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CULTURES"

RELIGION IN THE MIDDLE EAST

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THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE QURAN

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In The Name Of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.

When the Prophet Muhammad (may peace be upon him) was forty years of age, he was sent by God as a messenger for the whole of mankind. He stayed in Mecca thirteen years preaching, but his success was limited. He was ordered by God to immigrate to Madina, where he stayed ten years before his death. After the whole Arabian Peninsula became under his control, a huge number of people embraced the new religion and many letters were sent by him to the rulers of the surrounding countries.

The Quran has been revealed upon him from the time he became a prophet till he died, and what has been revealed upon him before he emigrates to Medina is called The Meccan Quran, and what has been revealed in Medina is called The Madinese Quran. The Quran is a miracle in its structure and meaning, its shape and content. Just as the miraculous nature which deals with the shape of the Quran is unlimited, while what deals with its contents is deeper than that of its shape, so our aim here will be limited, to show some signs which deal with the construction of the Quran. We are going to do so as we know that it is impossible to separate between the construction of the Quran and its contents.

The Quran challenged the Arabs to compose a similar Quran, or ten suras or even one, but they failed to do so. It also challenged the whole of mankind and the spirits, and stated clearly that they can never do so even if they were backed by each other. This came in the sura of Al Isra' verse 88 'O Muhammad say: if the whole of mankind and jinns were to gather together to produce the like of this Quran, they could not produce the like thereof, even if they backed up each other.' The verse referred to mankind firstly because they have more ability to express themselves, and referred to jinns secondly because they are well known as the creature whose ability is superior. The Quran in several suras gave this impression about jinns.

AN OUTSTANDING GROUP

It might be pleasant to state that if we did a survey over the Arabic community throughout history, to find out the group which was more likely to accept the Quranic challenge, we would realize that the Qurayshite group during the life of the Prophet was the outstanding group,

because Quraish has their own psychological and philological reasons, which should have persuaded them to accept the challenge, but the Quran is unimmitigable. Quraish expressed their psychological reasons before the hijra by hurting the prophet, his companions and forbidding people to accept the new religion, and after the hijra by fighting the prophet severely in many battles till their city, Mecca, was captured by the prophet. The philological reasons can be summarized as follows:

1. The pre-Islamic Qurayshite language, for religious, economical social and political reasons, was able to force its prestige over the whole languages of the Arabian peninsula, so it became the literary language of all Arabs. The main social aspects are two, the Qurayshite used to be visited, in seasons, by all the Arabs, and the main Arabian markets were not far away from Mecca.

2. Qurayshites, were known among the Arabs as more sensitive and people of fine taste. They avoided all philological faults scattered among the Arabs, and adopted elegant words and expressions. For example, the tribe of Tamin used to pronounce Al-Hamz, in such words SHAIAN شينا and KHASIAN خاسا while Quraish makes Al Hamz A YAI and says KHASIVAN خاسيا and SHAYVAN شيا; Quraish realized that Al-Nabr (what Tamin does) is better than Al Tasheel (what Quraysh does) so it adopted Al-Nabr of Tamin.

To the past reasons we may add two common important reasons dealing with what is called the instinctive tongue. These two reasons are:

- (a) Desinential inflection.
- (b) The ability to catch the second meaning of the word. When the distinguished Qurashite group vanished these two reasons began to decline and disappeared for good.

DESINENTIAL INFLECTION

Mainly the Arabic language is known by this phenomenon. The most benefit of it, is to give the word in the sentence more freedom, because it still preserves its position in the sentence. When there is a group of people who are able by nature to preserve this phenomenon, when they talk or compose prose or poetry, that would mean they are able to understand the Quran, which has been revealed in the same Arabic language. Abdul Qahr al Jurjani, says, that the Quranic miraculous nature came because it practised the grammatical rules strictly and got the benefit of the desinential inflection. The meaning of that is to build the sentence following blindly the meanings as they are arranged in your own self. For one reason we make a plain sentence and for another we change the arrangement of a word or more. Normally, when we want to express ourselves directly we follow blindly the grammatical rules, but when we want the

sentence to bear our feelings, emotions and ideas, then we would change the arrangement of some words, taking the use of desinential inflection. The rhetorical stages are numerous, and the peak of them is represented in the construction of the Quran.

