليك ونبح. مع ان قوله يلهث لم يقع في

موضعه وانما يلهث الكلب من عطش شديد وحر شديد ومن تعب واما النباح

فمن شيء آخر. 54

Al-Ġāhiz replies to them that they misunderstand these verses because

they are not aware of the different literary expressions of Arabic speech.

He explains to them the agreement and the similarity between the thing being compared and the thing with which the other is compared.

He says:

(57) "ليس ببعيد أن يشبه الذي أوتي الآيات والاعاجيب والبرهانات والكرامات في بدء حرصه عليها وطلبه لها بالكلب في حرصه وطلبه فان الكلب يعطي الجهد والجهد من نفسه في كل حالة من الحالات وشبه رفضه وقذفه لها من يديه ورده لها بعد الحرص عليها وفرط الرغبة فيها بالكلب اذا رجع ينبج بعد اطرادك له وواجب أن يكون رفض قبول الاشياء الخطيرة النفيسة في وزن طلبها والحرص عليها والكلب اذا أتعب نفسه في شدة النباح مقبلا اليك ومدبرا عنك لهث واعتراه ما يعتريه عند التعب والعطش." 55

These few rhetorical references are not sufficient to be regarded as a special method, but al-Gāhiz opened the door to others who follow him, like Ibn Qutaiba, who benefited from these notices.

Abū Hilāl al-ʿAskarī and his book al-Ṣināʿatayn

The writing about the rhetoric of the Qurʾān became clarified with Abū Hilāl al-ʿAskarī, although he did not write a special book about it. In his book al-Ṣināʿatayn, however, he says that rhetoric must be studied and known because it is the way to understand the rhetoric of the Qurʾān.

He considers the study of rhetoric to be the second step after knowing the unity of Allāh. He says:

(58) "... ان احق العلوم بالتعلم ، وأولاها بالتحقق بعد المعرفة بالله جل ثناؤه — علم البلاغة و معرفة الفصاحة الذي به يعرف اعجاز كتاب الله تعالى " 56

We see that rhetoric, in Abū Hilāl's view, still has a religious aim.

A knowledge of rhetoric leads to an understanding of the miraculous style

of the Qurʾān. He says:

(59) "وقد علمنا أن الانسان اذا أغفل علم البلاغة واخْل بمعرفة الفصاحة لم يقع علمه باعجاز القرآن من جهة ما خصه الله به من حسن التأليف، وبراعة التركيب وما شحنه به من الايجاز البديع، والاختصار اللطيف..."⁵⁷

Abū Hilāl divides his book into ten chapters and studies the subject of rhetoric in it. He supports his explanation mainly with verses from the Qurʾān, and sometimes with the speech of the Arabs or with the speech of the Prophet Muḥammad and His followers or with the verses of poets.

The simile in his book

He studies the simile in detail. He benefits from previous studies of the subject, especially that of al-Rummānī from whom he takes the division of the simile and the same evidentiary verses. He defines the simile as:

(60) "التشبيه: الوصف بأن أحد الموصوفين ينوب مناب الآخر بأداة التشبيه ناب منابه أو لم ينب"⁵⁸

which does not differ much from what the late rhetoric specialists say about it. He divides the simile into four parts exactly as al-Rummānī did.⁵⁹

I do not mention his evidentiary verses because he transferred them from al-Rummānī's work, using the very same words, and he also transferred his comments about these verses to show the connection between the thing being compared and the thing with which the other is compared and the basis of the comparison. But he adds another division of the simile. He divides the basis of the simile into its form, colour, beauty, movement and meaning. He says:

(61) "والتشبيه بعد ذلك في جميع الكلام يجيء على وجوه: منها تشبيه الشيء بالشيء صورة مثل قول عز وجل "والقمر قدرناه منازل حتى عاد كالعرجون القديم" ومنها تشبيه الشيء بالشيء لونا وحسنا كقول الله عز وجل "كأنهن الياقوت والمرجان" وقوله تعالى "كأنهن بيض مكنون" ⁶⁰

Then he gives examples only from the Arab poets.

Al-Šarīf al-Raḍī and his book *Talḥiṣ al-bayān fī maḡāzāt al-Qurʾān*

Al-Šarīf al-Raḍī's book is considered to be the first book on rhetoric which is written to explain the figurative expression (maḡāz) in the Qurʾān.

This subject is not dealt with throughout the book like all those before him, nor does he devote a special chapter to the subject as Ibn Qutaiba did. Although this book has the same title as Abū ʿUbaida's book maḡāz al-Qurʾān, each differs from the other. Abū ʿUbaida means by maḡāz how words are used and the explanation and the interpretation of the verses of the Qurʾān (as we saw when we discussed his book) ⁶¹ while al-Šarīf means by maḡāz its rhetorical meaning, by which he means the opposite of fact (ḥaqīqa). The only thing which is the same with both of them is that they follow the same arrangement of the sūras in the Qurʾān.

It is clear that the word maḡāz means metaphor in al-Šarīf's view. He repeats the word metaphor in each verse which has maḡāz. Usually he says after he mentions the verse that this is a metaphor. Sometimes he even mentions that the verse has allusion or simile or shortness. He considers them as a part of metaphor, as is the case with this verse:

62 "وَأَسْأَلُ مَنْ أَرْسَلَنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ مَنْ رَسَلْنَا أَجْعَلْنَا مِنْ دُونِ الرَّحْمَنِ آلِهَةً يُعْبَدُونَ" (62)

He says about the brevity in it:

"وهذا الكلام أيضا داخل في قبيل الاستعارة . المراد - والله أعلم - وأسأل أصحاب من أرسلنا من قبلك من رسلنا أو استنب ما في كتبهم وتعرف حقائق سننهم" 63 (63)

Although one might imagine from the title that al-Šarīf wrote his book to explain all the mağāzāt in the Qurʾān, in fact he explains only the metaphor in the Qurʾān. He explains it very well and in detail. In spite of the fact that metaphor is not my subject, I want to show that he analyses the metaphor clearly and I think that there is no other later rhetoric expert who analyses the metaphor in the Qurʾān better than al-Šarīf does. For example he analyses philologically the correct use of the word tahwī instead of using another word which gives the same meaning like tahinnu in this verse:

"وَأَجْعَلْ أَفْتِدَةً مِنَ النَّاسِ تَهَيُّ إِلَيْهِمْ" 64 (64)

"وهذه من محاسن الاستعارة و حقيقة الهي النزول من علو الى انخفاض كالهبوط والمراد به ههنا المبالغة في صفة الافتدة بالنزوع الى المقيمين بذلك المكان . ولو قال سبحانه : تَحْنُ إِلَيْهِمْ لم يكن فيه من الفائدة ما في قوله سبحانه "تهي إليهم" لان الحنين قد يوصف به من هو مقيم في مكانه و الهوى يفيد انزعاج الهوى من مستقره" 65 (65)

I think that the main cause for his writing his book is to explain the metaphor only in the Qurʾān. But he sometimes confuses the issue by mentioning other types of rhetoric, because at that early time the study of the rhetoric of the Qurʾān had not yet become established and its subjects were confused in the rhetorical expert's view.

With regard to the simile, throughout his book he mentions five verses only as they contain simile and metaphor at the same time. So he explains the metaphor in these verses and he leaves the simile

without mentioning anything about it.⁶⁶ Otherwise, his book is not free from philological explanation. Usually he mentions the philological meaning and the etymology of the words in the verses which he quotes. For example, he explains the philological meaning of the word mihādan in the verse:

(66) "الذي جعل لكم الأرض مهادا"⁶⁷

He says:

(67) "ومعنى المهاد والمهد واحد . وهو مثل الفرش والفراش . ألا ان المهد ربما استعمل في رسم الآلة التي يجعل فيها الصبي الصغير ليحفظه وهو يؤول الى معنى الفرش . والمهد ايضا : مصدر مَهَدَ يَمهد ، مَهْدًا اذا مَنَّ موضعا لقدمه و مضجعا لجنبه"⁶⁸

After all we see that al-Šarīf represents a special kind of study of the mağāz in the Qurʾān. His aim differs from the aim of other literary experts who came before him like al-Ġāhiz and Ibn Qutaiba.

We discussed earlier that al-Ġāhiz and his pupil Ibn Qutaiba wrote about the mağāz in the Qurʾān in order to defend the Qurʾān by explaining the mağāz in it as a reply to those who ask many questions about some difficult verses in the Qurʾān, as they do not understand the Arabic figurative expression (mağāz) in the Qurʾān. But the aim of al-Šarīf's study of the mağāz is to show and to explain the beauty and the magnificence which the mağāz adds to the verses of the Qurʾān.

Ishāq b. Ibrāhīm b. Sulaimān b. Wahb and his book
al-Burhān fī wuğūh al-bayān

Another unknown author, like Ibn Abī ʿAwn, who lived at the beginning of the fourth century (After Heğira). The rhetoric specialists ignored his book and did not mention anything about it although he talked

about some rhetorical subjects, such as simile, metaphor, allusion, diversion, exaggeration, ... etc. Perhaps the reason for their ignoring this book is the dullness of its style and the fact that it is full of scholastic theology and logic.

The simile in his book

He talks about it very briefly. He considers it to be the highest type of speech of the Arabs. He divides it into two kinds: material simile and spiritual simile. He gives as an example of the first type, the verse:

69 "كَأَنَّهُنَّ بَيْضٌ مَكُونٌ" (68)

and gives as an example of the second type the explanation of the basis of the simile in some verses of the Qurʾān without mentioning them.⁷⁰ He supports his explanation of these two kinds of simile with reference to the speech of the Arabs also.

Ibn Rašīq al-Qayrawānī and his book al-ʿUmda

He devotes a chapter to rhetoric in his book al-ʿUmda, mentioning mainly what is said about it in al-Ġāhiz's book al-Bayān wa al-tabyīn.

The simile in his book

He also devotes a chapter to the simile, which is taken from al-Rummānī in most cases. He supports his explanation with verses of pre-Islamic and later poems. He defines the simile as:

71 "بأنه صفة الشيء بما قاربه و شاكله" (69)

Then he mentions its type as al-Rummānī did, but his evidentiary verses are not from the Qurʾān but from the poets.

Lastly he mentions that the Qurʾān has a great deal of verses containing simile, but he mentions only four verses without any comment on them. He says:

(70) "وفي القرآن تشبيه كثير كقوله تعالى "والقمر قد رنا ه منازل حتى عاد كالعرجون القديم" وقوله تعالى "والذين كفروا أعمالهم كسراب بقيعة يحسبه الظمآن ماء" حتى اذا جاءه لم يجده شيئا" وقوله "واذا غشيهم موج كالظلل" وقوله "كانهم جراد منتشر".⁷²

He also explains the verse:

(71) "انها شجرة تخرج في أصل الجحيم طلعها كأنه رؤوس الشياطين"

as all the others explained it.

Ibn Sinān al-Hafāḡī and his book *Sirr al-Faṣāḡa*

The similarity between Ibn Sinān al-Hafāḡī and Abū Hilāl al-ʿAskarī is very strong. Both of them believe that the study of rhetoric has two aims, a religious aim, which is the main one, and a literary aim. Both of them believe that the study of rhetoric leads to an understanding of the īḡāz of the Qurʾān. But the thing which is noticeable in Ibn Sinān is that he uses the word al-faṣāḡa instead of rhetoric throughout his comments in the book.

The simile in his book

He talks briefly about the simile, influenced by al-Rummānī's treatise. He says that the beauty of the simile is either to explain the meaning of the thing being compared, which is not clear enough, in comparison with some other thing, or to liken one thing with another

which is greater and more serious in order to exaggerate in describing it. He gives examples of the first one from some verses of the Qurʾān without any comment. He says:

(72) "وما ورد في القرآن من ذلك قوله تعالى "والذين كفروا أعمالهم كسراب بقيعة...". وقوله تعالى "مثل الذين كفروا بربهم أعمالهم كرماد اشتدت به الريح في يوم عاصف...". وقوله تعالى "انما مثل الحياة الدنيا كماء انزلناه من السماء فاختلط به نبات الارض" وقوله تعالى "فاذا انشقت السماء فكانت وردة كالدهان" وقوله عز وجل "مثل الذين حملوا التوراة ثم لم يحملوها كمثل الحمار يحمل أسفارا" ⁷³

And as an example of the second kind he mentions the verse:

(73) "وله الجوار المنشآت في البحر كالأعلام"

he says: (74) "فانه شبه الشيء بما هو أعظم منه على وجه المبالغة". ⁷⁴

He talks about the verse: (75) "انها شجرة تخرج في أصل الجحيم طلعتها كأنه رؤوس الشياطين"

which most of the rhetoric specialists mention and comment upon.

Ibn Sinān, like al-Ġāhiz, imagines someone asking about this verse. The "heads of devils" were not to be seen, so how did Allāh liken the crop of that tree with it? He answers them:

(76) "بأنه قد استقر في نفوس الناس من قبح الشياطين ما صار بمنزلة المشاهد حتى أنهم اذا شبهوا وجهها بوجه الحور كان تشبيها صحيحا وان كانت الحور لم تشاهد ولم يستقر في نفوسهم قبح طلع الزقوم كما استقر في نفوسهم قبح رؤوس الشياطين فكان المشبه به أوضح". ⁷⁵

Then he adds:

(77) "في رؤوس الشياطين أيضا من المبالغة في القبح ما ليس في طلع الزقوم".

We do not see Ibn Sinān adding any new comments about the simile of the Qurʾān in his book.

Ibn Nāqiya al-Baḡdādī and his book
al-Ġumān fī raṣbīhāt al-Qurʾān

Al-Šarīf al-Raḍī is considered to be the first person to devote a book to the metaphor in the Qurʾān, so Ibn Nāqiya is considered to be the first to devote a book to the simile in the Qurʾān. He declares this fact himself when he says at the end of his book:

(78) "على كثرة ما ألف السلف من الكتب في أنواع علوم القرآن ، لم يفردوا لهذا النوع كتابا ولم يفتحوا الى القول فيه بابا ."⁷⁶

We shall discuss this book in detail as it is very close to our subject.

We saw before that Ibn Abī ʿAwn devoted a book to the simile in poetry (al-Taṣbīhāt) and he talks in the introduction about the similes of the Qurʾān, which he calls " تشبيهات خالق الاشياء عز وجل " (79) so perhaps Ibn Nāqiya saw this book (because both of them lived in Baghdad) and its introduction reminded him of the subject of Qurʾānic simile. Or perhaps his wish to show what wonderful similes the Qurʾān has encouraged him to write this book.

Whatever the cause of his writing the book, Ibn Nāqiya talks in the first pages about the merit of the simile. He says:

(80) "التشبيهات نوع مستحسن من أنواع البلاغة وقد ورد منه في كتاب الله تعالى ما نحن ذاكروه في هذا الباب وناهبون الى ايضاح معانيه والتبنيه على مكان الفضيلة فيه ."⁷⁷

Then he adds an explanation of the nature of the simile.

(81) "ان الشئ يشبه بالشئ تارة في صورته و شكله وتارة في حركته وفعله وتارة في لونه ونجده وتارة في سوسه وطبعه ، وكل منهما متحد بذاته واقع في بعض جهاته لذلك يصح تشبيه الجسم بالجسم والعرض بالجسم والجسم بالعرض والعرض بالعرض ."

Then he mentions the particles of simile like kāf, ka'anna, matal and ṣabīh.⁷⁸ These are the only rhetorical references which Ibn Nāqiya mentions in his book but the rest of the book contains philology, syntax, and a good collection of Arabic poems and prose about the subject of simile.

His method

After he has mentioned the verse which contains the simile and briefly interpreted it, he goes on to explain the philological meaning of the word. Most of the time he mentions the desinential inflection of the words and some syntactical feature of the verse. Then he mentions a poem which has the same meaning or the same type of simile. And he goes from one poet to another until he covers nearly all the poems which have the same simile as that verse. When he quotes these poems he explains how the poet employed this form of simile and how some of them are very good and others not so good. But none of them can reach the standard of the style of the similes of the Qur'ān in its beautiful perfect pictures of nature and the eloquent brevity of phrase.

His interpretation of the verse:

(82) كَذَابُ آلِ فِرْعَوْنَ وَالَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا⁷⁹

explains his method in the book very well. First he begins to explain the philological meaning of the words in the verse. He says about the first word da'b :

(83) "الدأب: العادة وملازمة الطريقة ، يقال: دأب يدأب دأبا و دؤوبا وهو

دائب يفعل كذا : اي يجري فيه على عادته وملازمته ، قال خدّاش بن زهير العامري :

وما زال ذاك الدأْبُ حتى تخاذلت هوازنُ وارفضت سليمٌ وعامرٌ

Then he transfers to the syntactical explanation of the word. He says:

(84) "وموضع الكاف في "كدأْب" رفع لانه خبر ابتداء كما أن موضع "خَلَفَكَ" في قولك : زيد خَلَفَكَ ، رفع بأنه خبر ابتداء وانتصب بالاستقرار"

After he has explained the philological and syntactical meaning of the first word he moves to the second word which is āl Firʿawn .

He says:

(85) "ومعنى "آل فرعون" اي : اتباعه فيما دعا اليه من ربوبيته فهم آل لانه يرجع أمرهم اليه بالنسب وكل من كان يرجع أمر القوم اليه بالنسب فهم آل في حق كان أو باطل ."

Then he explains the philological difference between the two words

āl and ashāb in the language. He says:

(86) "والفرق بين الآل والاصحاب: ان الآل يرجعون بالنسب الاوكد الاقرب وأما الاصحاب فمن الصحبة كالاصحاب في السفر وفي طلب العلم ."

Then he goes on to explain the simile, saying:

(87) "الآية تتضمن التشبيه لحال المشركين في اجتهادهم في كفرهم وتظاهرهم على النبي صلى الله عليه والتكذيب بآيات الله عز وجل بحال آل فرعون في تظاهرهم على موسى عليه السلام وتكذيبهم بآيات الله التي جاء بها"

After that he mentions the poem which has the same phrase of simile,

ka daʿb by Imruʿal-Qays emphasising again that the speech of Allāh is greatest and more eloquent, clear and beautiful than Imruʿal-Qays's poem, he says:

(88) "ونظير لفظ هذا التشبيه قول امرئ القيس وقول الله جل اسمه اكرم وأعظم"

وأفصح وأوضح ، وأبين وأحسن :

وقوفا بها صَحْبِي عَلَيَّ مَطِيئِهِمْ
وان شِفَائِي عَبْرَةُ لَوْ سَفَحْتُهَا
كدَأْبِكَ مِنْ أُمِّ الْحَوِيرِثِ قَبْلَهَا

يقولون : لا تَهْلِكْ أَسَىَّ وَتَجْمَلِ
فهل عند رسم دارسٍ مِنْ مُعَوَّلٍ
وجارتها أُمُّ الرِّبَابِ بِمَأْسَلٍ "

Then he starts to explain the similes in these verses of poetry.⁸⁰ Part of his method in the book also is that when he mentions the simile in a verse he mentions also all the other verses of the Qur^ʾān which have the same simile, in order not to repeat his explanation in more than one place in the book and not to repeat his evidence from a great deal of Arabic poetry. The examples for that are very clear in the book.⁸¹

This is the method he usually follows with each verse of simile. So we can consider the book as a philological, syntactical, rhetorical, exegetical and literary book at the same time.

His explanation of the simile

The outstanding thing in his book is his explanation of the comparison in the verses of the Qur^ʾān. He connects each aspect of the similes. He always gives causes for the use of simile by the Arabs (as the Qur^ʾān was revealed in accordance with their speech) and discusses why they likened this thing to that thing and why Allāh uses the same simile for them, as is the case with this verse:

82 "وان يتغيشوا يغاثوا بماء كالمهل يشوي الوجوه و ساءت مرتفقا " (89)

He takes several pages to explain the value of water to the Arabs by mentioning a large number of their poems. He refers to the fact that

the Arabs knew the worth of water and got very anxious to obtain it when they were thirsty, and were rarely able to find it. Sometimes they found brackish water after spending days in reaching it. So Allāh describes this condition of worry in the Last Day. The disbelievers will appeal for water but they will be given boiling water muhl instead. He says:

(90) "وقد وصفت العرب في أشعارها وأكثر من ذكر الماء الذي ترده في سلوك القفار الموحشة والبلاد النازحة ، ووصفه بالتغير والأسونة ، والخبث والأجونة وبالغت في ذمه وتشبيهه بكل ما يدل على قدم عهده وكراهة طعمه وقبح منظره ، إشارة الى ما تعانيه من ركوب الأخطار المهولة وتلاقيه في قطع المفاوز المجهولة ، كقول الهذلي :

ولقد وردت الماء فوق جماعه مثل الفريقة صقيت للمدنف
فصدرت عنه ظامنا وتركته تهتر علفته كأن لم يكشف⁸³

Ibn Nāqiya says that Allāh uses this simile in order to frighten the Arabs about the punishment of the Last Day because they knew only too well this kind of worry as they suffered from it in their everyday lives. He says:

(91) "فلما كانوا يلجؤون الى ورود هذه المياه و يلقون العناء بشربها ، والكلفة في تناولها ، وكان القرآن قد نزل بلسانهم وعلى ما عهد من شأنهم ذكر الله تعالى لهم من العذاب الذي أعده للظالمين ما يكون في بعض أحوالهم مثال له ، فيذكرون الكثير باليسير ، والغائب بالحاضر"

Then he adds:

(92) "وكما خوفوا بشرب هذا الماء فكذلك شوقوا الى أنهار الجنة ومائها والى سلسيلها وتسليمها ليروا أن ذلك أنفس بالقياس الى ما وصفوه في أشعارهم بالصفاء والرقه والخصر واللذة".⁸⁴

Another example is his interpretation of this verse:

(93) ⁸⁵ "انها ترمي بشرر كالقصر كانه جمالة صفر"

He explains that Allāh likened al-ṣarar to the camel "ḡimālatun"

because the camel represented a great thing in the Arabs' mind.

They were very admiring of its patience with regard to suffering

thirst and its tolerance of the very difficult life of the desert. So

Allāh likened the sparks "ṣarar" to the camel in order to intensify it

and to exaggerate the frightening aspect of the fire of hell. He says:

(94) "ولما كانت الابل أعظم الاشياء في نفوس العرب لصبرها على الأهوال
واحتمال الاثقال ، وكانوا يضربون بها الامثال ، في كثير من الاحوال ،
ويشبهونها بالجنان . . . فكذاك شبه الله تعالى شرر جهنم بها تعظيما له
وتهويلا و ارهابا منه وتخويفا ."⁸⁶

I think that Ibn Nāqiya gives the very best explanation of the use of simile in the Qur'ān and the similes of the Arabs. We discussed the others earlier (the philologists and the commentators) and have seen that they did not give this amount of detail of argumentation. For example they said that Allāh likened this thing to that thing because the Arabs do the same and they mention the poem which has the same simile to prove that. But we see that Ibn Nāqiya gives details of the reasons why Allāh addresses this simile to the Arabs, not only because they use the same simile in their speech but also because this simile has another meaning to the Arabs such as frightening them or encouraging them to believe in Allāh ... etc.

The reason for his supporting his explanation with a great deal of poetry

I think that he mentions a lot of pre-Islamic and Islamic poetry

in his book for two reasons:

1. He mentions pre-Islamic poetry to prove that the Qur'ān was revealed in complete accordance with the speech of the Arabs and especially with their custom of using similes.
2. He mentions Islamic poetry in order to show how much the Arabs were affected by the Qur'ān after its revelation and to show their attempts to imitate it in this kind of rhetoric (the simile), but they could not attain to its rhetorical style. This gives evidence of the inimitable style of the Qur'ān as he says after mentioning a lot of poetry containing similes which the poets use with nearly the same meaning as this verse:

(95) "ثم قست قلوبكم من بعد ذلك فهي كالحجارة أو أشد قسوة" ⁸⁷

He says:

(96) "فأما من قصد محض التشبيه في الباب واعتمد في أخذه على لفظ الكتاب فإنه وقف دون استيفاء المعنى بمثل قوله تعالى "أو أشد قسوة" وما يتبع هذا القول من الدلالة عليه والحجة فيه والتعليل له. وكذلك كل ما ينقله الشعراء وغيرهم من أرباب البلاغة إلى كلامهم من معاني القرآن لا يبلغون شأوه ولا يدركون مناله اعجازا واعوازا و إياها و امتناعا" ⁸⁸

This book is between the commentators' books and the philologists' books

In his book Ibn Nāqiya strikes a balance between the method of the commentators and the method of the philologists. He starts his explanation of the verse by quoting what was said about it in the commentators' books, especially al-Ṭabarī. He is very interested in al-Ṭabarī's book and most of his interpretation is taken from him. He always uses this phrase: "It was said in the tafsīr". But the tafsīr

he means is al-Tabarī's tafsir. As he says when he explains this verse:

89

"يَمِ نَطْوِي السَّمَاءَ كَطَيِّ السَّجَلِّ لِلْكَتَبِ" (97)

"جاء في التفسير 'السجل' الصحيفة التي فيها الكتاب وقال ابن عباس:

90 "السجل" الصحف تطوى على ما فيها من الكتابة وقيل السجل ملك"

But occasionally he mentions his own interpretation of the verse, then he adds what was said about it by interpreters like al-Tabarī.

When he goes on to explain the philological meaning of the words he mentions the statements of philologists, like Abū 'Ubaida and al-Farrā' about these words. As he says when he explains the word durriy in the verse:

91

(99) "كأنها كوكب دري" (99)

(100) "الدري عند العرب: الشديد الانارة والاضاءة، نسب الى الدر فشبه صفاءه

بصفائه. وقال الفراء: العرب تسمي الكواكب العظام التي لا تعرف أسماءها:

الدراي بلا همز وقال أبو عبيدة الدري من قولهم: درأ الكوكب اذا جرى

في أفق السماء من موضع الى موضع." 92

He is affected by the philologists also in that he refers to a great number of verses of Arabic poetry and their speech throughout his philological explanations. He is interested in giving evidence from Arabic poems for each word or each simile in the verses in the Qur'ān as they do and by using their method as discussed earlier.

There is another similarity between this book and the method employed in the books of the commentators and philologists, Ibn Nāqiya arranges his book about the Sūras and verses of the Qur'ān according to the arrangement of the Qur'ān itself, and this method was followed by the commentators and the philologists as well.

He gives a good explanation of this subject, namely that the comparison in the verse differs according to the difference of the readings of the word. He gives evidence from Arabic poetry to support each reading and to support the meaning of each of them, as happens with the simile of this verse:

(101) "انها ترمي بشر كالقصر كأنه جمالة صفر" 93

First he gives the two different meanings of the first reading, which was read as al-qasr which is mentioned by the commentators. He supports each interpretation with Arabic poetry in order to say that each meaning was used by the Arabs. He says:

(102) "جاء في التفسير أن "القصر" واحد القصور. وقيل: القصر جمع قصرة، وهو الغليظ من الشجر... والعرب تشبه الابل بالقصور ذهابا الى تمام خلقها وحسن صورتها. قال عنتره

فوقفت فيها ناقتي - وكانت - فدن - لأقصى حاجة المتلبي
وأما تأويل "القصر" أنه الغليظ من الشجر فهو حسن في التشبيه أيضا لأنه من نظائر الجذى " جمع جذوة، وهو ما غلظ من الخشب. وقد شبهت النار في اشتعالها و تفرع ضرامها بالشجر، كما قال العباسي:
وموقدات يتن يضر من اللهب يوسعنه من سلم ومن غرب
يرفعن أشجارا لنا من الذهب" 94

Then he mentions another reading of the word al-qasr which was read by adding the vowel point to the letter (ṣ) and its different meaning. He supports this reading by Arabic poetry also, and he considers the simile in this case to be a good simile as well. He says:

(103) "وقرأ بعضهم: "انها ترمي بشر كالقصر" - بفتح الصاد - جمع: قصرة،

اي : كأنها أعناق الابل . و هو تشبيه حسن أيضا ، لان العرب تستعير ذلك
في وصف النار ، فيقولون برزت أعناق النيران⁹⁵

He does not stop at mentioning the different meanings of each reading but sometimes he also mentions the desinential inflection of the word in each reading and dismisses some aspects of the morphology. This is seen clearly with this verse:

(104) "ثم قست قلوبكم من بعد ذلك فهي كالحجارة أو أشد قسوة"⁹⁶

He says:

(105) "ومن قرأ "أشد قسوة" رفع باضمار هي كأنه قال : أوهي أشد قسوة
و من نصب فهو خفض في الاصل بمعنى الكاف ولكنه على وزن "أفعل"
لا ينصرف للصفة ووزن الفعل ففتح و هو في موضع جر ."⁹⁷

A general view about the book

This book is rightly considered a veritable literary encyclopedia as it contains a good collection of Arabic poetry. It shows the wide knowledge of Ibn Nāqiya about the Arabic language, philology, syntax, interpretation, variant readings, literature, history and poetry.

This book, in my view, is very important to everybody who wants to study the simile of the Qurʾān from any aspect of the subject. It satisfies everyone who studies the simile either from the philological aspect or from the syntactical aspect or from that of the variant readings of the phrases of simile. It also contains a great deal of pre-Islamic poetry and poems by those who were not truly Old Arabic (muwalladīn).

He discussed in the book how the pre-Islamic poets employed this style of simile in their poems, and how the Qurʾān was revealed in the same style and with the same use of the simile as that known among the Arabs. Then he goes on to discuss how the Islamic poets quote from Qurʾānic similes in their poems. In addition, he sometimes refers to the statements of the Prophet Muḥammad and His followers which are spoken in the same style of simile or with the same phrases.

ʿAbd al-Qāhir al-Ġurġānī and his two books
Asrār al-balāġa and Dalāʾil al-ʾIḡāz

ʿAbd Al-Qāhir is considered to be a famous man in the history of Arabic rhetoric. He fixed its basis and established its rules and its principles. But unfortunately most of his evidence is taken from Arabic poems and he only very occasionally supports his explanation with the verses of the Qurʾān.

But in spite of that we have to study his two books for their value and their great importance in Arabic rhetoric.

His book Asrār al-balāġa

He studies in this book the subjects which were later called ʿIlm al-bayān (exposition). It involves the figurative expressions, metaphor, simile, comparison ... etc. He talks about the metaphor and simile in detail. He was the first one to establish the rules of these subjects in any detail.

Although there were many others who came before him and studied these subjects, none of them gave any details of the niceties of the subjects and they did not analyse them as he did. He talks about the metaphor and divides it into two kinds: good metaphor and bad metaphor.⁹⁸ He also talks about the psychological impression of metaphor and how the metaphor creates pleasure for the listener. Then he gives a detailed explanation of the various types of metaphor.⁹⁹

After that he passes to the subject of the simile. The most important thing in his explanation of this subject is that he divides it into simile and comparison. He considers the simile as general and the comparison as particular.¹⁰⁰ He says that each comparison is a simile but not each simile is a comparison. He differentiates between them in that the simile is straightforward and does not need explaining, such as the similarity between a cheek and a rose and between black hair and dark night.

But the comparison is not so direct. It needs some explaining to be understandable, like the comparison of a proof in its clarity and appearance to the sun.¹⁰¹ Then he talks about the compound simile, the basis of this simile being intellectual and extracted from many things which are collected together. For example, with this verse:

(106) "مثل الذين حملوا التوراة ثم لم يحملوها كمثل الحمار يحمل أسفارا."¹⁰²

He says that the basis of the comparison in this verse is an intellectual one, namely exclusion from the benefit of carrying a valuable thing with tiredness and difficulty in carrying it. He says:

(107) "الشبه منتزع من أحوال الحمار وهو أنه يحمل الاسفار التي هي أوعية العلوم"

و مستودع ثمر العقول ثم لا يحس بما فيها و لا يشعر بضمونها ، و لا يفرق بينها وبين سائر الاحمال التي ليست من العلم في شئ و لا من الدلالة عليه بسبيل ، فليس له مما يحمل حظ سوى أنه يثقل عليه و يكد جبينه ، فهو كما ترى مقتضى أمور مجمعة و نتيجة لأشياء ألفت و قرن بعضها الى بعض.¹⁰³

His analysis of the comparison in this verse is quite different from all previous study of the simile. He explains how this verse mentions a special function of the donkey, which is carrying, and a special value of the thing which is carried by him. This special value is a Scriptural one. He talks about this verse in many pages of his book.¹⁰⁴ He talks also about the successive similes which contain many sentences, like this verse:

(108) "انما مثل الحياة الدنيا كما أنزلناه من السماء فاختلط به نبات الارض مما يأكل الناس والانعام حتى اذا أخذت الارض زخرفها وازينت و ظن أهلها أنهم قادرون عليها أتاها أمرنا ليلا و نهارا فجعلناها حصيدا كأن لم تغن بالأمس"¹⁰⁵

He mentions that this verse contains ten sentences but each one connects to another one and it looks like one sentence. The basis of the comparison in this verse is taken from the whole sentence without any separation between the different parts, and if any of the sentences is omitted from its place the meaning of the comparison will break down. He adds that the comparison in this verse does not intend to liken life to water, but to liken the state of life in its beauty, delight and freshness and then what it will be at the end (on the Last Day) to the fresh plant which then withers and becomes frail. He says:

(109) "انك ترى في هذه الآية عشر جمل اذا فصلت. و هي وان كان قد دخل بعضها في بعض حتى كأنها جملة واحدة فان ذلك لا يمنع من أن تكون

صورة الجمل معنا حاصلة تشير اليها واحدة واحدة . ثم أن الشبه منتزع من مجموعها من غير أن يمكن فصل بعضها عن بعض وافراد شطر من شطر حتى أنك لو حذفتم منها جملة واحدة من أي موضع كان اخل ذلك بالمعزى من التشبيه .¹⁰⁶

We see that he considers the simile in this verse to be a comparison because the basis of the simile is an intellectual one and it arises from the connection between more than one sentence, which differs from the clear, ordinary simile. He says:

(110) "ينبغي أن تعلم أن المثل الحقيقي والتشبيه الذي هو الأولى بأن يسمى تعيلا لبعده عن التشبيه الظاهر الصريح تجده لا يحصل لك إلا من جملة من الكلام أو جملتين أو أكثر حتى أن التشبيه كلما كان أوغل في كونه عقليا محضا كانت الحاجة الى الجملة أكثر."¹⁰⁷

He adds that whenever there is distance between the thing being compared and the thing with which the other is compared, the simile will become more wonderful, and more melodious to the mind. He says:

(111) "وهكذا اذا استقرت التشبيهات وجدت التباعد بين الشئين كلما كان أشد كانت الى النفوس أعجب و كانت النفوس لها أطرب و كان مكانها الى أن تحدث الريحية أقرب."¹⁰⁸

This analysis of the compound simile is a new style of studying the simile which al-Ġurġānī discovered.

Then he talks about al-tašbīh al-qarīb and al-tašbīh al-ġarīb and al-tašbīh al-maqlūb and the rules of each. Then he talks about the differences between metaphor and comparison. He talks about exaggeration in the simile. But all his evidence for these subjects is taken from Arabic poems.

His second book Dalā'il al-I'gāz

He wrote this book to show the rhetoric of the Qur'ān. He does not relate the rhetorically inimitable style of the Qur'ān to the meaning of the words or to the comparison between the words of the Qur'ān and the words of the Arabs or to the rhyme of Qur'ānic verses. Nor does he relate the miraculous style of the Qur'ān to the metaphors which it contains (as al-Bāqillānī did) because not all the verses of the Qur'ān contain metaphor as he says. He does not consider the garīb words either. But he considers the adequacy of the meaning of individual words and the composition of sentences (al-naẓm) which help to achieve the desired meaning in their beauty and strength. This would happen with the help of the syntax in its general meaning. He considers that syntax is very important in his theory of naẓm. He says:

(112) "لم يبق إلا أن يكون في النظم والتأليف لأنه ليس من بعد ما أبطنا أن يكون فيه إلا النظم . وإذا ثبت أنه في النظم والتأليف وكنا قد علمنا أن ليس النظم شيئا غير توفحي معاني النحو وأحكامه فيما بين الكلم ."¹⁰⁹

Then he adds:

(113) "أعجزتهم مزايأ ظهرت لهم في نظمه ، وخصائص صادفوها في سياق لفظه ، وبدائع راعتهم من مبادي آيه و مقاطعها ، ومجاري ألفاظها ومواقعها ، وفي مضرب كل مثل ، ومساق كل خبر ، وصورة كل عظة وتنبيه وإعلام ، وتذكير وترغيب وترهيب . . . وبهرهم أنهم تأملوه سورة سورة وعشرا عشرا وآية آية ، فلم يجدوا في الجميع كلمة ينبويها مكانها ولفظة ينكر شأنها . . . بل وجدوا اتساقا بهر العقول وأعجز الجمهور ."¹¹⁰

He gives an example for this explanation in this verse of the Qur'ān:

(114) "وقيل يا أرض ابلعي ما فيك ويا سماء اقلعي وغيص الماء و قضي الامر واستوت على الجوّي و قيل بعدا للقوم الظالمين ."¹¹¹

He sees that the beauty of the words in this verse lies not in the meaning of the words alone but in their construction and connection with other words which give the desired meaning in a beautiful way.

He says:

(115) "فإذا نظرت في هذه الآية تجلّى لك منها الاعجاز وبهرك الذي ترى وتسمع أنك لم تجد ما وجدت من العزة الظاهرة والفضيلة القاهرة الآ لأمر يرجع الى ارتباط هذه الكلم بعضها ببعض وان لم يعرض لها الحسن والشرف الا من حيث لاقت الاولى بالثانية والثالثة بالرابعة وهكذا الى أن تستقرها الى آخرها وان الفضل نتائج ما بينها وحصل من مجموعها".¹¹²
He thinks that the important thing to achieve appreciation of this degree of rhetoric is the listener's sense and his familiarity with the speech of the Arabs.¹¹³

In this book he studies some subjects of rhetoric like figurative expression, metaphor, allusion and simile, in order to emphasise that the beauty of these verses is not due to the lexical meanings or to the content but to the extra meaning in the construction of the phrases which only the perceptive reader sees. As he says:

(116) "ان هذه المعاني التي هي الاستعارة والكناية والتشثيل و سائر ضروب المجاز من بعدها من مقتضيات النظم وعنهما يحدث وبها يكون لأنه لا يتصور أن يدخل شئ منها في الكلم وهي أفراد لم يتوخ فيما بينها حكم من أحكام النحو فلا يتصور أن يكون ههنا فعل أو اسم قد دخلته الاستعارة من دون أن يكون قد الف مع غيره".¹¹⁴
So he mentions these rhetorical subjects only to support his main

subject (the theory of naẓm) which he discovered.

However, we see al-Gurḡānī in this book give valuable comments on what he has seen of Arabic rhetoric but he does not direct study to the rhetoric of the inimitability of the Qurʾān. He

seldom supports his theory with verses from the Qurʾān. He deliberately avoids looking at the Qurʾān as he says:

(117) "لا غنى بالعاقل عن معرفة هذه الامور والوقوف عليها والاحاطة بها ،
وان الجهة التي منها يقف ، والسبب الذي به يعرف استقراء كلام العرب
وتتبع أشعارهم والنظر فيها . " 115

He just wants to facilitate the method of this kind of study firstly by detailed and long exposure to the speech of the Arabs and their poems in a critical spirit. He compares some Arabic poets who mention one subject. So he gives most of his attention to the aspect of Arab literature and to a critical study in order to achieve the understanding of the rhetoric of the supernatural character of the Qurʾān.

Footnotes to Part Three

1. He divides rhetoric into ten parts: I'gāz, tašbīh, Isti'āra, talā'um, fawāṣil, taḡānus, taṣrīf, taḍmīn, mubālaḡa and ḡusn al-bayān, p.70.
2. Rummānī, p.69.
3. Ibidem.
4. Ibidem.
5. Ibid., p.74.
6. Q.9, 39.
7. Rummānī, p.75.
8. Q.14, 18.
9. Rummānī, p.76.
10. Q.7, 176.
11. Rummānī, loc. cit.
12. Q.13, 14.
13. Rummānī, loc. cit.
14. Q.7, 171.
15. Rummānī, loc. cit.
16. Q.54, 20.
17. Rummānī, p.77.
18. Q.55, 37.
19. Rummānī, loc. cit.
20. Q.57, 20.
21. Rummānī, loc. cit.
22. Q.57, 21.
23. Rummānī, loc. cit.
24. Q.62, 5.
25. Q.69, 7.
26. Q.29, 41.
27. Q.55, 24.
28. Q.55, 14.
29. Q.9, 19.
30. Rummānī, p.78.
31. al-Bāqillānī, Muḡammad b. al-Ṭayyib, I'gāz al-Qur'ān, p.5.
32. Ibid., p.35.

33. Ibid., pp.111-112.
34. Ibid., p.107.
35. Ibid., p.113.
36. Ibid., p.154.
37. Ibid., p.243.
38. Ibid., pp.263-264.
39. Ibid., pp.275-276.
40. Ibidem.
41. Ibidem.
42. Ibid., p.284.
43. Ibidem.
44. Ibn Abī 'Awn, pp.2-3.
45. Ibidem.
46. Al-Ġāhiz, Abū 'Utman 'Amr b. Baḥr, al-Haiyawān, Vol. 5, p.25.
47. Ibid., p.28.
48. Ibid., see the index of Vol. 7, p.629.
49. Q.2, 18.
50. Ibid., Vol. 4, p.390.
51. Q.37, 64-65.
52. Ibid., loc. cit., pp.39-40.
53. Q.7, 176.
54. Ibid., Vol. 2, pp.15-17.
55. Ibidem.
56. Al-'Askarī, p.1.
57. Ibidem.
58. Ibid., p.239.
59. Ibid., pp.240-242.
60. Ibid., pp.245-246.
61. See p.50.
62. Q.43, 45.
63. Al-Šarīf al-Raḍī, Talḥīs al-bayān fī mağāzāt al-Qur'ān, p.301.
64. Q.14, 37.
65. Al-Šarīf al-Raḍī, p.184.
66. Ibid., see pp. 178, 184, 213, 246.
67. Q.43, 10.