The Arabs used to have till the first Islamic century one language, and because of mixing with non-Arabs, inside and outside the Arabian peninsula, the Arabs began to lose their instinctive tongue, we can describe the way of the language as follows. By the end of the first century the Arabs began to purify their language.

In the second century the instinctive tongue was spoilt, at cities such as Mecca, the city of the Qurayshites and Madina the first Islamic capital. By that time any bedouin is considered a just judge when a philological argument occurs among linguists. In the third century linguists began to follow-up the linguistic mistakes which are committed by bedouins, and in the fourth century, the instinctive tongue was spoilt everywhere, and the Arabic language was divided into a slang language and a literary language. The latter succeeded instinctive tongue and initiated it.

SECONDARY MEANINGS

The ability of the Arabs to catch the secondary meanings goes back to the same pre-Islamic life for many generations, and to the nature of the Arabic language as an etymological language. Under Islam the Arabic life was changed because the Arabs mixed with others and the influence seemed very clear over the language which declined quickly from its peak, as we explained previously the linguists who were very keen for the language to be pure so that the Quran, and the traditions of the prophet and the linguistic inheritance will be understood - put the grammatical rules. It is nice to know that Arabic grammar was complete, when its rules were stated in the first grammatical book called the book by Sibawaih (died 180 A.H.).

The nature of the Arabic language was helping to catch the secondary meanings, because each derived word contains normally the letters of the root from which it was derived so it gives its meaning and contains the meaning of the root. For example the word kitab means a book and also it has the ability to limit the angle through which Arab looked to the word because it deals with writing, the word Quran deals with reading so this Holy Book should be read. The word Badr means the full moon and gives the impression that moon at that night tries to emerge from behind the horizon before the sun etc.

We can say that these secondary meanings represent the point which

attracted the attention of the Arabs when they wanted to name things. They observed writing in the word *Kitab*, reading in the *Quran*, the circled shape in the word *Dar* (means a house) and height in the word *sama'* (means a sky). Normally we can find out the root from which the word was derived. The more easy to find out the root, the more easy to find out the second meaning. Arabs till the first Islamic century were able, by nature, to find the secondary meanings. When the instinctive tongue was spoilt the ability to keep Arab inflection and to understand the secondary meanings became weak. Through learning the grammatical rules, inflection could be obtained and through philological dictionaries, which collect together all words, derived from one root, in one section.

The safety of the Arabic instinctive tongue made them Muslims because they understood the deep meanings of the *Quran* and forced a group of the non-believers to listen, for the whole length of several nights, to the prophet reciting the *Quran* in his house in Mecca. They knew that dawn emerged only because the prophet stopped reciting the *Quran*. 'Otba B. Rabia is one of the Meccan non-believers, and was allowed by the tribe of *Quraish* to play the role of the ambassador between *Quraish* and the prophet. He offered the prophet many things such as money, authority, and medicine to cure himself to choose whatever he liked on condition that he will stop preaching for Islam. When *Otba* finished saying everything he wanted to say, the prophet asked him to listen to him, and recited from the beginning of the *Sura* of *Fussilat* till the end of the verse at which one must prostrate. The prophet prostrated and asked 'Otba to make his mind up. 'Otba returned to *Quraish* with a new countenance till they could understand that 'Otba had changed his mind towards the prophet. 'Otba made it very clear that an excellent future is waiting for the prophet and advised them not to be an obstacle in his way, because if he was killed by others or succeeded they would get the benefit. They want him to get killed, but if he succeeded he would still be considered one of their tribe!

It is well known also that the meaning of parts of the *Quran* is very clear and the meaning of some verses is from the so-called *Al-Mutashabih*, which is known by God only, and in spite of this fact the Meccan group listened to the prophet whole nights long. They declared that they did not know the meaning of some verses. That means that *Quran* when it is recited in the proper way has its charm, even if it was not completely understood. Can we show some reasons, deal with the construction of the *Quran* that makes it have all this influence? That is what we are trying to find out in the next few pages.