68. Al-Šarīf al-Raḍī, p.229.
69. Q.37, 49.
70. Al-Kātib, Abū al-Ḥusain Ishāq b. Ibrāhīm b. Sulaimān b. Wahb, al-Burhān fī Wuḡūh al-bayān, p.130.
71. Ibn Rašīq, Vol. 1, p.286.
72. Ibid., p.299.
73. Al-Ḥafāḡī, Abū Muḥammad ʿAbdullāh b. Muḥammad b. Saʿīd b. Sinān al-Ḥalabī, Sirr al-faṣāḡā, p.237.
74. Ibid., p.238.
75. Ibid., p.246.
76. Ibn Nāqiya al-Baḡdādī, al-Ḡumān fī tašbīhāt al-Qurʿān, p.408.
77. Ibid., p.3.
78. Ibid., p.4.
79. Q.3, 11.
80. Ibn Nāqiya, pp.20-21.
81. Ibn Nāqiya, passim, (e.g. pp. 73, 86).
82. Q.18, 30.
83. Ibn Nāqiya, pp.116-117.
84. Ibid., pp.119-120.
85. Q.77, 32-33.
86. Ibn Nāqiya, pp.399-400.
87. Q.2, 74.
88. Ibn Nāqiya, p.10.
89. Q.21, 104.
90. Ibn Nāqiya, p.129 and see al-Ṭabarī, Vol. 17, pp.99-102.
91. Q.24, 35.
92. Ibn Nāqiya, p.143.
93. Q.77, 32-33.
94. Ibn Nāqiya, pp.392-395.
95. Ibid., p.397.
96. Q.2, 74.
97. Ibn Nāqiya, p.6.
98. Al-Ḡurḡānī, Asrār, p.32.
99. Ibid., pp.32-65.
100. Ibid., p.75.

101. Ibid., pp.71-72.
102. Q.62, 5.
103. Al-Ğurğānī, loc. cit., p.81.
104. Ibid., see pp. 80-85.
105. Q.10, 25.
106. Al-Ğurğānī, loc. cit., p.87.
107. Ibidem.
108. Ibid., p.109.
109. Al-Ğurğānī, Dalā'il, p.300, see also p.64.
110. Ibid., p.32.
111. Q.11, 44.
112. Al-Ğurğānī, loc. cit., pp.36-37.
113. Ibid., pp.418-428.
114. Ibid., pp.300-301.
115. Ibid., p.33.

DISCUSSION

After discussing the simile in the Qur^ʾān mainly from its philological and other aspects from the work of men who studied this kind of Qur^ʾānic science, we can now establish certain specific philological characteristics of the simile in the Qur^ʾān which are as follows:

1. The great ability of the Qur^ʾān to choose the exact word, which describes the perfect nature-picture of the simile in a wonderful way. This we find in every simile of the Qur^ʾān. For example, we see how Allāh prefers the word bunyān to the word hāʾit or ḡidār in this verse:

(1) "ان الله يحب الذين يقاتلون في سبيله صفا كأنهم بنيان مرصوص" ¹

The first word suggests the meaning of a strong union and connection, whereas the other two words do not create these associations in the mind.

2. The similes of the Qur^ʾān derive their material from nature, its plants, animals and minerals. An example of a simile taken from plants is: "green crops devoured (by cattle)", "old shrivelled palm-leaf", hollow trunks of palm-trees"; one taken from animals: ass, dog, spider; and one taken from minerals: blocks of wood, carded wool, mountains. The Qur^ʾān does not pay any attention to the value of the thing with which the other is compared. The Qur^ʾān is only concerned with making clear in the mind of the reader the connection between the thing being compared and the thing with which the other is compared.

3. The simile in the Qur^ʾān is not an extra element which is added to the sentence but is an integral part without which the meaning of the

sentence is not complete. The meaning of the sentence depends upon the simile in order to be clear.

4. The Qur^ānic simile describes a picture until it becomes quite clear to the reader, as we see in this verse:

2 "وتكون الجبال كالعهن المنفوش" (2)

The Qur^ān is not satisfied with describing the mountain in the Last Judgement as being like "wool" but it describes it also as "carded" in order to convey more precisely the state of the mountains on that Day.

5. All the similes of the Qur^ān are taken from the life of the Arab in the desert. They are taken from their everyday life, their imagination and their beliefs; they describe their desires and their suffering. So all the similes would be familiar to the Arabs.

6. When Allāh wants to describe the believers and praise them and describe the paradise which they will go to after their lifetime on earth, He describes the thing with which the other is compared as something precious, as when He describes to them what they will see in paradise as being like beautiful girls with wide, lovely eyes.(Q56,22-23). Allāh likens them in beauty to hidden pearls on one occasion and to the jacinth and the coral-stone another time.(Q55,57-58). But in describing the disbelievers Allāh likens them to the lower things of creation, like spiders, donkeys, cattle and dogs.

7. The thing being compared in the simile of the Qur^ān might be one thing but it is likened to two or more things in order to fix the idea in the mind of the reader and to make it perfectly clear. For instance: the description of the perplexity of the hypocrite in the Cow Sūra (v. 17). This perplexity is likened to the perplexity of one who walks at night and

kindles a fire to light his way but suddenly this light goes off and leaves him in complete darkness where he cannot see anything. It is also likened to the perplexity of one who walks under a heavy rainstorm accompanied by darkness, thunder and flashes of lightning. They put their fingers in their ears because of the thunder-claps for fear of death.

The aim of the simile in the Qurʾān

One aim of the simile in the Qurʾān is to arouse emotions in order to evoke desire or fear. Therefore the hypocrites and disbelievers have an ample share of the similes of the Qurʾān. The simile describes their inner life and their psychology very clearly and describes the effect of the Prophet asking them to believe in Allāh and how they replied to this invitation disdainfully and reluctantly.

The Qurʾān's aim in the use of simile is not only for effect, but also for representation and depiction. We see this when Allāh wants to show His ability to bring the Hour of Judgement in the quickest way that can be imagined. He resorts to describing it as a twinkling of the eye, (Q.16,77), and when Allāh describes the weakness of the people on the Day of Resurrection in a hurry to receive their punishment He sees their image in terms of thickly-scattered moths, when he says: "A day wherein mankind will be as thickly-scattered moths." (Q.101,4).

So we see that clarity and directness are the main aims of the simile in the Qurʾān, achieved by using nature-pictures to make less tangible concepts more familiar and clearer. This would happen when

immaterial things, which are not easily understandable, are likened to other material things which are familiar in Arab life and available in their surroundings.

So we see that when Allāh wants to describe spiritual concepts like the Day of Resurrection, angels, paradise or hell He likens them to things which are perceptible through the senses. The desert and what it contains by way of water, plants, animals, and mountains are the only things perceptible through the senses to the Arabs, therefore the Qurʾānic simile is rich in these words.

The best study of the Qurʾānic simile in my view

In fact it is very difficult to choose which kind of study is more intensive and more comprehensive than others in its study of the simile in the Qurʾān, because each type of study specialised in one aspect of the simile in the Qurʾān, explaining these verses as they do the other verses.

The philologists studied the philological meaning of the words in the Qurʾānic simile and how the Arab used these words. They are also interested in explaining that this kind of simile or that one was familiar and very well-known to the Arab, as we have seen in the chapter on philologists.

The commentators differ in their interests in studying each aspect of the Qurʾān. We discussed Ṭabarī's method and how he explains the simile simply, concentrating only on the uninterrupted chain of authorities on which a tradition is based in the verses

containing simile, as he does with all others. Zamahṣarī concentrates on explaining the simile in detail, giving all the various types, as he is considered to be a rhetorical expert more than anything else. Another commentator, like Rāzī, who is a philosopher, concentrates on the philosophic subject-matter in the verses containing simile. The last one we discussed in this group is Abū Ḥayyān, who concentrated on the syntactical aspects of the verses containing simile. So each one concentrates only on one aspect of the Qurʾānic simile, the aspect which he is interested in studying.

In the chapter on the literary and rhetorical works we discussed how these writers were interested in studying the simile as a form of rhetoric, not in relation to the Qurʾānic simile as such (except for those who study the inimitability of the Qurʾān according to its rhetoric). They divide the simile into many sections and define each section, sometimes mentioning a verse of the Qurʾān which is in accordance with their definition without concentrating on the verse itself. Each of these writers (philologists, commentators, rhetorical experts) considers that the type of study which he is interested in is the important thing to study in the Qurʾān, as we have seen in the introduction to their books. Therefore, each work gives us one way of looking at the similes of the Qurʾān, and their efforts should not be discounted because each part of this study is very important in understanding the simile of the Qurʾān as a whole. I think that all these studies together help to give us a more complete idea about the Qurʾānic simile.

We cannot say that the philologists' study is not perfect because it discusses only one aspect of the Qur'ānic simile (Linguistics). This judgement is not right in my view because this group's sphere of interest is Linguistics or linguistics and syntax, not rhetoric or literature.

Nor can we expect any one from the commentators' group to give us a complete study of the Qur'ānic simile in all its aspects, because each of them is interested more in one aspect of the Qur'ān and studies the Qur'ānic simile in the same way as he studies the rest of the verses of the Qur'ān.

However, there is one writer whose book examines almost all aspects of the simile in the Qur'ān. That is Ibn Nāqiya al-Baghdādī in his book al-Ġumān fī tašbīhāt al-Qur'ān .³ He is the first person to devote a book solely to studying all the Qur'ānic similes, bringing together all the studies which preceded his: the philological, syntactical, commentary, literary and rhetorical works, and adding a new study of the Qur'ānic simile which consists of explaining the connection between the similes in the Qur'ān and the way of life of the Arabs.

He is considered to be the first person to study this aspect of the Qur'ānic simile. He tries to relate each simile in the Qur'ān back to its connection with Arab life in the desert and their customs, describing how the Qur'ān takes the thing with which the other is compared from their everyday life.

There is another aspect of his study of the Qur^ʾānic simile, namely his reference to a great deal of poetry. He categorises each poem in accordance with the verse containing simile in the Qur^ʾān. I think he mentions a large number of pre-Islamic poems and late poetry in his book for two reasons:

1. He quotes from a great deal of pre-Islamic poetry to show that the Qur^ʾān was revealed in accordance with the speech of the Arabs and their customs in the use of simile.

2. He mentions a lot of poetry by the late poets (Islamic poetry) to show how the poets were affected by the Qur^ʾānic simile and tried to imitate it. But they did not succeed in reaching the standard of the style of the Qur^ʾānic simile in its perfect nature-picture and the brevity of the phrases, which proves that the style of the Qur^ʾān is inimitable.

I think that this book is very important and useful to everybody who wants to study the simile of the Qur^ʾān from all viewpoints, whether it be philology, syntax, the different readings of some words, commentary or the literary angle. In addition he mentions history, traditions and various stories throughout his book and quotes statements by the Prophet Muḥammad and his followers to support his interpretation of the verses. It satisfies every student's need. From the philological point of view we have seen that the writer explains every difficult word in the verses philologically, and he occasionally mentions statements by philologists like Abū ʿUbayda and Farrāʾ, among many others. He usually mentions the morphology of some words in the verses. He does not neglect syntax in his interpretation. He

frequently mentions the syntactical aspects. As regards rhetoric, he mentions rhetorical material only in the first two pages of his book where he explains the grace of the simile and how this arises from its simplicity. He also mentions the particles of the simile. Only these remarks are considered to be rhetorical.

We can regard this book as mediating between the methods of the commentators, the philologists and the literary experts. The author favours the commentators who interpret the meaning of the simile in a very simple way⁴ without complication of any detail, confining themselves only to mentioning the thing being compared and the thing with which the other is compared and the basis of the comparison.

He follows the philologists in quoting a verse of poetry in order to support his interpretation of a word or a simile in the Qurʾān to show that this word or this kind of simile was familiar to the Arabs. He also mentions the Arabicized words in the Qurʾān and the foreign vocabulary. He follows the literary people in explaining the connection between the Qurʾānic simile and the Arab environment. Although he is the first writer who mentions this aspect of the simile, this kind of study is nowadays considered to be a literary aspect as we have seen in recent studies. The book shows us the writer's profound knowledge of most of the sciences of the Arabic language, like philology, morphology, syntax, commentary, different readings, literature, history, stories and a good collection of Arabic poetry. But the book is not without its shortcomings in my view. The writer digresses and he moves from one subject to another without any reason and sometimes

strays far away from the main subject.

Sometimes he states that he will not digress from the subject and then we see him disobey himself and divert from the main subject.

We see this when he quotes this verse:

(3) "انما مثل الحياة الدنيا كما أنزلناه من السماء" 5

Afterwards he explains the philological aspects of this verse and quotes a great deal of the poetry of simile which is the same kind as this verse, taking up about 17 pages. He says:

(4) "وقد استعملوا من الاستعارة والتشبيه و ضرب المثل بالرياض والنبات ،
ما يخرج بنا ذكره عن قصد السبيل ."
Then he says: "فمن ذلك ما جاء من تشبيه النساء في حسنهن" 6

and then he goes on in another 18 pages to mention other Arabic poetry which has the same simile again.

There are two very long digressions in the book: one of them with the verse:

(5) "والقمر قدرناه منازل حتى عاد كالعرجون القديم" 7
when he mentions the condition of the moon which occurs in 28 mansions.

Then he returns to Arabic poetry which uses the moon as a simile. This explanation takes up pages 184-215 in his book.

Another long digression is when he quotes this verse:

(6) "ذلك مثلهم في التوراة ومثلهم في الانجيل كزرع أخرج شطأ" 8

He mentions the names of plants and how the Arabs use the description of plants and trees to describe people and how they called themselves after the names of plants. This explanation takes up pages 276-300 in his book.

Footnotes to Discussion

1. Q.61, 4.
2. Q.101, 5.
3. See p.160.
4. Ibn Nāqiya Passim.
5. Q.10, 25.
6. Ibn Nāqiya, see pp.58-86.
7. Q.36, 38.
8. Q.48, 29.

APPENDIX

Translations of the Arabic quotes and the Qur'ānic
verses in the thesis in numerical order

Introduction

- (1) The simile has a high rank in Arab speech; it is indicative, in their view, of intelligence and skilfulness. The more beautiful a simile is, the more knowledgeable about poetry the user of that simile would be considered. And, the more able to convey the meaning that user is the more clever he would be considered.
- (2) Makes the meaning clearer and confirms it. This is well agreed upon by all Arabs and non-Arabs, and none of them has dispensed with it.
- (3) It has a magical effect in bringing differing things together to an extent that reduces distances between different things that are as far apart as east and west; it also presents abstract meanings as if they were persons viewed or monuments erected; it makes the dumb speak and brings out eloquence even from the non-Arab; it shows life in the mineral kingdom; And, it presents the opposites, e.g. life and death or fire and water.
- (4) The likeness of those who choose other patrons than Allah is as the likeness of the spider when she taketh unto herself a house, and lo! the frailest of all houses is the spider's house, if they but knew.

(Q29, 41)

- (5) Al-šibh, al-šabah, and al-šabiḥ are al-matal. Two things resemble each other; they are alike, i.e. each resembles the other.
- (6) Al-Matal and Al-Šabah are equivalent in meaning; one says: this is mitluh and mataluh, just as one says: this is šibhuh and šabahuh.

- (7) Stating that one of two things can replace the other either sensorily or intellectually.
- (8) The simile is to state that one of two things replaces the other (using techniques of comparison), (i.e. on the way of likening), whether in actuality they replace each other or not.
- (9) The simile is to attribute a meaning or characteristic of one of two things to the other.
- (10) The Qur'ān has been revealed in seven versions; each of them is sufficient (to get the message across) and aim-satisfying.
- (11) And they will feel remorse within them, when they see the doom.
(Q.10,55)
- (12) Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth. The similitude of His light is as a niche wherein is a lamp. The lamp is in a glass.
(Q.24,35)
- (13) Then We inspired Moses, saying: Smite the sea with thy staff. And it parted, and each part was as a mountain vast.
(Q.26,63)

Part One

- (1) "That it comprises sounds by which all peoples express their desires." "As for the declension and root-meaning (of the Arabic word for language), it is of the form fu^lla from the verb laḡawtu, i.e. I spoke. It was originally luḡwa, as in kura (a ball), qula (a wooden toy) and tuba (a collection)". "In al-Muḥkam the plural is given as luḡāt and luḡūn, and its relative adjective as luḡawī, not laḡawī." Al-Azharī said, "the word luḡa is one of the incomplete words, and was originally luḡwa, derived from (the verb) laḡā meaning to speak. Al-laḡā means a young camel uncounted in blood-wit or the like because of their small size. "The word al-laḡw means speech. You say, 'this is the language they speak'. With reference to birds forms of the word mean singing".
- (2) "The word laḡw has two meanings, one indicating something unconsidered, and the other indicating pronunciation of a thing. As for the first, it refers to young camels unconsidered in blood-wit. The poet al-^ʿAbdī said:
Or a hundred, then their young make a throng and a hundred comprises a huge herd.
There is a verb laḡā, yalḡū, laḡwan, pertaining to unconsidered oaths. The noun al-laḡā also connotes the same. God, may He be blessed and exalted, said, "God will not take you to task for a slip in your oaths", i.e. with something you do not confirm in your hearts. The word laḡā comes in the Prophetic Tradition, "Anyone saying (as much as) 'hush' at the Friday prayer has spoken (vanities)". The second meaning is that of pronouncing something. The derivation of the word luḡa is said to come from this meaning, to pronounce (lahiga)".
- (3) Ibn al-Ḥāḡib said in his Muḥṭasar, "language comprises any sound given a meaning". Al-Asnawī said in his Commentary on Minḥāḡ al-Uṣūl, "Speech is a term indicating sounds carrying meaning".

- (4) "This is a matter requiring a good deal of thought. Most historians of language consider, however, that language originated in consensus and agreement, rather than in revelation and inspiration".
- (5) "The Arabic language was inspired. This is shown by the words of God, may His praise be glorious, "and He taught Ādam all the names". Ibn ʿAbbās used to say, "He taught him all the names, that is the names whereby people of all nations make things understandable, like a riding beast, earth, a plain, a mountain, a camel, a donkey, and so on".
- (6) The consensus among scholars to resort to the nation's language for sorting out their differences and agreements, as well as resorting to their poetic heritage. Had language been established by an arbitrary convention this would not have been the case.
- (7) The Arabs derive words from words, e.g. ḡinn is derived from ḡtinān. "ḡ" and "n" always indicate covering, e.g. the Arabs armour. ḡunna. Aḡannahu al-lail, and ḡanīn, i.e. embryo. Also ins is from zuhūr (appearance): ānastuhu meaning absartuhu (I saw him). This is how the Arabs speak.
- (8) This is also based on the above, namely that language is inspiration. He who has inspired us with the knowledge that ḡtinān means al-sitr also inspired us with the knowledge that ḡinn is derived from it. We cannot invent new words, nor can we say other than what they said. We cannot engage in analogical derivations they have not done because in this is the corruption of language and the negation of its truths.
- (9) God, may He be praised, taught Ādam the names of all creatures in all languages which Ādam and his children spoke: Arabic, Persian, Syriac, Hebrew, Greek, etc. Then when Adam's children scattered in the earth, each of them stuck with one of these languages which then prevailed over all others (distancing him from them). Knowledge of this faded with time.

- (10) As if two or three or more scholars would meet desiring to explain and clarify matters known. They would give each of these a description and a name to signify it and distinguish it from others.
- (11) This is not decisive evidence as it is possible to interpret it as giving Ādam the authority (to name the animals). This power is unquestionably from God, may He be praised, therefore, if this is possible, and not improbable, then the alternative cannot be used as an argument.
- (12) Others believe that the origin of all languages is in natural sounds, such as the wailing of wind, the rumbling of thunder, the trickling of water, the braying of the donkey, the crowing of the crow, the neighing of the horse, the whinnying of the deer and such things from which languages later developed. This, to me, is an accepted view and a tenable opinion.
- (13) And, a fire, as it were the end of a (tiny thin long) stick, the light of which is raised with night by the blows of the strong (winter) wind.
- (14) Al-šibh, al-šabah, and al-šabiḥ al-matal. Two things resemble each other: they are alike, i.e. each resembles the other. I likened it to him, and I likened him to it. Šabbaha: equating between one thing and another.
- (15) In language, resemblance, similarity and likeness are equivalent; mitl and matal are respectively equivalent to šibh and šabah.
- (16) (One uses the word) šabbaha (which means he likened, to describe the action of somebody) if he equated one thing with another (in some way). One says: ašbaḥtu Mr. X, and šābaḥtuh (to mean we resembled each other). One says: the two things tašābaha, and ištābahā to mean that they resemble each other. And, in the Qurʾān the verse states that "and it is given to them in resemblance (mutašābihan)". However, resemblance here is not in the sense of confusion but in being equated (in some way or another).

- (17) Al-šabah: a very prickly tree which looks like the samura.
Al-mušabbah: yellowish form of nissiyy. Al-šabah: a grain taken for medicine.
Al-šabbān: a kind of plant, like al-tumām, called al-šabbān.
- (18) Al-šibh, and al-šabah: brass which becomes yellow when it is dyed (polished).
- (19) Al-šabah: precious metal which resembles gold.
- (20) When it has been treated this way, it resembled gold in colour.
- (21) Al-Matal and Al-Šabah are equivalent in meaning; one says: this is mitluh and mataluh, just as one says: this is šibhuh and šabahuh, (to mean that one thing is similar to, and a similitude of, another). And, one says: tamattala bihi, just as one says: tašabbaha bihi, (to mean that one has endeavoured to look similar to another). And, mattala one thing with another means he equated (in some way) one thing with another, or considered them to be equal in some way or another.
- (22) The word mitl is an equating word.
- (23) Al-ḥaqīqa comes from ḥagga, i.e. becomes an obligation. Its derivation is from "crafted" and "precision." In reference to cloth weaving, it means well knit. Al-ḥaqīqa is literal speech in its proper place without any kind of similes or figurative language.
- (24) It is derived from qāza, yaḡūzu the past of which is qāza, i.e. pass by. This is its origin. Yaḡūzu also means permissible, unobstructed, unprevented.
- (25) This means that literal speech is straightforward and unobjectionable. It may be possible to use other than literal speech if it expresses similar meaning, but this would have similes and figurative usages not present in the first.

- (26) Al-ḥaqīqa (the truth) is what is established in usage as it was originated in language. Al-maḡāz is the opposite of that.
- (27) Al-ḥaqīqa is the opposite of al-maḡāz. Ḥaqqaqahu taḥqīqan, i.e. endorsed it. Al-muḥaqqaq speech is that which is serious.
- (28) Ḡāwaza fī Kalāmihī means speaking figuratively, and figurative speech is not (literal) truth.
- (29) Al-ḥaqīqa constitutes most of speech and most of the Qurʾānic verses and Arab poetry.
- (30) Know that most of language is maḡāz (figurative) not ḥaqīqa (literal). The same is true of most verbs, e.g. summer has come, and winter is defeated.
- (31) This language is mostly maḡāz, and rarely is it ḥaqīqa.
- (32) Language contains ḥaqīqa and maḡāz.
- (33) There is no maḡāz in Arabic.
- (34) He who denies al-maḡāz in Arabic denies a necessity and spoils the beauty of the Arabs' language. They say "the shoulder of the road" although the road has no shoulder, and "the wing of travel" although travel has no wing. These are all maḡāzāt.
- (35) This is like saying somebody's gift is muznun wākif, which is a simile, meaning his generosity is abundant. This is similar to God, glory to Him, saying "sanasimuhu ʿala al-ḥurtūm", which is a metaphor.
- (36) Al-maḡāz is used for three meanings: elaboration, emphasis, and likeness. Al-ḥaqīqa occurs in the absence of these.

- (37) As for classifying simile under al-mağāz this is because the two likes are approximately and by convention alike, not literally.
- (38) Overt simile does not change the use of words. In saying, for example, Zaid is like a lion, and this news is known to everybody like the sun, one does not change the meaning of any word. If this were not the case then every tašbīh in the world would be a mağāz. This is impossible because tašbīh is one of the meanings (in language) and has particles which indicate it. If the object of likeness is overtly stated speech becomes haqīqa, as is the case in most speech.
- (39) Al-muḥaqqiqūn say that tašbīh is a kind of haqīqa. Al-Zingānī said in Al-Mi'yār: altašbīh is not a mağāz because it is one of the meanings (of language) and has words indicating it. It does not change the meaning of words from their objects, but it prepares the ground for isti'āra and tamṭīl because it is like a base to them and they are like branches to it. According to the grammarians, what falls of it into the sphere of mağāz is what is regarded as isti'āra (i.e. metaphor).
- (40) The Ṣaiḥ ʿIzz al-Dīn took a middle position: if it were with a letter then it is haqīqa, but with its omission then it is mağāz, as omission occurs in al-mağāz.
- (41) Poetry is the register of the Arabs. In it they recorded their genealogy and recounted their achievements and from it is learnt the (Arabic) language. It is their reference in understanding the Qurʾān, the sayings of the Prophet, prayer and peace upon him, and the sayings of his followers and their followers.
- (42) Al-Aṣmaʿī never interpreted any poetry if it reflected anything in the Qurʾān.

- (43) He did not speak about ʿasafat and aʿsafat because the Qurʾān has "riḥun ʿāsif." He did not speak about God resurrecting the dead, nor about saḥatahu and aḥatahu because some read "fayushitkum" , nor about salaka al-tarīq and aslakahu because the Qurʾān has "mā salakkum fī saqar," nor about ḥalada ila al- ardi and aḥlada, nor about kanantu al-ḥadīṭ and aknantuhu because the revealed verse has "baidun maknūn" and "wamā takinnū sudūruhum."
- (44) He had so much scruple that he never interpreted anything from the Qurʾān, or even from the ordinary language that had an equivalent or derivation in the Qurʾān. This applied also to the Ḥadīṭ (the Prophet's speech) by way of caution (i.e. showing respect for the Prophet).
- (45) The Arabs in the Ġāhiliyya lived according to the heritage inherited from their fathers regarding their languages, culture, religious practices and sacrifices. But the advent of Islam altered many states, changed religions, stopped practices, and transported language expressions with some additions of new rules and conditions so that what was last overlaid what came first, e.g. Islam mentions al-muʾmin, al-muslim, akāfir, and al-munāfiq (the believer, the Moslem, the heretic, and the hypocrite).
- (46) The Arabs derived al-muʾmin from amān and īmān (safety and belief), which is believing. To this the ṣarīʿa added conditions and descriptions according to which the muʾmin qualified as muʾmin. They also knew that kufr means only: to cover, to hide.
- (47) As the likeness of vegetation after rain, whereof the growth is pleasing to the husbandman.
- (Q57, 20)
- (48) The sower of the land is called kāfir because when he sows the seeds in the earth he covers them.

- (49) The origin of kufr is the covering of a thing. Al-kāfir is so called because heresy (kufr) has covered his heart. The Arabs call the sower kāfir because he covers the sown seeds with the tilled earth.
- (50) God, great be His praise, said "Upon us (resteth) the putting together thereof and the reading thereof" meaning collecting and reading it (the Qurʾān). He further said "And when We read it, follow thou the reading" meaning if We formed something of it and gave it to you, then take it, embrace it, and do as it says.
- (51) O ye who believe! Render not vain your almsgiving by reproach and injury, like him who spendeth his wealth only to be seen of men and believeth not in Allah and the Last Day. His likeness is as the likeness of a rock whereon is dust of earth, a rainstorm smiteth it, leaving it smooth and bare. And the likeness of those who spend their wealth in search of Allah's pleasure, and for the strengthening of their souls, is as the likeness of a garden on a height ...
- (Q2, 264-265)
- (52) Al-safwān is plural, the singular of which is safwānah, al-ṣafāt. Al-ṣafā, in the plural, is smooth stones. Ṣaldan, and sald (of earth and heads): that which has no growth. Birubwatin, rubwa: a rise in the land above the wādī.
- (53) Would any of you like to have a garden of Palm -trees and vines, with rivers flowing underneath it, with all kinds of fruit for him therein; and old age hath stricken him and he hath feeble off-spring; and a fiery whirlwind striketh it and it is (all) consumed by fire.
- (Q2, 266)
- (54) Al-iṣṣār: wind that excites clouds. It is said also, that which has fire in it. Al-Zaḡḡāḡ said: it is the wind which starts from the earth like a column towards the sky.

(55) Al-i'sār: violent wind which starts in the earth and rises like a fiery column towards the sky.

(56) Such is their likeness in the Torah and their likeness in the Gospel - like as sown corn that sendeth forth its shoot and strengtheneth it and riseth firm upon its stalk, delighting the sowers - that He may enrage the disbelievers with (the sight of) them.

(Q48, 29)

(57) Ahrağa şata'ahu: produced offspring. . Of plants, ašta' a, and mušti' mean producing plantlets. āzarahu, sāwāhu, i.e. became like the parent (plant). Istağlaz, galuza: became thick. Istawa 'ala sūqihi: straightened on its stems. Al-sāq is also the trunk of a tree.

(58) Abū ^cUbaida was the first to speak of mağāz, by which he did not mean the converse of hağīga but that which expresses the meaning of verse.

(59) The Qur'^{ān} was revealed in a clear Arabic tongue. Therefore, neither the fathers who heard its revelation nor those who came after them needed to inquire about its meaning because they spoke the same Arabic tongue. Their knowledge of it enabled them to understand it without needing to ask about its meanings, nor about its grammar, or the gist of it. The Qur'^{ān} has what the Arabic language has of rare words, grammar, and inflection.

(60) Or like a rainstorm from the sky, wherein is darkness, thunder and the flash of lightning. They thrust their fingers in their ears by reason of the thunder-claps, for fear of death.

(Q2, 19)

(61) Savyib: rain, similar to sayyid. It is from šāba, yašūbu, i.e. to make rain, cf. ^cAlqama b. ^cAbda: ... sābat ... tašūbu.

(62) Abū⁶ Ubaida was asked in the court of al-Faḍl b. al-Rabī⁶ about His saying, glory to Him, its crop is like the heads of devils, since threat and warning are done with what is known while this (image) is unknown. Abū⁶ Ubaida answered that God, glory to Him, spoke to the Arabs the way they spoke themselves, and he quoted Imru'u al-Qays describing a threat of an unknown beast having teeth like the fangs of a qūl. They all admired his answer. He continued: when I returned to Baṣra I wrote this book which I called Al-maḡāz.

(63) It is an allusion and simile.

(64) Drinking even as the camel drinketh.

(Q56, 55)

(65) Al-hīm, the singular ahyam (of sand and cattle): their thirst is never quenched no matter how much they drink.

(66) Allah hath sealed their hearing and their hearts, and on their eyes there is a covering.

(Q2, 7)

(67) The Accusative has terminated. As predicate, the word becomes Nominative: gaṣāwatun, as if the comparison stated: (upon) their eyes (is) a covering.

(68) And if a wave enshroudeth them like awnings, they cry unto Allah, making their faith pure for Him only.

(Q31, 32)

(69) The singular is zilla, from the intensity of the blackness of abundant and massive water.

(70) Of them is (a kind) that goeth upon its belly.

(Q24, 45)

(71) This is a simile because walking is not done with the belly but with feet. Mixing between what has feet and what has not is permissible in a similar way to saying "I ate bread and milk". One does not say "I ate milk" but "I ate bread".

(72) And Allah it is who sendeth the winds and they raise a cloud; then We lead it unto a dead land and revive therewith the earth after its death. Such is the Resurrection.

(Q35, 9)

(73) Fatutir, i.e. collects, brings and produces. The Arabs may replace fasuqnāhu (we drove it) with fanasuquhu (we shall drive it), along the lines of replacing fa'alna for naf'alu, as the poet has said: "... tārū ... dafanū" in place of yaṭirū and yadfinū. Al-nuṣūr: the infinitive of al-nāṣir. The poet al-Aṣa said: ... al-nāṣir.

(74) Do you not see that the language of the Tamīmiyyīn in leaving mā without grammatical regimen may be imitated as that of the Hiḡāziyyīn. This is because each of the two peoples has their own standards of usage which may be imitated. You cannot refute either of these two languages with the other because neither has any privileges over the other. Have you not heard the saying of the Prophet, prayer and peace be upon him, that "the Qur'ān was revealed to me in seven versions, all of which are adequate and sufficient".

(75) And of what has had different interpretations which imāms interpreted in their own languages resulting in two or more meanings he said, wa qadaw'ala hardin qadirin was interpreted in three ways: some said "purposefully", some said "preventively", and others said "angrily and spitefully".

- (76) From amongst the language experts, the first to write about this, i.e. about the meanings of Qurʾān, was Abū ʿUbayda Maʿmar Ibn-al-Muṭanna followed by Quṭrub b. -al-Mustanīr, then al-Aḥfaṣ. And from amongst the Kūfīyīn (i.e. the people of al-Kūfa) was al-Kisāʾī followed by al-Farrāʾ.
- (77) The reason behind writing al-Farrāʾ's book about the meanings (of Qurʾān) was that ʿUmar Ibn Bukair was a friend of his and was accompanying (as an advisor) al-Ḥasan Ibn Sahl. So, he (ʿUmar Ibn-Bukair) wrote to al-Farrāʾ saying: Sometimes Amīr (prince) al-Ḥasan Ibn Sahl asks me about something in the Qurʾān and I might not find a readily available answer. So, (it will be highly appreciated) if you can compile or write a book for me to which I can refer. Accordingly, al-Farrāʾ asked his friends to gather so that he might dictate them a book about the (meanings) of Qurʾān.
- (78) The likeness of those who disbelieve (in relation to the messenger) is as the likeness of one who calleth unto that which heareth naught except a shout and cry.

(Q2, 171)

- (79) He attributed the similitude to the unbelievers, whom he likened to the shepherd, not to the sheep. The meaning, and God knows best, is that the unbelievers are like the animals whose understanding of what the shepherd tells them does not go beyond (hearing) his voice. They would not understand whether he bids them feed or drink. This is how the unbelievers react to the Qurʾān and to the Prophet's warning. Al-taṣbīḥ is conjoined to the shepherd, but the reference is to the herd, on the pattern of "he fears you hawfa al- asad "like the fright of the lion", meaning as he fears a lion, since it is the lion which is known to be frightening.
- (80) As they were frightened asses, fleeing from a lion?
- (Q74, 50-51)
- (81) Al-Qaswara is said to be the hunters. Al-Kalbiyy said, it is the lion.

- (82) Such is their likeness in the Torah and their likeness in the Gospel - like as sown corn that sendeth forth its shoot and strengtheneth it and riseth firm upon its stalk.

(Q.48, 29)

- (83) They are exemplified in the Bible as well as in the Qur^ʾān, and, it is said, also in the old and new Testaments. They are like plants producing ṣatʾāhu and ṣatʾuhū (plantlets): like wheat ears each grain of which produces ten, eight, and seven (of itself) the one strengthens the other. Hence His saying āzarahu, meaning helped and strengthened him. ʾIstaḡlaḏa: strengthened. A single grain would not rise on its stalk. This is a proverb God, glory and praise to Him, mentioned to the prophet, prayer and peace upon him, who started out alone then He strengthened him with followers as He strengthened the grain with what grows from it.

- (84) Or like a rainstorm from the sky, wherein is darkness, thunder and the flash of lightning.

(Q.2, 19)

- (85) He likened darkness to their infidelity: the lightning, in the light of which they walk trusting to faith, and thunder to the frightening threat mentioned in the Qur^ʾān.

- (86) Lo! the likeness of Jesus with Allah is as the likeness of Adam.

(Q.3, 59)

- (87) That is, he has no father and no mother. He is, therefore, more wondrous than Jesus. Then He said ḥalagahu (created him), but this does not relate adjectivally to Ādam, as relations exist between indefinite nouns only. He created him from earth. The example is related in order to expand upon the similitude of Ādam. The sentences are independent.

- (88) The likeness of those who are entrusted with the Law of Moses, yet apply it not, is as the likeness of the ass carrying books.

(Q.62, 5)

- (89) Al-asfār: books of religious knowledge. He carries them not knowing their contents. Yahmul (to carry) may be related to ass, making the sentence similar in meaning to saying: like an ass carrying books. This is because what has "al" may be related adjectivally like saying: I shall not pass except bi al-raḡul yaqūlu ḡalik (by the man saying that). This is equivalent to saying: bi al-ladī yaqūlu ḡalik (by the one who says that).
- (90) Their likeness is as the likeness of one who kindleth fire.
(Q2, 17)
- (91) The similitude is quoted in comparing the action not the men as such, this being a similitude of falseness. He said: they are like one who lights a fire. He did not say those who light a fire. Had the simile referred to the men it would have been in the plural, like saying: "(they are) like bolstered wood", referring to their values and bodies; also like saying: "(they are) like empty palm trees", using the plural because he meant the men.
- (92) He created man of clay like the potters.
(Q.55, 14)
- (93) Al-salsāl is mud mixed with sand making it porous, like earthenware. Salla and salsal similar to sarra and sarsara, i.e. the squeaking of a door. The Arabs repeat al-lām in the geminate forms, e.g. they say karkartu al-raḡula instead of karartuhu (passed by him), and kabkabtuhu instead of kababtuhu.
- (94) Al-salsāl: unglazed mud. All dry mud and earthenware is said to salla, salīlan.
- (95) Al-Aḥfaṣ said that every thing that gives sound is salsāl, except mud. Ibn Abbās interprets the word salsāl as al-sāl, i.e. the water that falls on the earth causing it to crack and as it (the water) dries, the earth has a sound; [if, for example, you rub some dry sand, it will sound]. This is the salsāl.

- (96) There serve them youths of everlasting youth, whom, when thou seest, thou wouldst take for scattered pearls.

(Q.76, 19)

- (97) Muhalladūn: beautified and decorated, also said is mugarratūn (i.e. wearing earrings):

Muhalladūn: of permanent youth, never growing old. This is the more probable meaning, as the Arabs call the mature man with permanent black hair muhallad. It is also used of the man who has grown all his teeth, as well as of youths who have permanent teeth.

- (98) The similitude of His light is as a niche wherein is a lamp. The lamp is in a glass. The glass is as it were a shining star.

(Q.24, 35)

- (99) Durri² and durriyy, with and without hamz, is from dara²a of planets when they fall like the stones with which the devil is stoned. In the tafsīr, however, it is one of the planets Mercury, Venus, Jupiter, Saturn, or Mars. The Arabs may call the larger planets whose name they do not know al-darāriyy, without hamz.

- (100) And thereon ye will drink of boiling water, drinking even as the camel drinketh.

(Q.56, 54-55)

- (101) Al-hīm are the camels afflicted with a disease making their thirst unquenchable. The singular is ahyam and the feminine haimā². Some Arabs say hā²im and the feminine hā²ima, the plural being hīm. This is similar to ā²it and ī²it, also hā²il hīl. The "u" was left out in hīm so that the "ī" does not become "ū".

- (102) The day when they came forth from the graves in haste, as racing to a goal.

(Q.70, 43)

- (103) Al-A^cmaš and Āšim have read: To našb they hurry towards. In this the word našb means something erected. However, Zaid bn Tābit has read it like this: To nušub they hurry up. In this case nušub will mean gods, the gods they worshipped instead of Allāh. Both are correct and the plural form is 'anšāb'.
- (104) Comparison is so common; it is an endless chapter.
- (105) It will not be an exaggeration to say that it (comparison) is the most frequent device in their speech.
- (106) Arabs use comparison in four different ways. They have the exaggerated comparison, the correct comparison, the convergent comparison and the divergent comparison. The last is not easily understandable and it might need interpretation. This is the least polished.
- (107) The glass is as it were a shining star.
(Q.24, 35)
- (108) Like unto hidden pearls.
(Q.56, 23)
- (109) Al-maknūn means the well-guarded; one says kanantu something to mean that he has securely maintained it. However, to say aknantu something will mean that you have hidden it. An example of the latter is in the verse: "Or, in your hearts, you have hidden (aknantum) something".
- (110) Its crop is as it were the heads of devils.
(Q.37, 65)
- (111) One of the ignorant heretics has objected to this verse; it likens the absent to the present. We have never seen satans' heads (the word by word translation of ru³us al-šayātīn), he argues. Accordingly, how can we use them in such a comparison.