The whole Quran is unimitigable, whether the sura be long or short, such as Al-kawthar or Al-ikhlas. Anyone who can taste the Arabic language can never miss a verse from the Quran when he faces it among the lines of the page that he reads. The gap is wide between the Holy Quran and the traditions of the prophet in spite of his being the most eloquent among the Arabs.

One of the most important marks of the Quran is all those who recite it, whatever their standard of education, can understand it, so they are indulged in it, and living wherever it carries them. The deep mind always comes to the conclusion that its capacity is limited and there are still many points in the Quran needed to be examined by others. The idea which says: 'the earlier left so many things for the later is very closely linked with the Quran.'

If we wanted to reveal the secret of this we would discover firstly that the Quran gathered together many things in a fascinating balance between the ability to satisfy both, the self and the mind. It satisfied the self by its sweet tone, musical words and torrential feelings, and satisfied the mind by its proper meanings, remote aims and good structure. This marvellous balance is the reason for the Quran being recited continuously. When somebody finishes reciting a part of it, he would be eager to resume reciting.

THE THEORY OF CONSTRUCTION

As all the verses of the Quran are inimitable, so the theory which will explain its miraculous nature, must be comprehensive enough for each verse can be treated by it. This condition could be achieved by the theory of construction which was discovered by the famous grammarian and rhetorical scholar, Abdul Qahir al Jurjani, who declared that the language, in its reality, is a group of relationships among words in the sentence, and so the single word is helpless. There is no difference between one word and another, as far as both of them can be pronounced easily and properly.

Abdul Qahir al Jurjani gave the whole of his effort and attention to meaning, words in the opinion of Abdul Qahir are mere servants the author needs not more than arranging meanings in himself .. In whatever shape satisfies him then words would come by themselves without any effort. This is the summary of the theory of construction. It is considered, in the opinion of Abdul Qahir, able to explain the miraculous nature of the Quran. It is clear that this theory is comprehensive that it is suitable to measure any text, and not the Quran only.

Both great rhetorical books of Abdul Qahir have reached us, they are

Asrar ul-Balagha and *Dala'il ul-i 'Jāz*. The subject of the first is rhetoric and the subject of the second is semantics. Abdul Qahir passed over rhetorical ornament quickly, mainly in *Asrar l-Balaghah* and carried towards it the same idea that the meaning is the most important thing. What will be accepted from it is that which comes naturally, otherwise it would be worthless.

It is important to state on this occasion that the three rhetorical subjects *Al Bayan Al Ma'ani* and *Al Badi'a* came under these names as a result of the two books of Abdul Qahir. He studied in *Asrar al Balaghah* the items of which *'Ilmul Bayan* consists, and tried in *Dalail al-I'ajāz* to reveal the secret of the miraculous nature of the Quran. So he composed this large book which deals with his theory of the construction of the Quran or *Nazariyyat ul Nazm*.

Although we do not know exactly which one of the two books was composed first, it seems clear that the theory of construction which was shown in *Dalail ul-I'ajāz* and which is suitable to measure any text - is suitable naturally to conclude the three subjects of rhetoric. So, can we understand that the book of *Asrar ul Balaghah* was written first and that Abdul Qahir, when his theory became very clear in mind, as was expressed in *Dalail ul I'ajāz*, realized that he has treated previously from the same point of view, in *Asrar ul Balaghah* the similar rhetorical items which came recently under the name of *Ilmul Bayān*, so there was no need to repeat what he said and preferred to direct his effort to explain and practice his theory and his second big book? Perhaps that would be understood when somebody read these two books carefully. We have pieces of evidence to prove that. One of them is that Abdul Qahir tried very hard on many occasion in *Dalail ul-I'ajāz* to explain his theory till the last part of the book was turned into a group of essays to explain each time this theory which is considered the key to understanding the secret of the miraculous nature of the Quran. We do not find anything in *Asrar ul Balagha* which deals with this theory. The second peice of evidence is that Abdul Qahir does not limit rhetoric in *Ilmul Bayan*, because most of the rhetorical texts are outside this science so it was necessary for the theory which tries to discover the secret of the miraculous nature of the Quran to be a comprehensive one. In *Dalail ul-I'ajāz* his great theory was a ripe one.