- (112) However, about those who object, Allāh (mighty and sublime be He) said: "Nay, but they denied that, the knowledge whereof they could not compass, and whereof the interpretation (in events) has not yet come unto them".
- (113) One interpretation is that, there is an ugly looking kind of tree called 'Al-astan' has a fruit called ru'ūs al-šayātīn . This kind of tree is the one that al-Nābīga refers to in his saying: "its (nice) black lower parts do not harmoniously fit in with 'Al-astan'".
- (114) It is of more immediate appeal; Allāh has drawn, in the hearts of people, a disgusting picture of satans and this is more eloquent than concrete view. Then, He (Allāh) likened the tree to what is disgusting to everybody.
- (115) Scholars of language have asserted that every rebel, whether he is a human-being or jinn, is called šayṭān , and that when we say tašayṭan we will mean that he has sinned and been wicked. An example of this is in the verse "devils of humankind and jinn". Another example is that of Al-rāgiz when he says: I have seen her swallowing a snake; one satan has married another.
- (116) The likeness of those who are entrusted with the Law of Moses, yet apply it not, is as the likeness of the ass carrying books.
- (Q62, 5)
- (117) This verse: "The likeness of those who are entrusted with the Law of Moses, yet apply it not, is as the likeness of the ass carrying books" explains clearly how they have feigned blindness to see the truth of Torah and how they have not obeyed its orders and gone beyond its limits, to the extent that they were just like a donkey carrying books about the content of which he knows nothing.
- (118) Poetry writers who know no more about good poetry than camels. It is a pity that a camel will never care what he carries, nor will he worry at what he carries.

(119) From among the wonderful similes, from among the correct similes, the admired, the good, the extremely exaggerating.

(120) And know that comparison has limits; things can be similar in some aspects, but differ in others. However, a comparison is understood in its context. If one likens face to sun, it will mean that they are similar in brightness and elegance, not in being able to burn or in size.

(121) (Pure) as they were hidden eggs (of the ostrich).
(Q37, 49)

(122) And Arabs liken women to an ostrich egg to mean they are similar in purity and beauty of colour. An example of this is found in this verse of poetry by al-Rā^cī: "in her clothes she looks as if she were a white ostrich making a shield of her feathers around her body to protect herself from cold."

(123) And Arabs liken a woman to sun, moon, branch, deer, wild cow, white cloud, pearl and egg. In each of these cases a particular aspect is meant.

(124) And thou seest the hills thou deemest solid flying with the flight of clouds.
(Q27, 88)

(125) Because of her elegant easy moving (passing). Al-A^ʿṣa says in this verse of poetry: In her walking from her neighbour's house to hers, she looks as if she were flying with the flight of clouds; no delay, no rush.

(126) The greatness of Qur^ʾān can only be understood by those who have the deep insight, broad knowledge and understanding of Arabs' ways of structuring their speech.

(127) Lo! it throweth up sparks like the castles, (or) as it might be camels of bright yellow hue.
(Q77, 32-33)

- (128) Who reads this as al-qasr will mean hall of the well which Arabs living in desert build. But who reads it as al-qasir will mean the date-palm trunks, i.e. the sparks are likened to the date-palm trunks in amount, and to the black camels in colour; Arabs call the black camels sufran as in this verse of poetry: From those I get my horse and my mount; the young are yellow like raisins. This means that they are black but they were called sufran because their black colour has a trace of yellow. This is similar to calling the white deer adm because their whiteness has a trace of darkness.
- (129) Regarding figure of speech, misinterpretation is so common and interpreters have gone in different directions using different approaches in their interpretations.
- (130) In Torah it is stated that "Allāh (glorified and exalted be He) has blessed and purified the seventh day as on that day He had rest after he had completed his creation". Essentially, to have a rest will imply that you have undergone something which caused you to get tired and because of that you have a rest. However, this can be expanded; al-istirāḥa which literally means having a rest, might also include being free of duty after you have been involved in it.
- (131) The likeness of those who disbelieve (in relation to the messenger) is as the likeness of one who calleth unto that which heareth naught except a shout and cry.
- (Q2, 171)
- (132) Some of the language scholars conceived the verse: "The likeness of those who disbelieve (in relation to the messenger) is as the likeness of one who calleth unto that which heareth naught except a shout and cry" as an inversion. Literally, the unbelievers in this verse are likened to the shepherd. But what is meant is to liken the unbelievers to the sheep shouted at by the shepherd.

- (133) For whoso ascribeth partners unto Allah, it is as if he had fallen from the sky.

(Q.22, 31)

- (134) This is a simile given by Allāh regarding those who do not believe in Him to show how far from guidance they are and how great is their entire loss.

- (135) One says that one thing is mitlu another and it is mataluhu just as saying one thing is šibhu another and it is šabahuhu. In both cases what is meant is that one thing is similar to another and is its similitude. However, matal and mitāl might mean the appearance and description of something ... When one says mattaltu something to you, what is meant will be that I have described that thing to you.

- (136) Its crop is as it were the heads of devils.

(Q.37, 65)

- (137) Al-Šayātīn are ugly snakes with light weight bodies ... In this verse of poetry Al-rāʾiz says: "A head-covered woman (Ageer) who swears whenever I do, she looks as if she were šaytān of al-ḥamāt, I imagine."

Al-ḥamāt is a kind of tree. When Arabs look at an ugly scene they say it looks like šaytān of al-ḥamāt to mean the snake that hides in this kind of tree.

- (138) And (they) follow that which the devils falsely related against ...

(Q.2, 102)

- (139) The devils did not bring it down. (Q.26, 210)

- (140) If something is ugly it is likened to al-šayātīn, e.g. one says that it looks as if it were the face of šaytān or the head of šaytān. Of course, šaytān cannot be seen but it is known to be the most ugly thing one would imagine, and if it were to be seen he would have looked extremely ugly.

(141) See n. 47 in this part.

(142) By the word al-kuffār he means the farmers whose hiding of seeds when they sow them in soil is similar to the unbelievers' hiding of the truth or of the favours of Allāh (mighty and sublime be He).

(143) Their works are as ashes which the wind bloweth hard upon a stormy day.

(Q14, 18)

(144) He meant a day the wind of which is so stormy. However, the word wind was omitted from the last part of this verse because it was mentioned in the first part, and so it was understood to be meant.

(145) Arabs use a word in place of another. This happens if one word is a cause of, contiguous to, or similar to another. An example of this is to call the plant naw because the latter is a cause of the former as in Ruba's saying "And the anwa for which clouds are provision (i.e. provide with water) have become dry" by which he means that herbs have become dry.

Also rain is called sky because it falls down from the sky as in this saying: "we have been walking in sky until we got here", to mean that we have been coming while it was raining. This also can be seen in this verse of poetry: "When sky falls on some people's fields we pasture it even if they were angry", which means when rain falls ...

They also say that earth has smiled when the plant grows out of it. This is because the appearing of the plant out from earth is as nice as the appearing of the beautiful front-teeth which appear when somebody opens his mouth with a laugh. Also, the buds of date-palms when they come out are called the buds of laughing because they look like the nice-looking front-teeth in their whiteness. Also, one says: I have got the waterskin sweat from somebody, to mean that he caused me a lot of trouble and distress.

The origin of this is that when one carries a waterskin he gets tired and his body gives off sweat and particularly through the forehead. Because of that, the waterskin sweat is used whenever one wants to express being so tired or distressed; people say: we have got the forehead sweat from Mr. X.

- (146) If you ask somebody who objects to describing a wall he has seen and which was about to collapse, he will say nothing but it was so close to collapsing, or it was very near to collapsing, or it was at the edge of collapsing. Whatever he says, he has made the wall a subject, and I do not think that he can express such meaning without such words in any of the (non-Arabs') languages. Also, Arabs say: "In the fields of Mr. X there are trees which are shouting", to mean that the trees are so tall that their being tall is notable to whoever looks at these trees. The idea behind this comparison is that the trees make themselves visible just as the shouting person makes himself audible by shouting.
- (147) The Qur'ān has come in Arabic; its words, meanings, styles of succinct phrasing, and ways of elongation in wording. These are used to stress something, to allude to some meaning with the aim of making it more understandable, and to exemplify things which are less graspable. If the Qur'ān was so bare as to be equally understandable by both the ignorant and the knowledgeable, no body would have been preferred over the others, there would have been no trial, and skilfulness would have vanished. The deep-under-surface ideas are those which need skilfulness and competence to discern them. But the easily discerned ideas associate with incompetence and laziness.
- (148) Those who object to the use of maḡāz in the Qur'ān have asserted that Qur'ān has made untrue statements; the wall never wants and the community is never shattered as stated in the verse: "How many a community . . . We (Allāh) have shattered". Such objection is the strongest evidence for ignorance, bad insight, and inability to

understand in those who have made it. If using mağāz is making untrue statements, and if associating an action with a non-animal is invalid, then all our speech is invalid. We say: herbs grow, the tree gets tall, the flower blooms, the mountain stands up, and the price went down. We also say: this action was taken by you. In effect, the action has not occurred; it is you who have caused it to occur. And the verse states that "as the matter intends (literal translation)", but the matter does not intend; it is someone who intends to do it. In another verse it is stated that "their commerce did not prosper (make profit)", but commerce does not make profit; profit is made from it. Still another verse states that "and they came with false blood on his shirt", but the blood was not false; it was used as an evidence to make false statements.

- (149) Arabs have in their speech the figurative expressions which are ways of speaking. They have metaphor, simile, inversion, postponing, preceding, omission, repetition, concealing, declaring, insinuation, explicit mentioning, implicit mentioning, addressing the individual in the way of addressing the group, addressing the group in the way of addressing the individual, addressing the individual in the way of addressing the couple, giving the general to mean the special, and giving the special to mean the general.
- (150) With all this, the Qurʾān was revealed. Accordingly, no translator can translate it (with all the connotations of its verses) to any language as has been done in translating the Bible from its native language to Greek and Ethiopic, and in translating the Torah and Al-Zabūr and all Allāh's holy Books to Arabic. This is because all the non-Arab languages are not as rich in figurative expressions as Arabic.

- (151) To make things easy, he gave orders to let every people read (the Qurʾān) in their own accent and in the way they were used to. For example, al-Hudalī (anybody from the tribe called Hudal) pronounces the word hatta (which means until) as ʿatta because it is easy for him to pronounce it this way. And al-Asadī (anybody from the tribe called Asad) pronounces the words tiʿilmūn and tiʿlam and tiswaddu wuḡūh, and alam iʿhad ilaykum. And, al-Tamīmī (anybody from the tribe called Tamīm) pronounces al-hamza, but al-Quraṣī (anybody from the tribe called Quraṣ) skips over it. One of another tribe might read the words qīl and qīd (which respectively mean 'was said' and 'was caused to vanish') by stressing the vowel al-kaṣr, and reads "our goods was back (muddat) to us" by stressing the two vowels al-kaṣr and al-ḍamma. Also, by somebody else, the expression "why do not you trust us (mālaka lā taʾmanna)" might be read by suggesting the vowel 'u' while carefully doubling the 'n' sound. However, these are not easy to every tongue.
- (152) If every group (tribe) was to give up the language they got used to throughout their life, they would have found that very difficult and a lot of problems would have been faced. And, even if this were to be achieved, it would have needed a lot of physical practice and giving up a lot of habits. Because of this, Allāh meant to make things easy for people by giving them the opportunity to choose both between languages and between pronunciations.
- (153) Every thing has an opposite which explains it; white is the opposite of black, death is the opposite of life, and day is the opposite of night.
- (154) Ibn Sida said that al-ḍidd and al-ḍadīd both mean the opposite of something and the plural form is al-aḍḍād. Ibn al-Aʿrābī said that nidd means what is similar and didd means the opposite.

- (155) It is one of the Arabs' ways of naming to give the same name to the thing and its opposite, e.g. calling both the black and white ḡawḡ.
- (156) This kind of word is the rare, subtle, wonderful kind in the Arabs' speech.
- (157) Some people have denied that Arabs use the same word to mean the thing and its opposite. However, this is not right; those who asserted that Arabs called the sword muḥannadan and the horse tarfan are those who asserted that Arabs used the same word to the thing and its opposite. About that we have written a book in which we have explained their argument which we have proved to be wrong.
- (158) Semantics of Words
- (159) Know that in their speech they have different words for the different meanings, different words for the same meaning, and the same word for different meanings ... An example of the last, is that of using the word waḡadū to mean strong feeling, and also to mean that I have found something lost. There are many examples of this.
- (160) If the same word is used for two opposite meanings, that word must have originally been associated with only one of those meanings, then the two meanings were confounded by way of expansion. An example of this is calling both day and night ṣarīm because each of them is cut off from the other, i.e. each follows the other with no clear cut-off point. However, both originate in the same meaning, i.e. cutting.
- (161) If the same word was given to two opposite meanings, it cannot be the case that Arabs have conceived both meanings to be equivalent. It is just that one meaning was associated with the word by one tribe, and the other meaning was associated with the

word by another tribe. Then, the tribes heard each other and each of them borrowed the meaning of the other. For example, the word ḡawn was used by an Arab tribe to mean white, and it was also used by another tribe to mean black, then one group has taken from the other.

(162) This should not be intentional or original; it is the result of mixing up different languages, or it may be that a word was associated with a particular meaning and it was incidentally used to mean something else then it was used over and over again for the latter meaning to the extent that it became as if it were originally associated with it.

(163) It is used to mean both day and night. An example of using it to mean the day time is in this verse of poetry:
He kept all night saying it got dark until darkness vanished and the day light came.

An example of using it to mean night is in God's saying "it has become like al-sarīm " to mean that it has burned and, as a result, became as black as night.

(164) The people of falsehood, lie fabrication and contempt for Arabs.

(165) The people of falsehood, lie fabrication and contempt for Arabs, think that Arabs have done this because of their lack of wisdom and eloquence and because of the frequently happening confusion in their conversation.

(166) A part of the Arabs' speech explains another and the beginning of a sentence might link up with its end. However, to understand their speech, you have to consider it in its context. A word might have two opposite meanings but once it is used for one of those meanings, there should exist in the context, either before or after the word itself, what indicates the intended meaning for the word in that context. For example, in this verse of poetry:
"Apart from death, every thing is trivial; however, everybody

goes about hopefully", the word ḡalal was used to mean trivial although it has another meaning (great) but the intended meaning was understood from what has been said before and following that word in the verse.

(167) Allāh (mighty and sublime be He) said: "But those who knew that they would meet their Lord...". He meant those who are sure about that. Allāh did not at all mean to praise some people for their being sceptical about their return to Allāh. Also, Allāh said talking about Yūnus: "And (mention) Dhu'n-Nūn, when he went off in anger and deemed that We had no power over him". In this verse Allāh meant that Yūnus has hoped for this: no Muslim would think that Yūnus was convinced that Allāh had no power over him.

(168) These are they who purchase error at the price of guidance, so their commerce doth not prosper.

(Q2, 16)

(169) One says I bought something to mean that I paid for it and got it; this is the common meaning. However, one can use the same word ʾīstaraytu (which commonly means I bought as pointed out) to mean I sold something.

(170) Some interpreters said: This means that they sold guidance for (the trivial price of) misguidance. Some of the language experts assert that Arabs consider the preferring of something to another to be in the same rank as buying it. A poet says:
You preferred hair to the bald head, the pleated (i.e. problematic) route to the clear one, and the short life to the long one just as a Muslim buys when he converts to Christianity.

(171) The similitude of His light is as a niche wherein is a lamp.

(Q24, 35)

(172) She turns her beautiful eyes which are as nice as two lamps in two niches.

(173) (This lamp is) kindled from a blessed tree, an olive neither of the East nor of the West.

(Q.24, 35)

(174) An olive neither of the East nor of the West.

(175) This means that, it is not eastern and it is not western, but it is both; The sun's rays reach it during both sunrise and sunset and because of that, its oil will be of superior quality.

(176) Some interpreters say: Allāh (mighty and sublime be He) has described a green tree blooming surrounded by other trees the shadow of which prevents sunrays reaching that tree during both sunrise and sunset.

(177) This interpretation refutes the earlier one; it asserts that the sunrays reach this tree during neither of those two times.

(178) Then a visitation came upon it while they slept, And in the morning it was as if plucked.

(Q.68, 19-20)

(179) Night is called al-sarīm and day also is called al-sarīm because each of them is chopped off from the other, i.e. each follows the other with no clear cut-off point.

(180) "It became like al-sarīm , i.e. it became as black as night. Zuhair said: As I called on him at night (al-sarīm), I found him sitting down with his friends. By night here he meant before the day light appears.

(181) "Giving the same word to two opposite meanings"

(182) Al-sarīm is the night and it is also the day; each of them is chopped off from the other.

- (183) It is one of the Arabs' famous techniques.
- (184) Al-sarīm is the day because it has followed (was chopped off from) night. Al-sarīm is also the night because it has followed (was chopped off from) the day time. However, we do not consider this to be 'Didd'.
- (185) See n. 127, in this part.
- (186) Al-sufr are the black camels; you never see a black camel without a trace of yellow colour spreading over his body and that is why Arabs called the black camels 'sufran'. This is similar to their calling the deer adaman because their whiteness is confounded with darkness. An example of this is in this verse of poetry by Abū 'Ubaid:
 From those I get my horse and my mount; they are sufran in colour like raisins.
 By sufran here he meant black. (cf. no. 128).
- (187) Sufr means black. One says: that the camel is aşfar if his body is black and his ears, nose, armpits and legs are yellow.
- (188) ... whom the devil hath prostrated by (his) touch.
 (Q.2, 275)
- (189) Al-hābit is the sleeper and it is also used to mean who claps or strikes his hands together. One also says that somebody habaṭa the mud to mean that he was encamped in mud. One also says that somebody habaṭa the camel to mean that he hit the camel. However, every thing you hit by hands is said to have been habit (i.e. have been hit).
- (190) Baddala something means that he has brought about some changes in. Tabdīl something means making changes in it, and Istabdala something means he has replaced it by another. This means that, essentially, al-tabdīl is to make the thing different from its initial state, but al-ibdāl is to put something in place of another.

- (191) The necessary condition for al-badal is to put something in the place of another.
- (192) One of the things that Arabs used to do is to use one letter in place of another. The word madahahu (which means praised him) can be written as madahahu and the word rifall which means a long tail can be written as rifann. This is well known and many scientists (language experts) have written about it.
- (193) The existence of al-ibdāl (i.e. using one letter in place of another) does not imply that Arabs have meant, intentionally, to do that. It is the case that for a particular meaning a given word was used in the language of one tribe, and for the same meaning the language of another tribe has associated another word which was almost similar to the word used by the other except in one letter.
- (194) The evidence for this is that, the same tribe did not pronounce a word attaching al-hamza to it on one occasion and removing it on another. Also, the same tribe never use the letter al-sīn instead of the letter al-sād, or change the letter lām (attached to words for specification) to the letter mīm. Nor did they change the letter al-hamza at the beginning of a word to the letter ʿayn as in pronouncing the word an as ʿan. None of these is found in the same tribe-language; one way is found in one tribe's language and the other way is found in another tribe's language.
- (195) If the two letters are not so close as regards their point of articulation, using one instead of the other cannot be considered to be substitution as when one changes a letter of a word pronounced in the mouth by a letter from a word pronounced in the throat.

- (196) This is the sort of thing which happens rarely, when, for example, one uses the letter al-yā' instead of the letter al-lām just because he does not like doubling of sounds. It is not regular. Examples of these are to be found in one's saying tasarraytu (i.e. pretended to be happy), tazannaytu (i.e. pretended to be in doubt), and tagaṣṣaytu (i.e. followed up a certain story). Also, in the word asnatū the letter 'tā' was originally yā' but they changed it because they wanted a letter easier to pronounce.
- (197) Then We inspired Moses, saying: Smite the sea with thy staff. And it parted, and each part was as a mountain vast.
(Q.26, 63)
- (198) Al-lām and al-rā' (two letters) can be used instead of each other; Arabs say falaḡ or faraḡ to mean the morning.
- (199) Which pelted them with stones of baked clay, And made them like green crops devoured (by cattle).
(Q.105, 4-5)
- (200) Darbun siḡḡīl or darbun siḡḡīn means violent. Siḡḡīl and siḡḡīn are the same in meaning. An example of the use of this word is in this verse of poetry by Ibn Muqbil:
His men strike the heads (probably of their enemies), from whatever direction they come, so bravely that their striking is strongly siḡḡīnan recommended by heroes.
Also, in this verse of poetry another example is found:
"Heavy striking which is so strong siḡḡīlan in war."
- (201) And coin for them the similitude of the life of the world as water which We send down from the sky, and the vegetation of the earth mingleth with it and then becometh dry twigs that the winds scatter.
(Q.18, 46)

- (202) One says: The wind scattered darat the ash. One also can say tadrūhu or tadrihi to mean it scatters. And, one says darwan or darian to mean scattering. Ibn Mas'ūd and Ibn 'Abbās have read the sentence "the wind scatters it" as tadrihi al-rīh.
- (203) Tadrūhu al-rivāḥ is derived from darawtu and daraytu; each of the two is used.
- (204) Thus Allah coineth (the similitude of) the true and the false. Then, as for the foam, it passeth away as scum upon the banks, while, as for that which is of use to mankind, it remaineth in the earth. Thus Allah coineth the similitudes.
- (Q13, 17)
- (205) The word gufa' was read by Ru'ba as guta'. Also one says: The wind has scattered gatal or gafal the leaves. And one says: The falling leaves gatala or gafala.