Although the book of *Dalail ul-I'ajāz* was a big one, it was not rich enough in its examples, both Quranic and poetic, because Abdul Qahir tried to explain his theory theoretically more than practically. Abdul Qahir also could have chosen better poetic texts more capable to explain

his theory.

But the most important point is that Abdul Qahir was very fond of meaning that he neglected completely the music of the word and the rhythm of the sentence. The phenomenon of rhythm in the Quran has a great role to attract the attention of both the reciters and the listeners. We would have expected Abdul Qahir to pay this phenomenon a great attention, but unfortunately it was neglected by Abdul Qahir completely. We are going to throw some light on this phenomenon in this present paper.

Abdul Qahir's theory of the construction of the Quran means that language is a group of relationships among the words of the sentence. But *Dalail ul I'ajaz* being poor in its examples, even the Quranic ones, this fact did not give Abdul Qahir the opportunity to give his great theory the flexibility to be able to cover the whole text, and to find out the unity of it and to make the seen and unseen relationships of the text clear. We do not know that he took care of the so-called unity of the subject. Surely this unity is well known recently but nevertheless, Abdul Qahir should have participated in this field mainly because the unity of the subject is sometimes quite necessary and appreciated. Some of the pillars of the so-called 'amudushshi'ar are linked with the unity of the line of the poem and the unity of the poem itself. We think that the unity of the subject or the verse of the Quran needs to be examined for a while. We are going to try doing so in this present paper.

THE MUSIC OF THE ARABIC LANGUAGE AND THE RHYTHM OF THE QURAN

It is known about the Arabic language that it is a musical language both in poetry and prose. The music appears so clearly in poetry that it is considered one of the main pillars of Arabic poetry. It seems that the rhythm of Arabic poetry is the only complete and exact rhythm. That is seen clearly in the main sixteen Arabic metres, this number increased afterwards. Some of these metres have been borrowed recently, mainly by the Persian, Turkish and Urdu languages, because of the great mixing with the Arabic language. Some of the Arabic poets have the ability to have in their poetry what is called the inner rhythm, in addition to the external one. Almutanabbi and Albuhtury are among those. It is said about the latter that he wanted to compose poetry, but he sang.

It is clear that the rhythm of prose is less than that of poetry, and because the Arabic language is a musical one, the Abbasid poet Abul-atahiya, for example, used to have the ability to ascribe some part of the common speech that he heard to the Arabic poetic metres without changing any word, but sometimes he may make a few changes. Some writers have a remarkable ability to get the benefit of the music of Arabic words and

of their own musical sense, so if you changed a page of what they have written into musical signs you would observe the similarity among the shapes of those signs that you can transcribe some parts of lines into poetic metres. Among those outstanding in the past is Abu 'Uthmān 'Amr B. Bahr Al Jahiz and in the present days Dr. Taha Nusain.

When the self reaches a high rank of sharp sense, its speech curves by itself towards music. We discover sometimes that a speech of a character who does not compose poetry may form a complete line of a poem. This thing, for example, happened to the prophet Muhammad who neither composed poetry nor recited it, on a certain important occasion, some of his speech forms the metre called Arrajaz. He said:

أنا النبي لا كذب . . . أنا ابن عبد المطلب

its rhythm goes like this

Mutaḥ 'Ailun mutaḥ 'ailun
mutaḥ 'Ailun mutaḥ 'ailum

متفعّلن متفعّلن
متفعّلن متفعّلن

If we move to the Quran, we will realize that rhythm is a part of every chapter and verse. Each chapter has its own rhythm which might be found in another chapter and may not. The chapter, mainly when it is long, contains normally more than one rhythm. We always find complete suitability between the rhythm and the nature of the subject. Any ear which has the slightest ability to recognize tones, must detect the rhythm of the Quran it hears being recited properly. If we borrow one of the criteria with which speech is measured musically, for example, syllables, which are useful to measure poetry and prose and we measure a group of verses of the Quran, we will realize the similarity among the parts of the verse, and the group of verses. The rhythm is sometimes similar to a half line of verse or even to a complete line. When we recite these parts of the Quran, we recite them as we recite the other parts of the Quran.