Part Two

- (1) The first thing in this connection is to consider the aspects which must be treated as primary and which must be dealt with before any others which point to the meanings that are contained in the verses of the Qurʾān. Without knowledge of them, ambiguity arises for those not proficient in Arabic philology and for those who have not mastered the workings of various aspects of the natural spoken forms of language.
- (2) O ye who believe! Render not vain your almsgiving by reproach and injury, like him who spendeth his wealth only to be seen of men and believeth not in Allah and the Last Day. His likeness is as the likeness of a rock whereon is dust of earth, a rainstorm smiteth it, leaving it smooth and bare.

(Q.2. 64)

- (3) safwān: the word is both Singular and Plural, although some regard it as Plural, stating that the Singular would be safwāna, classing it with: tamra, tamr ; nahla, nahl. Those who regard it as a Singular, give, as the Plural, sif/sufwān, sufiy and sifiy. cf. the following line of verse:
the alighting of the birds upon the sufiy.
safwān: and safā - smooth stones. wābil: a heavy downpouring of rain; cf. the line of Imru'ul-Qays: sāʿatan wābil
The conjugation of the word is: wabal yabil wablan ...
sald: used of stones, it means: solid, having no vegetation upon it; used of a region, it would suggest a plantless region.
Used of the head, it would imply (total) baldness.

- (4) And He it is Who sendeth the winds as tidings heralding His mercy till, when they bear a cloud heavy (with rain), We lead it to a dead land, and then cause water to descend thereon and thereby bring forth fruits of every kind. Thus bring We forth the dead.

(Q.7, 57)

- (5) Naṣr: gently blowing auspicious winds which scatter the clouds, driving them along.
- (6) [On the day when the earth and the hills rock] and the hills become a heap of running sand.

(Q.73, 14)

- (7) (Grammatically), the word al-mahīl (which means the thing being poured down) is an object in one's saying "I poured down the sand, or I poured it down". This happens when one scratches the bottom of a pile of sand causing its top to pour down on its bottom. In this connection Arabs have two forms (i.e. two ways of deriving words); (for the sand, or any thing else, that undergoes such an action) they say mahīl or mahyūl just as they say makīl or makyūl (which both mean the thing being measured). Another example can be found in this verse of poetry:

Your people have thought that you are a master, but the fact is that you are an ordinary (magyūn which could have been replaced by magīn) person.

- (8) Say: Shall we cry, instead of unto Allah, unto that which neither profiteth us nor hurteth us, and shall we turn back after Allah hath guided us, like one bewildered whom the devils have infatuated in the earth.

(Q.6, 71)

- (9) Istahwathu: X; the root is hawā, yahwī.
Ḥayarān: the adjectival form from hāra, yahār, hīratan, hayrānan, hayrūratan, meaning to stray. The word is here diptote, as are all forms faʿlān, where the feminine is faʿlā.

- (10) Those who swallow usury cannot rise up save as he ariseth whom the devil hath prostrated by (his) touch.

(Q.2, 275)

- (11) ribā: increase; IV arbā yurbī irbā'an, to excel another ;
one says a thing rabā if it overtops .
rabā, yarbū rabwan, to exceed, excel, overtop, to increase
beyond its former state.
rābiya is so called, since it overtops the surrounding land;
a man is said to be fī ribā of the tribe when he is conspicuous
by his nobility.
arbā, thus: to cause to increase; murbi: increasing the sum
which was owed to him; the increase placed upon an original debt
is the consideration for the extension in the time allowed for
settling the debt beyond the original date when it should have
been repaid.
- (12) The day when they came forth from the graves in haste, as racing
to a goal.
- (Q.70, 43)
- (13) In saying yūfidūn, al-īfād means going swiftly, as in the line:
...an ostrich... mīfādan... in search of refuge.
He says: seeking a place of refuge, thus al-īfād means speed.
Ru'ba said: they made us go ʿala awfād.
- (14) In saying ʿila nuṣbin yūfidūn, al-īfād means going swiftly, as in
the line: I shall describe an ostrich mīfādan....
- (15) yūfidūna means they go swiftly. Ru'ba says:
they made us go ʿala awfād.
- (16) As they were frightened asses fleeing from a lion!
- (Q.74, 50-51)
- (17) It is correct to say in my view that the two renderings are well-
known and both are correct in meaning. The reader would be
correct in choosing either reading. Al-Farrā' maintains that the
fatha and damma are commonly interchanged in the speech of the
Arabs. He cites the line: Hold your donkey, it is mustanfir ...

(18) And of His portents are the ships, like banners on the sea,
(Q.42, 32)

(19) Al-ḡawārī is the plural of ḡāriya: they are the ships which sail the sea.

(20) Lo! it throweth up sparks like the castles, (Or) as it might be camels of bright yellow hue.

(Q.77, 32-33)

(21) She is like a Roman tower, built solidly with plaster, mortar and stone.

(22) A similitude of those who disbelieve in their Lord: Their works are as ashes which the wind bloweth hard upon a stormy day.

(Q.14, 18)

(23) The specialists have supplied different explanations for the Nom. of maṭalu: some of the scholars of Basra say this is as though God said, "and among the stories which We relate to you is the similitude...." He proceeds to interpret the verse on the pattern of "the likeness of Paradise is ..." which is of frequent occurrence. Some of the Kufans said the likeness is actually made between the actions of the unbelievers and the ashes, but the Arabs give the noun greater priority, as being more familiar, then follow that with mention of the predicate. The verse means then "The likeness of the actions of the unbelievers is as ashes..."

(24) And when thou seest them their figures please thee; and if they speak thou givest ear unto their speech. (They are) as though they were blocks of wood in striped cloaks.

(Q.63, 4)

(25) The Readers have disagreed as to the reading of ḡ ṣ b: some read ḡ ṣ ḡ b, as though arguing that that is the plural of the plural: ḡ ṣ ḡ b - pl. ḡ ṣ ḡ b, pl. ḡ ṣ ḡ b, as is done with:

ṭamra - pl. ṭimār, pl. ṭumur

ḡ ṣ ḡ b might also be explicable as a pl. of ḡ ṣ ḡ b : ḡ ṣ ḡ b / ḡ ṣ ḡ b

cf. akama : ukum / ukm

- (26) These are two well-known readings (based upon) two approved pronunciations. Thus, whichever the Reader prefers to recite is correct. Pronouncing the middle consonant with zero vowel in the plurals of words having the singular form fu'ula (pl. fu'l) in nouns (names) is more frequent among the Arabs. For example, they render the plural of badana : as budn; adama : as am.
- (27) The likeness of that which they spend in this life of the world is as the likeness of a biting, icy wind which smiteth the harvest of a people who have wronged themselves, and devastateth it.
- (Q.3, 117)
- (28) The comparison is to what the infidel gives as alms to ingratiate himself and draw closer to God. He is a denier of the oneness of God and he is a disbeliever with regard to Muhammad (PBUH). The giving of alms gains him nothing so long as he remains an infidel. The giving of alms is thus ephemeral and yields no benefits like the wind with hail-stones blighting the crops. By hart he means the crops which a people had hoped to harvest and the benefit which would be yielded.
- (29) Lo! it is a tree that springeth in the heart of hell, Its crop is as it were the heads of devils.
- (Q.37, 64-65)
- (30) As if the fruit of this tree (meaning the zaqqūm tree) with its ugliness and loathsomeness is as ugly as the heads of devils.
- (31) If the question arose: what is the basis of the comparison between the fruit of this tree and the ugliness of the heads of devils when we have no knowledge of how ugly devils' heads are, the answer is that we represent one thing in terms of another so that the term designated is defined by the designator when the designator shares similarity with the reality it represents and when we know that the designated term shares similarity with either or both of them. It is known that the people addressed by this verse are idolators who did not know what the zaqqūm tree is or what devils' heads are, and who had never seen one or other of them.

- (32) As to the zaggūm tree, God has described it by mentioning it to them and by explaining it till they understood what it was and what it looked like. He said:...
- And thus their eyes were opened to it. As to the comparison of the fruit with the heads of devils, there are various interpretations. According to one, God compared the fruit of the tree with devils' heads, along similar lines to the usage current among the people addressed by the verse, i.e. people accustomed to using 'like a devil' when they wished to exaggerate the ugliness of something.
- (33) like a devil ...
- (34) As to comparing its fruit with devils' heads.
- (35) Already have We urged unto hell many of the jinn and humankind, having hearts wherewith they understand not, and having eyes wherewith they see not, and having ears wherewith they hear not. They are as the cattle-nay, but they are worse.
- (Q.7, 179)
- (36) Deaf, dumb, blind, therefore they have no sense.
- (Q.2, 171)
- (37) The Arabs say that of someone who refrains from the use of one of his limbs to suit the needs of the occasion. Along these lines, Miskīn al-Dārimī says:
- I become blind if my lady neighbour comes out and stay so until she is decently covered. I close my ears to what goes on between them ...
- He described himself in having given up sight and hearing as becoming blind and deaf. This is common in the speech and verse of the Arabs.

- (38) Those unto whom they pray beside Allah respond to them not at all, save as (is the response to) one who stretcheth forth his hands toward water (asking) that it may come unto his mouth, and it will never reach it.

(Q.13, 14)

- (39) The plea a person makes to gods does not yield any benefit to him and is as futile as someone extending his hands to the water without lifting it in a cup to his lips unless in making the plea he elevates himself towards God. The reference is to water and the person holding it. The Arabs refer to the person who strives for what he cannot get as someone who holds water. Some of the Arabs said: ... I miss you, but you and I are like the one who holds water and whose fingers do not quench his thirst. By this is meant that his hand holds nothing more than that of a person who holds water, because the person who holds water holds nothing (unless he raises the water to his lips). It is also said: What affection there was between me and her has become like someone who holds water in his hands.

- (40) The person who extends his hands to hold the water in order to raise it to his lips will not achieve that and will not quench his thirst with his fingers.

- (41) An inspiration from God.

- (42) And He taught Adam all the names, (Q.2, 31)

- (43) By 'all the names' is meant the names of things which had been named. If asked what the meaning is of 'His teaching of the names of things which had been named', I would answer showing him the species He has created and teaching him that this is called a horse and this is called a camel and so on, teaching him their conditions and the religious and worldly benefits associated with them.

- (44) And Allah it is Who sendeth the winds and they raise a cloud;
then We lead it unto a dead land and revive therewith the earth
after its death. Such is the Resurrection.

(Q.35, 9)

- (45) If you asked: Why is fa-tutiru in the present form regardless
of what comes before (arsala - past) and after it? I would answer
that this is done in order to relate a condition in which the winds
move the clouds. This evokes as present the magnificent image
which points to the power of the Almighty. This occurs with verbs
which are used to distinguish and specify a condition which might
astonish or concern the addressee. Ta'abbata šarran said:
I have met qul tahwa (present verb as above).

- (46) Then, even after that, your hearts were hardened and became as
rocks, or worse than rocks, for hardness.

(Q.2, 74)

- (47) Why is it said ašadduqaswa while the verb from al-qaswa is used
to derive af'al as the elative and the verb of wonder. To that I
would reply, this is so because this form is more indicative and
explanatory of the extreme degree of hardening. Another aspect
of this phenomenon relates to the fact that the meaning of 'more
hardened' is not intended. The intention is to attribute an
extreme degree to 'hardening' as in: ištaddat qaswat al-ḥiḡāra
(the hardness of the stone increased) and qulūbuhum ašaddu
qaswatan (their hearts have become even more hardened).

- (48) He sendeth down water from the sky, so that valleys flow according
to their measure, and the flood beareth (on its surface) swelling
foam).

(Q.13, 17)

- (49) If it is asked why awdiya is in the indefinite, I would answer that
this is because the rain comes only from the bottom one valley to
another. Some of these overflow while others do not.

- (50) Or like a rainstorm from the sky, wherein is darkness, thunder and the flash of lightning.

(Q.2, 19)

- (51) Sayyib is in the indefinite to relay the meaning of a type of hard torrential rain.

- (52) These things are mentioned in the indefinite to relay that what is meant are 'types' of these things as in zulumāt dāḡiya (darkness of the pitch-dark type) and raḡdun qāṣif (thunder of the booming type) and barqun ḡāṭif (lightning of the fleeting type).

- (53) Al-samā' (the heavens) is used in the definite to negate the idea that what comes from the heavens comes from one horizon among many, because every horizon and every layer is the heavens. The meaning is 'heavy cloud' covering all the horizons of the heavens, as with sayyib. This is an exaggeration in construction, form and indefiniteness.

- (54) See No. 10 in this part.

- (55) Taḡabbuṭ al-ṣayṭān is widely believed by the Arabs. They believe that a man is possessed by the devil and he is thus demented and deranged. Al-ḡabṭ means striking unevenly as in ḡabṭual-ʿāṣwā' (at random) which conforms with early Arab beliefs.

- (56) See No. 16 in this part.

- (57) There is nothing to see comparable to the fear of wild donkeys and their galloping flight when scared by something. Therefore, most of the comparisons the Arabs made in describing camels and their endurance in walking, involved comparing them with donkeys and their galloping when approaching water or scenting a hunter.

- (58) The likeness of those who disbelieve (in relation to the messenger) is as the likeness of one who calleth unto that which heareth naught except a short and cry.

(Q.2, 171)

- (59) Al-na^ʿiq is making sounds as in na^ʿaqā al-mu^ʿadīnu (the muezzin called); na^ʿaqā al-rā^ʿī bi l-da^ʿn (the shepherd called his flock). Al-Aḥṭal said: fa-n^ʿiq ... (call your herd, oh Garīr).
- (60) See No. 18 in this part.
- (61) Kal-a^ʿlām means like mountains. Al-Ḥansā^ʿ said: ka-^ʿannahu^ʿ alamun fī ra^ʿsihi nāru (he is like a flag with fire at its head).
- (62) Although he was modern, they do not use him as ṣāhid. He is an Arab philologist, so treat what he says as if he narrated. The philologists say the evidence for this is al-ḥamāsa. His readers are convinced as they accept what he reports.
- (63) In zamaḥṣarī's and other people's discussions and writings, citations from the poetry of Abī Tammām occur and in the book al-Ḥāh by al-Fārisī as well. He maintained that citation is nearly repeating what has been reported from the Arabs. In doing so he has not violated Arabic conventions.
- (64) One cites the poetry of the Muwalladīn for discussion of meaning as one cites the poetry of the Arabs for discussion of sounds.
- (65) And thereon ye will drink of boiling water, drinking even as the camel drinketh.

(Q.56, 54-55)

- (66) Ṣ-r-b al-ḥīm was read with the three vowels: the fatha and damma give us two infinitives while the kasra gives (meaning maṣrūb) what is drunk by the ḥīm (camels) which suffer from al-hiyām, a disease of those who never quench their thirst no matter how much they drink (pl. ahyam, haimā). Du al-rumma said: fa-aṣbahat ka l-haimā (became like the camel with the disease of insatiable thirst). It is said that al-ḥīm means sands and it is argued that the plural al-haimām, with fatha

on the ḥāʾ (meaning sand which does not cohere) was derived on the basis of the form fuʿul, as in ṣaḥāb and suḥub. This was then lightened to conform to the plural of abyad.

- (67) Those facts are only accessible to a person well-versed in two Qurʾānic sciences, namely al-maʿānī and al-bayān.
- (68) It occurs frequently that those who interpret the Qurʾān without adequate knowledge confuse utterances that are used metamorphically and as similes. They go for the superficial and in doing so miss the meaning and the purpose, preventing themselves and their listeners from acquiring the noble art of rhetoric.
- (69) Al-maʿānī, al-bayān and al-badīʿ are the three sciences subsumed by rhetoric. They are the most important tools of the interpreter of the Qurʾān who must be aware of what the 'inimitability' of the Qurʾān involves. Without knowledge of these sciences, the task cannot be achieved.
- (70) Their likeness is as the likeness of one who kindleth fire.
(Q2, 17)
- (71) When it came to their description, it was followed by a simile to make it clearer and more complete. The use of similes by the Arabs and the invoking of analogies by scholars exercised a considerable influence on the bringing out of the subtleties of meaning and the uncovering of truths. The purpose was to make the person who visualises, a person who realises, and to make the person who surmises, a person who believes, and to make the person who is absent, a present witness. For some reason, God used similes profusely in the Qurʾān and other holy Books. Similes also abounded in the speech of the Prophet of Allāh (PBUH), as well as in the speech of other prophets and wise men.
- (72) See No. 50 in this part.

- (73) There is a consensus among rhetoricians of al-bayān that all similes belong to the category of compound comparisons and not single comparisons. Comparison requires more than a one-to-one relationship and gives the masterly saying and the pure doctrine.
- (74) The matal in the original speech of the Arabs means al-mitl, which is the analogue. It is said matal, mitl and matil, in the same way as šabah, šibh and šabih. The proverbial expression, (it is called), is one comparing what has given rise to it with what it is compared with.
- (75) The Arabs take disparate things and compare them with their analogues, as Imru'ū al-Qays did, and as we see in the Qur'ān. They compare how groups of things have come to be associated with each other, thus becoming as one thing comparable to other similar things. God says: "And coin for them the similitude of the life of the world as water which We send down from the sky". What is meant here is the ephemeral nature of the good things of this life which is short-lived like all plants and vegetation. As to comparisons of persons with others not normally associated together that is not found.
- (76) People are like but to houses which are dwelt in and then deserted, leaving them empty on the morrow.
- (77) For whoso ascribeth partners unto Allah, it is as if he had fallen from the sky and the birds had snatched him or the wind had blown him to a far-off place.
- (Q.22, 31)
- (78) This simile may be of the compound or the divided type. If it is a compound simile, God's meaning would be: those who associate other gods with God, destroy themselves utterly. This is achieved by comparing the conditions of such idolators with that of one who has fallen from the heavens and been snatched and devoured by

birds, or blown away by the wind only to fall in some faraway land. If the simile is of the divided type, then God would be comparing faith in its elevation with heaven, and would be comparing the temptations which override thinking with the snatching birds, with the devil who leads astray into the valley of error, with the wind which blows away things into the deep abysses of destruction.

(79) See No. 20, in this part.

(80) Ġimālāt is the plural of ġimāl or ġimāla the plural of ġamal. The comparison is with palaces and then with camels to make the comparison clearer as we see in those who compare camels with al-afdān and al-maḡādil. Abū al-ʿAlāʾ said: ... red shining in the dark, radiating sparkles like al-ṭurāf. The comparison is with al-ṭurāf (i.e. a tent of red leather) in greatness and redness. In his insolence, he seems to intend to add to the Qurʾānic simile, arrogantly carried away in his confusion, prefacing his verse with hamrāʾ. This is to introduce his addition and to draw attention to it, and to draw the attention of the listener to its position. He was blinded here and in the hereafter to God's plural in ka-annahu ġimālātun sufr which is supposed to have the same status as his 'red house'. The comparison with the palace, which is the citadel, has two aspects: the greatness and elevation. The comparison with al-ġimālāt, which is hump, on the other hand, has three aspects: the greatness, the elevation and the yellowness. God preserve us from his delusion in using ṭurāf and his insolent references to it.

(81) And as for ʿĀd, they were destroyed by a fierce roaring wind, which He imposed on them for seven long nights and eight long days so that thou mightest have seen men lying overthrown, as they were hollow trunks of palm-trees.

(Q.69, 6-7).

- (82) It cannot be ruled out that al-husūm is the plural of hāsīm as in šuhūd and qu'ūd. It may also be an infinitive as in šukūr and kufūr. If it is plural, the meaning is 'put an end to every goodness' and 'eradicated every blessing' or 'continuous' like the endless blowing of the wind which does not cease until it has finished them off. The point of the comparison is to relay consecutiveness and comparing it with the continuous cauterising of a wound until it closes up. If husūm is an infinitive, on the other hand, it may be governed by its own verb, tahsum - husūman, meaning tasta'sil - isti'sālan, or it can be an adjective, as in datu husūm, or it can be accusative of reason to indicate the nights have been intended to be eradicated. 'Abd al-ʿAzīz b. Zarara al-Kulābī said: ... a'wāmun husūm ... Al-Suddī reads it otherwise with fatha on the hā'. This gives us a circumstantial expression of the wind being intended to be eradicating.
- (83) See No. 21 in this part.
- (84) Al-matal is used metaphorically to relay the quality of strenge-ness. A'māluhum is explained along the lines of su'āl, sā'il (questioner), i.e. someone asks what they are compared with. The answer would be 'what they did is like ashes'. The answer may also be the works of those who deny God. The meaning may also be the predicate for the subject, i.e. an adjective describing the works of those who disbelieve as 'ashes'. Finally, the grammatical description of a'mālihīm may be a substantive standing for another substantive, i.e. in apposition to mitl al-ladīna kafarū whose works are like ashes.
- (85) The philosophers said ... the wise among the philosophers said ...
- (86) And whomsoever it is Allah's will to guide, He expandeth his bosom unto the surrender, and whosoever it is His will to send astray, He maketh his bosom close and narrow as if he were engaged in sheer ascent.

- (87) See No. 4 in this part.
- (88) See No. 2 in this part.
- (89) Al-safwān is a smooth stone. According to Abū ʿUбайд, al-Aṣmaʿī maintains that al-safwān and al-safa and al-safwa are singular abbreviated noun. Some say that al-safwān is the plural of safwāna, like marḡān of marḡāna and saʿdān of saʿdāna. Al-wābil is torrential rain as in: wabalat al-samāʾ, tabilu wāblan, and ard mawbūla (wet with torrential rain). Al-salid means smooth and dry as in haḡarun salid (smooth dry stone) and ḡabalun salid (smooth shiny mountain); ardun salida meaning the land is barren like al-haḡar al-salid and salid al-zand...
- (90) Those who denied Shuʿeyb became as though they had not dwelt there.
- (Q.7, 92)
- (91) It is said of a people who stayed in a place for a long time, ḡana al-qawm.
- (92) Maḡna is the singular for the houses used by a people who stay in a place for a long time. ... ḡanū fī-ha ...
- (93) Al-Zaḡḡāḡ says of kaʾan lam yuḡnū fī-ha: it is as if they did not live in it (mustaḡnīn). It is said: ḡāna al-raḡul - yaḡna, if he istaḡna, which is derived from al-ḡinā, the opposite of poverty.
- (94) ... God compares the condition of those disbelievers with the condition of someone who had never been in those places.
- (95) As if there were nobody there. On the contrary, we were the dwellers of those places but we were annihilated.
- (96) It is said of a people who stay in a place for a long time, ḡanā al-qawm.

- (97) As for those who disbelieve, their deeds are as a mirage in a desert. The thirsty one supposeth it to be water till he cometh unto it and findeth it naught.

(Q.24, 39)

- (98) Al-Azharī said that al-sarāb is what appears to the eye in the open and in daylight in the desert. It seems to be flowing water and though it is not, it seems to be so to anyone who observes it from a distance. They said sarab al-mā' - yasrabu - sarūban, if it flows, the fā'il is sārib. Al-qī'a, according to al-Farrā' on the other hand, is the plural of qā', like ḡār and ḡīra. Al-qā' is the flat surface of the land. Al-Zaḡḡāḡ said that al-zamān, whose hamza may be lightened, means the very thirsty.
- (99) See No. 70 in this part.
- (100) What is intended by using comparisons is to affect the hearts which would otherwise be untouched if something were mentioned on its own. This is because the purpose of a figure of speech is to compare the hidden with the visible, the absent with the present, so as to enable the audience to know what something really is. It makes things extremely clear since sense and reason have come to the same point. It must be obvious that to make something attractive in order to influence someones belief, it is necessary to cite a comparison that will touch the heart, e.g. comparing faith with light. By the same token, the ugliness of unbelief is not impressed on the mind if it is merely mentioned. The impression on the mind is more profound if unbelief is compared with darkness. If we wish to relay the notion of the fragility of something, we compare it with gossamer. This is more expressive than merely mentioning fragility. It is for this reason that God used comparison so profusely in the Qur'ān and His other Books.

- (101) In the original speech of the Arabs, al-matal means mitl or analogue. It is said matal, mitl, maṭīl in the same way as ṣabah, ṣibh and ṣabīh. It is said of a proverbial saying that it is a matal if it involves a comparison of something and it should contain some novel feature.
- (102) It must have some novel aspect.
- (103) Al-matal is of two types. In one, the comparison is between what is intended in the two, even if the comparison does not hold good in every detail between them. This is called a compound simile. The second type compares what is intended in both but the comparison holds for every detail in the two.
- (104) The similitude of the life of the world is only as water which We send down from the sky, then the earth's growth of that which men and cattle eat mingled with it.
- (Q10, 25)
- (105) The Book of God abounds in comparisons of faith with light and disbelief with darkness. The reasoning behind this is that light is the ideal means of guidance to the right and beneficial path and to the removal of doubt and the discovery of benefit in one's religion. God uses light because by its very nature it removes doubt, and compares faith with light which is the ideal means of guidance in worldly matters. Comparing disbelief with darkness, on the other hand, brings the image of the misguided who have lost the way that they should follow. This cannot be encapsulated in a more effective way than with reference to darkness to show the reason for the deprivation. This is also theologically true: there is no sin more serious than disbelief. Hence the comparison with darkness.
- (106) Comparisons are intended to make meanings more understandable, more memorable and more vivid. This is because purely abstract meanings are beyond the senses the imagination and man's vision.

If the equivalence of such meanings with what is tangible is mentioned, the senses, imagination and vision are reconciled, accepting the opposition. The result is that what is accessible to the mind coincides with what is accessible by the senses. Comprehension is total and the target is achieved.

- (107) See No. 20 in this part.
- (108) Beware that God compared the sparks with the greatness of a palace. He compared these with al-ḡimālāt al-ṣufr in colour, multitude and consecutiveness and speed of movement. It is also said that the beginning of the sparks becomes gradually greater and thus becomes like a palace. The separate flying pieces make the comparison with al-ḡimālāt al-ṣufr.
- (109) The likeness of those who are entrusted with the Law of Moses, yet apply it not, is as the likeness of the ass carrying books.
(Q.62, 5)
- (110) The use of the donkey in the context of carrying is clearer and more common than horses or mules or the like. This use can also be explained in terms of intending to relay the qualities of ignorance and stupidity which we commonly associate with donkeys. Other qualities such as lowness and baseness are also attributed to donkeys. The purpose of this comparison in the context, is to shame the people in question. The meaning here is that loading books on a donkey can be done all the more safely, easily and completely because the donkey is low and easy to ride and guide. Another meaning for this comparison relates to the consideration of sounds and their harmony as preconditions for good speech. The utterances asfār and himār are harmonious from the point of view of sound. No other animal names can fulfil this requirement.
- (111) See No. 22 in this part.

- (112) See No. 44 in this part.
- (113) This is because the act of sending is attributed to God and it is known that He does things by saying 'let it be' so that no time or fragment of time is needed. This is why He did not use the future. What happened had to happen, both quickly and thoroughly. He estimated sending at known times to specified places and this 'estimating' is like sending itself. When he attributed that act of arousing to the wind, which is done in a specified period of time, he says tutīru, treating it as an entity.
- (114) See No. 50 in this part.
- (115) Anyone who yearns to devote himself to the science of interpretation and to the investigation of its different aspects must peruse Sibawaih's book. It is the authority that is referred to and relied on in this regard.
- (116) The interpretation of the Book of God may be approached from a number of angles: the first is the science of language with its nouns, verbs and particles.
- (117) ... the second is a knowledge of the rules which govern the Arabic language from the standpoint of construction and use. This is to be taken from the science of grammar.
- (118) ... the third aspect relates to better and more eloquent sounds and constructions. In this connection, we rely on the science of al-bayān and al-badī'.
- (119) I have spent a long time writing this book and I have attempted to classify and to include the best and most essential. I have surveyed the classifications that others have made and I have looked carefully at the proposals in their works. I have included what I thought graceful and have excluded what I thought was strange. The result is what I have gleaned from the science of the Arabic language by looking at grammatical constructions, at the methods for composing poetry and prose, and at the art of oratory and verse.

- (120) And coin for them the similitude of the life of the world as water which We send down from the sky, and the vegetation of the earth mingleth with it and then becometh dry twigs that the winds scatter.

(Q18, 46)

- (121) Al-ḥašīm is that which is dry. According to al-Farrāʿ, its singular is ḥašīma. According to al-Zaḡḡāḡ and Ibn Qutaiba, al-ḥašīm is whatever has dried out after being wet, as in ḥašīm al-muḥtazir. The origin of al-ḥašīm is crumbled dry plants.

- (122) Abū 'Ubaida said darā and adrā two forms. Ibn Kīsān said that tadrūhu is taḡī'u bihi wa-taḡhab. Al-Aḥfaṣ said that tadrūhu is tarfa'uhu.

- (123) And in the morning it was as if plucked.

(Q68, 20)

- (124) Ibn 'Abbās said that ka l-sarīm is ka l-ramād al-aswad. This is the meaning in the language of Huzaima from whom we also get the meaning ramla, known in the Yemen to be barren and with which their garden is compared. Al-Ḥassan said, sarama 'anha al-ḥair is the same as qata'a (cut off). Therefore, al-sarīm means maṣrūm. Al-Tawrī said that ka l-sarīm is ka l-subḥ (like the morning) in that it has become white like the harvested crops. Mūrḡ said it means ka l-ramla (like sand) which has receded from the rest of the sand and does not grow anything useful. Al-Aḥfaṣ said it is ka l-subḥ (like the morning) which has separated from the night. Al-Mubarrid said it is ka l-nahār, like the empty day. Šamr said that al-sarīm is al-lail (night) and al-nahār (day), the one separating from the other. Al-Farrāʿ and others said al-sarīm refers to al-lail as their garden was blackened.

- (125) Al-tafsīr in the language is explicating and revealing according to Ibn Duraid. This is the origin of tafsīra in the sense of the water examined by a physician. It is used as an infinitive derived

on the tafīla pattern, as in ḡaraba-taḡriba, karama-takrima, although the form which might have been expected to be used in a strong verb would be tafīl form as in the Qur'anic expression "aḥsanu tafsīra". Another meaning of tafsīr is unloading before releasing him in the paddock. Ta'lab said fasartu al-faras means unsaddling. This is a reference to the meaning of exposing or revealing: as if the reference is to uncover its back.

(126) Grammar alone is not sufficient for the knowledge of eloquent Arabic speech. One must also be aware of the speech of the Arabs and understand their customs thoroughly.

(127) ... explaining the utterances which are obscure to the hearer in a manner which clear to him by synonym or paraphrase or other semantic indications.

(128) Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth. The similitude of His light is as a niche wherein is a lamp.

(Q.24, 35)

(129) Al-nūr in the speech of the Arabs is visible light. It is attributed to God metaphorically on the basis of two considerations: either as an active participle meaning munawwir (the one giving light to heaven and earth), or as a case of ellipsis, i.e. dū nūr (having light). It is also likely that nūr is a form of praise as in fulān šamsu l-bilād wa-nūr algaba'il wa-qamariha (sun of the country and the light and moon of the tribes). This is common in the speech of the Arabs and their poetry. The poet said: as if you were a sun and the kings were stars.

(130) See No. 12 in this part.

(131) Al-naṣb is what a man erects, to which a man hastens. It might be a flag, a building or an idol. It was very common for idols which were called al-ansāb for this reason. Abū 'Amr said it is a net in which the prey is caught in hunting and to which the owner hastens lest the prey should escape. Muḡāhid said: naṣb is a flag.

According to Ibn Duraid, if naṣb is read with damma, it means 'erected idols which were worshipped'. Al-Aḥfaṣ said that nuṣub is the plural of naṣab like rahn-ruhun; anṣāb is then the plural of the plural. yūfidūn is yusriʿūn. According to Abū al-ʿĀliya, it means they race to a certain distance. The poet said: ... like the jinn yūfadna from ʿabqār.. Another poet illustrates the meaning of going swiftly: ... I will describe an ostrich as mīfādan ...

- (132) O my neighbour, fate has been unkind to us,
come to me, I will share my troubles with you.
- (133) His saying compared the poetry of al-Ḥamdānī is unacceptable since the poetry of late writers is not acceptable evidence.
- (134) As to what occurs in the poetry of Ḥabīb, it is not to be quoted. Abū ʿAlī al-Fārisī has been criticised for quoting Ḥabīb:
He who entertains wishes will remain weak ...
How could he quote the poetry of a muwallad about whose errors in Arabic people have written chapters.
- (135) See No. 97 in this part.
- (136) Muslim bin Muḥārīb reads biqīʿāt with a tāʾ maḥṭūṭa as the plural of qīʿa like dīmāt and qīmāt from dīma and qīma. Another reading he proposes uses the tāʾ which is like the hāʾ in pause. This probably points to the plural of qīʿa and the pausal hāʾ is a feature of the language of Tay, as when they say al-banāh and al-aḥawāh. The author of al-Lawāmiḥ said: probably what was meant could be qīʿa as in the other readings but emphasising the fatha gave rise to the alif as in muḥranbaq li-yanbāʿ. It may also be that he made it like saʿla and saʿlāt, laila and lailāt. Al-qīʿa is singular, equivalent to al-qāʿ, or is the plural of qāʿ as in nār and nīra. In this way, the reading of qīʿāt would be considered a sound plural capable of forming a broken plural like riḡālāt quraisʿ and qīmālāt... sufr.

- (137) See No. 70 in this part.
- (138) Al-matal in the original speech of the Arabs has the same meaning as al-mitl and al-matīl, in the same way as ṣabah and ṣibh and ṣabīh, which is the analogue. Amtāl is the plural of matal and mitl. According to al-Yazīdī, al-amtāl are al-aṣbāh, and the origin of al-matal is al-waṣf (description). When it is said, hāda matalu kāda, this means that the description of this is the same as the description of something else in some respect. Al-matal is also a proverbial saying which is novel in some way. It has been said that al-matal gives a tangible and an intangible visible description which in some way subtly points to something similar, so that the mind perceives the equivalence with the counterpart.
- (139) It must be novel in some respects.
- (140) It affects the heart in a manner which is not attained by describing something by itself, the purpose of al-matal being to compare the hidden with the visible and the absent with the present so that they are seen as one and the same, making what can be sensed to conform with what is in the mind.
- (141) See No. 109 in this part.
- (142) He compared them with the description of a donkey carrying books, as it does not know that it is carrying: whether books or stones, the donkey is aware only of the fatigue of the carrier.
- (143) Their knowledge of poetry is as good as the knowledge of camels ...
- (144) And when thou seest them their figures please thee; and if they speak thou givest ear unto their speech. (They are) as though they were blocks of wood in striped cloaks. They deem every shout to be against them. They are the enemy.

(Q.63, 4)

(145) They were compared to al-huṣb (wood) for the strangeness of their understanding and the absence of faith from their hearts. He went further to indicate the uselessness of the wood by having it leaning on a wall. The comparative is either a new sentence or if a continuation refers back to "them" understood. The comparison is intended to describe them as cowards and as weak-willed. This is indicated by ʿalaih as the second subject, showing them as considering any occurrence as an occurrence to them, thus relaying the notion of the cowardice and the terror in their hearts.

(146) See No. 77 in this part.

(147) He puts into the utterances of the Qurʾān more than is there. He ascribes to God what He has not said. He does this all the time in his interpretation. He reads too much into the Qurʾānic utterance, ascribing things to God that He did not say and with no evidence from the utterance to lend weight to such a view.

(148) This man often cites philosophers who are at variance with Islamic theologians in the interpretation of the word of God which has been revealed in the language of the Arabs. The Arabs do not understand any of the concepts propounded by the philosophers. The interpretation of the philosophers is like riddles and puzzles. These men, nevertheless, are called 'men of wisdom' by this man. In fact, they are the most ignorant disbelievers of God and His prophets.

(149) Or as darkness on a vast, abysmal sea. There covereth him a wave, above which is a wave, above which is a cloud. Layer upon layer of darkness.

(Q24, 40)

(150) Interpretation based on part-to-part comparison is like al-bāṭiniyya interpretation. It is a deviation from the speech of the Arabs.

Part Three

- (1) Rhetoric is to reach the heart, by meaning, in the best of words.
- (2) It comes in three ranks: the lowest, the highest, and in between.
- (3) What is of the highest rank is inimitable; this is the rhetoric of Qur^{ān}. However, what is of a lower rank is imitable, e.g. the rhetoric of eloquent people.
- (4) Stating that one of two things can replace the other either sensorily or intellectually.
- (5) Likening what can not be sensed to what can be sensed.
- (6) As for those who disbelieve, their deeds are as a mirage in a desert. The thirsty one supposeth it to be water till he cometh unto it and findeth it naught.

(Q.24, 39)

- (7) Both are similar in their being false illusions and in their being eagerly needed ... The man who is parched with thirst is too keen to get it (water). However, having been let down, he (the unbeliever) will get his account whereby he will be led to hell where he will stay forever.
- (8) A similitude of those who disbelieve in their Lord: Their works are as ashes which the wind bloweth hard upon a stormy day. They have no control of aught that they have earned.

(Q.14, 18)

- (9) The two things being compared are similar in their being destroyed, having no benefit, and in their being unable to realize.
- (10) Recite unto them the tale of him to whom We gave Our revelations, but he sloughed them off ... Therefore his likeness is as the likeness of a dog; if thou attackest him he panteth with his tongue out, and if thou leavest him he panteth with his tongue out.

(Q.7, 175-176)

- (11) They are similar in their refusing to obey, and in their low status; the dog lolls out his tongue whether he is attacked to stop that or left alone, and so is the unbeliever, he will not faithfully obey, whether he is forced to do that or not.
- (12) Those unto whom they pray beside Allah respond to them not at all, save as (is the response to) one who stretcheth forth his hands toward water (asking) that it may come unto his mouth, and it will never reach it.
- (Q13, 14)
- (13) They are similar in their being very much in need for benefit, and in their being in great sorrow for what they have not achieved. And, in this there is an order not to ask anybody except Allāh (mighty and sublime be He) who has the power to make us achieve something or not, and who is totally fair.
- (14) Likening what is not common to what is common.
- (15) And when We shook the Mount above them as it were a covering.
- (Q7, 171)
- (16) They are similar in their being so high.
- (17) Lo! We let loose on them a raging wind on a day of constant calamity, sweeping men away as though they were uprooted trunks of palm-trees.
- (Q54, 19-20)
- (18) The similarity is in that the wind has eroded and annihilated both of them (people and date-palm trunks); in this verse there is an evidence for the great power of Allāh, and there is also an intimidation that such punishment might be under way soon.
- (19) And when the heaven splitteth asunder and becometh rosy like red hide.
- (Q55, 37)

- (20) They are similar in their being red.
- (21) Know that the life of this world is only play, and idle talk, and pageantry, and boasting among you, and rivalry in respect of wealth and children; as the likeness of vegetation after rain; whereof the growth is pleasing to the husbandman.
- (Q57, 20)
- (22) "They are similar in their being the object of pride and admiration, and in their liability to change to the opposite."
- (23) Likening what can not be intuitively realized to what can be.
- (24) And a Garden whereof the breadth is as the breadth of the heavens and the earth.
- (Q57, 21)
- (25) And in this there is a marvellous description which may arouse the desire to (get into) Paradise which is so beautifully described as spacious. The similarity here, between Paradise on one side and heavens and earth on the other side, is in being spacious.
- (26) The likeness of those who are entrusted with the Law of Moses, yet apply it not, is as the likeness of the ass carrying books.
- (Q62, 5)
- (27) ... thou mightest have seen men lying overthrown, as they were hollow trunks of palm-trees.
- (Q69, 7)
- (28) The likeness of those who choose other patrons than Allah is as the likeness of the spider.
- (Q29, 41)
- (29) Likening what is weak as regards some characteristic to what is strong in that respect.

- (30) His are the ships displayed upon the sea, like banners.
(Q.55, 24)
- (31) He created man of clay like the potter's.
(Q.55, 14)
- (32) Count ye the slaking of a pilgrim's thirst and tendence of the Inviolable Place of Worship as (equal to the worth of him) who believeth in Allah ...
(Q.9, 19)
- (33) This is a simile in which the weak regarding some characteristic has been likened to what is strong in that connection. They are similar in greatness though the mountains are greater.
- (34) Wonderfully phrased, marvellously worded and extremely eloquent to an extent that shows the incompetence of humans to imitate.
- (35) The Qurʾān, with its inimitability and miraculousness, cannot be understood as we understand the rhetoric of poetry. This art (rhetoric) has nothing miraculous; one can have a command of it by learning, practising and preparing as in writing poetry, designing rhetorical speeches, structuring epistles and in skilfully prepared prose. However, the loftiness of the style of the Qurʾān has no peer to be imitated, nor could such be spontaneously produced, as the poet may arrive at a unique verse of poetry, find an appropriate word, or come out with an outstanding unique meaning.
- (36) Some have asserted that the iʿqāz of the Qurʾān can be deduced from the areas we have written about; and that can be the proof for iʿqāz. However, we disagree with that assertion; such areas, if attended to, can be commanded by training and preparing for them. For example, if one learns how to write poetry, he will write poems. But training and preparation will not at all enable anybody to imitate the Qurʾān in my view, in the sense in which we have stated that the iʿqāz is recognised.

- (37) Who has reached the top in his knowledge about the Arabic language and had a command of its ways and techniques, knows the limits of the skilful speaker and knows what is beyond ability; he realizes the i'qāz of Qur'ān as he differentiates between rhetorical speech, an epistle and poem, and as he differentiates between the good, the bad, the fluent, the eloquent, the unique, the skilful and the outstanding of poetry.
- (38) You will realise the difference between the speech of the human beings and that of their lord (Allāh), and you will see how the structuring of the speech of the Qur'ān is different from that of the humans' speech. You will also realize the difference between the speech of an eloquent speaker and that of another, between the speech of one rhetorician and that of another, between the speech of one poet and that of another, and between all of those and the structuring of the speech of the Qur'ān.
- (39) Poetry writing is something that is possible and can be achieved ... But the Qur'ān's linguistic structuring is too high for anyone to think that he can imitate it, too superior for the human intellect to fully understand it, and too unique for anyone to hope that he will attain its level or that he can seek it.
- (40) A simile is to state that one of two things can replace the other either sensorily or intellectually.
- (41) If we say that the Qur'ānic similes are inimitable, we will be presented with what you are well acquainted with from the similes of the well known poetry. In the poetry of Ibn al-Mu'tazz you can find the beautiful similes which are similar to magic. In this regard, he has his own peculiar style and he has arrived at what was never arrived at by other poets. We have shown also that many aspects of rhetoric are amenable to be learned and that one of such aspects is not sufficient in the absence of the others.

- (42) We deny anyone to say that the inimitability is due to only one individual kind on its own apart from the others, as when somebody says: The oath by itself is miraculous, the simile is miraculous, the use of homonym is miraculous, and the use of synonym is on its own a miracle.
- (43) If a verse containing a simile is claimed to be inimitable because of its phrasing and word structuring, I will not argue against such a claim. However, I cannot claim that its inimitability is due only to its inclusion of a simile.
- (44) It is possible to say that the use of a cunning metaphor may show īqāz as also literal expression since in both rhetoric is equally apparent.
- (45) Each of the metaphor and bayān has what cannot be defined, estimated or achieved just by learning, and is too deep to be discerned just by preparation. And, what can be learned, grasped or achieved must not be considered to be inimitable.
- (46) Similes of the creator (mighty and sublime be He).
- (47) Examples of similes referring to form can be found in the verses:
 "And for the moon We have appointed mansions till she return like an old shrivelled palm-leaf",
 "Its crop is as it were the heads of devils",
 "(In beauty, they are) like the jacinth and the coral-stone", and
 "(Pure) as they were hidden eggs (of the ostrich)".
- (48) Examples of similes referring to actions can be found in the verses:
 "And for those who disbelieve, their deeds are as a mirage in the desert. The thirsty one supposes it to be water ...",
 "The similitude of those who disbelieve in their Lord: Their works are as ashes which the wind blows hard upon a stormy day ...".
 From these there are so many in the Qur'ān.

- (49) Other examples of figurative expressions and similes that include likening to eating can be found in the verse:
 "Lo! Those who devour the wealth of orphans wrongfully ...",
 and in the verse: "devouring illicit gain". This can still be said even if they used this money to drink alcoholics, wear clothes and ride animals (like horses) without spending a penny on food. About those people who eat the orphan's wealth, Allāh said: "They do but swallow fire into their bellies", and in that there is another figurative expression.
- (50) All these are different though all of them are figurative expressions.
- (51) Deaf, dumb and blind; and they return not.
 (Q2, 18)
- (52) And about people who can actually hear, Allāh said that: "(they) are deaf, dumb and blind; and they return not" (i.e. they will not return to what is right). This is just a comparison.
- (53) Lo! it is a tree that springeth in the heart of hell, Its crop is as it were the heads of devils.
 (Q37, 64-65)
- (54) This does not mean that people have seen a devil in any form. It is just that as Allāh has made it natural to all nations to feel disgusted from all forms of devil, dislike him and hate him, and as Allāh has made it common to all tongues to liken the bad things to devil, He (Allāh) used this natural attitude to intimidate, and discourage people to do what is not in accord with their nature and the human nature in general.
- (55) Recite unto them the tale of him to whom We gave Our revelations, but he sloughed them off, so Satan overtook him and he became of those who lead astray. And had We willed We could have raised him by their means, but he clung to the earth and hallowed his own

lust. Therefore his likeness is as the likeness of a dog; if thou attackest him he panteth with his tongue out, and if thou leavest him he panteth with his tongue out.

(Q.7, 175-176)

- (56) The likening of what has been mentioned at the beginning (the rejector of Allāh's miracles) to the dog does not fit. If somebody is being given something which he rejects without saying anything, we cannot liken him to the dog who barks and runs away when you attack him, and attacks you and barks when you leave him alone. Moreover, they argue, the word yalhat (lolls out his tongue) in this verse does not fit; a dog lolls out his tongue as a result of being thirsty, feeling hot, or being tired, but barking results from something else.
- (57) It is understandable to liken the person who shows desire for and keenness on the wonderful miracles and convincing proofs when he is presented with them, to the dog in his keenness and desires; a dog gives the effort from himself in every case. By the same token, it would be understandable to liken that person in his rejection of such miracles and proofs, after he has been interested in and eager for them, to the dog when he runs away after you have attacked him. The rejection of the important things must be as strong as accepting them and equal in weight to the keenness for them. And, the dog, as he gets so tired from barking and coming forward and backward, lolls out his tongue as a result of becoming tired and thirsty.
- (58) After knowing Allāh (glorified be He), the most important science to be learned and promoted is the science of rhetoric whereby the inimitability of the Qurʾān can be realized.
- (59) We have known that if the human being neglects the science of rhetorics, he will not realize the inimitability of the Qurʾān with what Allāh has put into it from beautiful writing, outstanding structuring, eloquent brief describing and beautiful conciseness.

- (60) The simile is to state that one of two things replaces the other, by the likening technique, (i.e. on the way of likening), whether in actuality they replace each other or not.
- (61) And after all, in every speech the simile has different bases:
e.g. one thing may be likened to another regarding form as in the verse: "And for the moon We have appointed mansions till she returns like an old shrivelled palm-leaf",
One thing may be likened to another regarding colour and beauty as in the verse: "(In beauty, they are) like the jacynth and the coral-stone", and the verse: "(Pure) as they were hidden eggs (of the ostrich)".
- (62) And ask those of Our messenger whom We sent before thee:
Did We ever appoint gods to be worshipped beside the Beneficent?
(Q.43, 45)
- (63) This speech is also metaphoric; what is meant, and it is only Allāh who exactly knows, is 'ask the followers of the prophets sent before you, or look at their books and examine what they used to'.
- (64) ... So incline some hearts of men that they may yearn toward them,
(Q.14, 37)
- (65) And this is one of the good metaphors; essentially, al-hawī (the verb of which is tahwī) is getting down from a higher to a lower place. What is meant by using it here is to exaggerate the describing of hearts as filled with love towards the dwellers of that place. If Allāh said tahinnu (which means to long for) instead of tahwī, the former would have not been as greater impact (in expressing the meaning) as the latter; you can describe somebody as longing for something while he is staying in his place, but to describe him as getting down from where he is to a lower place, this would imply his being disturbed (in some way or another).

- (66) Who made the earth a resting-place for you.

(Q43, 10)

- (67) Al-mihād and al-mahd are the same in meaning (where somebody rests). This is similar to al-firās and al-fars (which both mean where one sleeps). However, the word al-mahd may have been used to mean the bed in which the young boy is kept (baby cot) which converges in meaning to the meaning of al-firās. Also, the words mahada and yamhad (the name of which is mahdan) are derivatives of al-mahd and they are used to mean putting the foot or the side in a certain position.

- (68) (Pure) as they were hidden eggs (of the ostrich).

(Q37, 49)

- (69) Likening something to what is contiguous or similar to it.

- (70) In the Qur^{ān} there are many similes. Examples of these can be found in the verses:

"And for the moon We have appointed mansions till she return like an old shrivelled palm-leaf",

"As for those who disbelieve, their deeds are as a mirage in the desert. The thirsty one supposes it to be water till he comes unto it and finds it naught",

"And if a wave enshrouds them like awnings, ...", and

"As they were locusts spread abroad".

- (71) See No. 53 in this part.

- (72) Examples from among what has appeared in the Qur^{ān} in that connection can be found in the verses:

"As for those who disbelieve, their deeds are as a mirage in a desert ...", "A similitude of those who disbelieve in their Lord: Their works are as ashes which the wind blows hard upon a stormy day ...",

"The similitude of the life of the world is only as water which We send down from the sky, then the earth's growth of that (which men and cattle eat) mingles with it ...",

"And when the heaven splits asunder and becomes rosy like red hide -", and "The likeness of those who are entrusted with the Laws of Moses (Tawrah), yet do not apply it, is as the likeness of the ass (donkey) carrying books".

- (73) See No. 30 in this part.
- (74) He has likened the thing (being likened which is the ships) to what is greater (the thing being likened to which is the mountains) with the aim of exaggerating.
- (75) See No. 53 in this part.
- (76) The ugly picture of devils (satans) is so engraved in the hearts of people that it has been become as if they were viewed. Using this picture in comparisons is similar to likening some face to the face of al-hūr (the beautiful companion, chaste women of heaven) in spite of the fact that we have never seen such faces either. And, the ugliness of the crop of al-zagqūm (a hell tree) is not as engraved in the people's hearts as the heads of devils and, accordingly, what it is likened to is clearer.
- (77) Also, in using the heads of devils there is more exaggerating in describing the ugliness than in using the crop of al-zagqūm .
- (78) Although our predecessors have written a lot of books on various areas of Qurʾānic subjects, they have not devoted a book, or even a chapter, to this particular subject.
- (79) Similes of the creator (mighty and sublime be He).
- (80) Similes are a kind of rhetoric that has a particular appeal. In this chapter we are going to mention and explain what has appeared from this kind in the Qurʾān, pointing out the source of beauty in it.

(81) A thing may be likened to another regarding form, appearance, movements, actions, colour, external characteristics, internal characteristics and nature; each of these has its own identity. However, one of them might have some dimensions in common with another. So, one can liken one substance to another, a characteristic, i.e. accident to a substance, a substance to a characteristic, and one characteristic to another.

(82) Like Pharaoh's folk and those who were before them, they disbelieved Our revelations.

(Q3, 11)

(83) Al-daʿb means the habit (what one used to do), or perseverance. One says daʿb (to mean he persevered), ʿadʿub (to mean he perseveres), daʿūban (to mean persevering), and he is dāʿib doing something (to mean he is persevering in doing something), or he is doing it the way he used to. In this verse of poetry Ḥaddāṣ bn Zuḥaīr al-ʿĀmirī says:
The persevering (al-daʿb) continued until Hawāzin drew back, and Salim and ʿĀmir surrendered. (Hawāzin, Salim and ʿĀmir are names of tribes).

(84) The vowel associated with the letter (k) in the word kadaʿb is al-raḥ because (grammatically) it is a predicate to the subject (ḥabar ibtidāʿ). This is similar to the word ḥalfak when one says ʿAid ḥalfak. The vowel associated with that word, initially, is al-raḥ because it is also ḥabar ibtidāʿ, however, in effect the vowel associated with it is al-naṣb because of its position in the sentence. (i.e. its coming after the verb to be).

(85) They are his āl (followers) because they depended on him. Everybody in whom any group depends, whether in right or in wrong, is leader and they are his āl.

- (86) The difference between al-āḥ (people) and al-aṣḥāb is that the people of somebody have a stronger connection with him than have his companions, such as travel companions or study-companions.
- (87) The verse includes likening the state of affairs of the unbelievers, in their disbelief and rebellion against the prophet (peace be upon him) and denying the signs of Allāh (mighty and sublime be He), to the state of affairs of the Pharoah's people in their rebellion against Moses (peace be upon him) and their denial of the signs of Allāh which Moses has brought.
- (88) A literal equivalent of this simile is in a verse of poetry by Imru' al-Qays, though Allāh's saying is nobler, more eloquent, clearer, more clarifying, and better. Imru' al-Qays says:
 Standing on their mounts beside it, my friends are saying: do not get ruined by your grief, and be patient,
 My recovery is a tear, if I shed it. I wonder if an old encampment is a place for wailing. As you used to find from Um-al-Huwairit (name) and Um-al-Rabāb (name) at Ma³sal (name of some place).
- (89) If they ask for showers, they will be showered with water like to molten lead which burneth the faces. Calamitous the drink and ill the resting place!
- (Q18, 30)
- (90) In their poetry, Arabs have frequently described the wells which they used along the barren desert routes and in the remote areas. They have described it as amenable to change, stagnant, smelly and salty. They have also exaggerated dislike in likening it to whatever might show that it is not fresh, of a bad taste and ugly. This was to indicate the great dangers they undergo and the difficulties they face along the unexplored routes to get water. An example of this is in this verse of poetry by al-Huḍayl who says:

As I reached the water, I found it as nasty as (some medicine) prepared for an extremely ill person.

So, I returned back thirsty leaving it untouched as if I had not found it.

(91) As they had drawn this water and greatly suffered in drinking it and had great difficulty in getting it out, and as the Qurʾān had come in their own language and in accordance with what they were acquainted with, Allāh described (in the Qurʾān) the punishment he has prepared for the wrong-doer in such a way that the description would be meaningful to them, (because it is drawn out of their own environment). In this way, the less valuable (water) is a reminder of the more valuable (obeying Allāh), and the present (water) is a reminder of the absent (the punishment which the wrong-doer will get later on the Day of Judgement).

(92) And as they were threatened with this water, their desires were aroused for the rivers, water, salsabīl and tasnīm of heavens. This was to let them realize by themselves that what they are aroused to is much better than what they have described in their poetry as pure, clear, cold, and tasty.

(93) Lo! it throweth up sparks like the castles, (Or) as it might be camels of bright yellow hue.

(Q.77, 32-33).

(94) As camels are patient and able to endure difficulties and carry heavy loads, they were the best to Arabs' hearts. Because of this Arabs have used camels frequently in their maxims and likened them to heavens (Paradises) ... Thus, Allāh has likened the sparks of hell blazing fire to camels to show how great they are and to scare and intimidate people.

(95) Then, ever after that, your hearts were hardened and became as rocks, or worse than rocks, for hardness.

(Q.2, 74)

- (96) Whoever concentrates on the mere literal meaning of the simile depending only on the words of the Qur^ʾān, will not fully understand the meaning. For example, in the above verse when Allāh says "and even worse in hardness", the literal meaning of this saying is not enough to understand it; besides the literal meaning it has connotative evidence and justification for itself. And, all the Qur^ʾānic meanings which poets and others imitate using their own words, will not at all attain the greatness and inimitability associated with the Qur^ʾānic meanings as expressed in the Qur^ʾān's own words.
- (97) The Day when We shall roll up the heavens as a recorder rolleth up a written scroll.
- (Q21, 104)
- (98) It has been reported in the tafsīr (interpretation) that the word al-siġil means where books are kept. However, Ibn ^ʿAbbās said that it means books which are folded to hide what they contain. It was also reported that it is a name of an angel.
- (99) ... as it were a shining star.
- (Q24, 35)
- (100) To Arabs, the word al-durriy means strongly luminous (giving out strong light); it is a derivative of the word al-durr (pearls). The pearls are so clear and because of this the strongly luminous thing is likened to the pearls as regards clearness. And, al-Farrā^ʿ said: Arabs call the great planets for which they have no names al-darārī. And, Abū ^ʿUbaida said that the word al-durri is taken from the Arabs' saying "the planet has dara^ʿa " to mean that it has run from one position to another in the sky.
- (101) See No. 93 in this part.

- (102) It was stated in the tafsīr (interpretation) that the word al-qasr is the singular of al-quṣūr (which means palaces). It was also stated that it is plural qasra which means the thick trees ... Arabs liken camels to palaces to express the camel's physical perfection and beauty of its appearance as in this verse of poetry by ʿAntarah:
- My (female) camel stopped there, as if she were a palace, so that I could satisfy the needs of those who have been waiting for that. However, interpreting the word al-qasr to mean the thick trees is also a beautiful simile; this is equivalent to al-ḡada of which the singular is ḡudwa; which means the thick piece of wood. And, Arabs liken fire, in its blazing and branching of flame, to trees as in this verse of poetry by al-ʿAbbāsī:
- Stoves that stayed all night blazing and widening the flame both eastward and westward are sending out trees of gold for us.
- (103) Some have read the word al-qasr as al-qasar by adding the vowel point to the letter (ṣ) in which case the plural of that word will be qasara; (which means the camel necks), that is, (the sparks) are likened to the camel necks (in their being huge). This is a beautiful simile; which Arabs use to describe fire as when they say: "the fire necks have emerged" ...
- (104) See No. 95 in this part.
- (105) He who reads aṣaddu qaswatan, i.e. using rafʿ in the above verse, argues that hiya is understood, i.e. hiya aṣaddu. However, reading this with naṣb argues that it is genitive originally as if he said ka-aṣadda. But since this is elative it has no 'i' in genitive and so 'a' is used but the position is genitive.
- (106) See No. 26 in this part.
- (107) The comparison is taken from the state of affairs of a donkey carrying the containers of knowledge (books) and the results of the human intellectual activity (books), but about their content

he knows nothing and cannot even differentiate between them and any other load that has nothing to do with knowledge. And, at the end of the day, the donkey gets nothing but to be burdened with his load and the effort to satisfy his owners needs; it is just a matter of association between things (as the donkey is associated with loads' carrying).

- (108) The similitude of the life of the world is only as water which We send down from the sky, then the earth's growth of that which men and cattle eat minglenth with it till, when the earth hath taken on her ornaments and is embellished, and her people deem that they are masters of her, Our commandment cometh by night or by day and We make it as reaped corn, as if it had not flourished yesterday.

(Q10, 25)

- (109) If you look at this verse, you will find that it contains ten separate sentences though they are so connected with each other that they look as if they were one sentence. However, this does not render us unable to understand the scene described by each individual sentence. Moreover, the comparison is derived from (all the sentences) in their totality without separating one sentence from another or one part (of the verse) from another to the extent that if you drop out any of these sentences, the significance of the simile will be broken.
- (110) You have to realize that the real simile, which is better called comparison because of its going beyond the concrete explicit simile, is only obtained by a sentence, two sentences or more. And, the more intellectual the simile is, the more there will be a need for the longer grammatical structure.
- (111) If you examine the similes, you will find that the more the things being compared diverge, the more touching to hearts and the more satisfying and comforting to souls the simile is .

(112) The only option open now is that (the inimitability of the Qur'ān) lies in its composition of sentences (al-nazm) and the harmonious connection of words together; we have proved that all the other options are irrelevant. If this is so and considering the fact that al-nazm is simply to observe the grammatical rules of speech ...

(113) (By those who have thoroughly examined the Qur'ān), the advantages found in its nazm, and the characteristics encountered in the context of its wording were found to be inimitable. Not only this, but also that they were astonished by the marvels found in the beginning of its verses, segments of verses, how words fit into their context, every exemplifying, every informative statement, every advice, every warning, every informing, reminding, arousing and frightening. Moreover, they were amazed by that, as they thoroughly examined it (the Qur'ān) sūrah by sūrah, ten verses by ten verses, and verse by verse, they could not find a single word out of place or redundant ... Instead, they found a consistency which was admired by their minds and for which there was no way of imitation by anyone.

(114) And it was said: O earth! Swallow thy water and, O sky! be cleared of clouds! And the water was made to subside. And the commandment was fulfilled. And it (the ship) came to rest upon (the mount) Al-Jūdī and it was said: A far removal for wrongdoing folk!

(Q11, 44)

(115) If you look at the above verse, you will see the inimitability and you will be amazed by what you see and what you hear. Because such self-evident beauty and surpassing elegance would have not obtained without something to do with the connection of the words to one another. And, the beauty and

uniqueness (of that verse) lie only where the first (word) connects to the second, the third to the fourth, ... and so on until you have read them all. The greatness (of the verse) comes from between (the words) and is the result of them all considered collectively.

- (116) These meanings, namely, metaphor, allusion, simile and all kinds of figurative expressions, are needed for al-nazm; by them it is obtained and from them it results. This is simply because none of them can be incorporated into individual words not linked up together in accordance with the grammatical rules. For example, one cannot imagine a metaphor incorporated into an individual verb or noun which is not in appropriation with the others.
- (117) Every wise man needs to know about these matters and to have a command of them. And, the only way to achieve this is to examine the Arabs' speech and to look into their poetry.

Discussion

- (1) Lo! Allah loveth those who battle for His cause in ranks,
as if they were a solid structure.
(Q61, 4)
- (2) And the mountains will become as carded wool.
(Q101, 5)
- (3) The similitude of the life of the world is only as water which
We send down from the sky.
(Q10, 25)
- (4) From metaphors, similes and likening to gardens and to plants,
they have used so many; if we were to mention all they have
used, it would take us away from our main concern. An
example is what we have got from their likening women as
regards their beauty (to other things) ...
- (5) And for the moon We have appointed mansions till she return
like an old shrivelled palm-leaf.
(Q36, 38)
- (6) ... Such is their likeness in the Torah and their likeness in the
Gospel-like as sown corn that sendeth forth its shoot ...
(Q48, 29)

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