If we look for the reasons which made rhythm a part of Arabic speech and the Quran, we can trace some of them to the nature of the language and we may summarize them as follows:

1. Desinential inflection which allows the word to have a great freedom in the sentence
2. The huge number of words.
3. Etymology, and the limited number of the letters of the word.

We talked previously about desinential inflection.

The huge number of words goes back to the wide space of the Arabian

peninsula and each tribe's need to invent their own words. Because of the strong mixing of Arabs, mainly in commercial, rhetoric markets, and during religious seasons, Arabic vocabulary became thoroughly mixed. The Qurayshite language became the common language of all Arabs as was explained previously.

We are going to look at etymology from another point of view, namely how it helped the Arabic language to be musical and poetical language. Because etymology is regular in Arabic language, so the words which are derived from similar roots used to be in a certain sonic form. The morphological forms, in which words are shaped, resemble musical forms, most of the Arabic roots consist of three letters, and the word, whether it is a verb, a noun or a preposition, consists of very few letters, the preposition in particular, consists sometimes of only one letter. So that the Arabic word can never be, including the added letters, more than seven letters.

Depending upon these facts, we can say that the Arabic speech is a group of musical forms. Desinential inflection helped the Arabic sentence to be musical, that is why rhythm became one of the most important pillars of the Arabic poetry, and a remarkable sign of the good prose. The rhythm appears in its best shape in the Holy Quran. Because the Arabic word is musical it persuades its poetry to have rhyme as an important part of it as well. It is an ornament for both the ear and the eye. The Quran has what is called *Al Fasilah* in front of the rhyme in poetry. *Al Fasilah* in the Quran, is not necessarily always the same, and the form of the last word in the verse is not necessarily also the same. The same metre is necessary in poetry while there is complete freedom for the verses of the Quran to choose any free rhythm.

The Quran observed, in content and shape, the nature of the two main periods through which the Muslim community passed. In Mecca, before the Hijra and in Madina after it. The concern of the Meccan Quran was mainly with the fundamental bases of the religion, while the concern of the Madinese Quran was largely with legislation, because the Muslim nation was founded in Madina. Dealing with the rhythm of the Quran, it has been noticed that it corresponds with the two main periods. As the Meccan Quran is normally directed towards the cruel-hearted Meccans who accused the prophet of lying and denied resurrection, the Meccan Quran normally consists of short suras and verses, including sharp expressions, and using certain words suitable for the common atmosphere such as the word *Kallā* which comes in the Meccan Quran only, and sometimes is repeated in very close verses. But when calm was a sign of the Madinese Muslim nation,

which breathes in Madina freely, and faces the natural circumstances which are normally faced by any young state, the Medinese Quran inclines to have long chapters and verses to treat different subjects.

As the methods of the Meccan Quran to persuade non-believers were numerous, and the subjects were different, so it was possible for many verses and chapters to be long. This means that any Meccan chapter, which combines the two main methods of the Meccan and Madinese Quran, might be an example for the Quran's concern for the nature of each subject it treats, and the suitability between its shape and contents. The sura of Mary could be that selected example.

THE RHYTHM OF THE SURA OF MARY

The sura of Mary, which concerns as the whole Meccan Quran does, the fundamental basis of the religion, has two main ways to persuade the non-believers to trust the prophet and to believe in the day of Judgement. The first way is through stories. The second way is through talking about the Meccan people and others like them throughout history. As stories in this sura are in general about a group of the good servants of Allah, who were presented with the Gift of Faith, so it is natural to be calm. The most important sign of this part of the sura is the clear inclination of the verses to be fairly long, and the last letter of verses is soft, Al Ya' or Al Hamza which might be turned into Ya'. The rhyme of Ya' is interrupted in seven verses, but two other close letters. They are Al-Nun and Al-Mim. It is nice to state that the seven verses in rhyme of Nun and Mim divided the verses of the rhyme of Ya' into two halves, each of them consisting of thirty verses exactly.

The reason for changing the rhyme into nun or mim, and changing the tone into a peculiar one, is because the subject is utterly different, and because the aim is to try to attract the attention to the error committed by the extremist followers of Jesus (may peace be upon Him). These are the verses which deal with Mary, Jesus and Ibrahim (may peace be upon them).

” واذكر في الكتاب مريم اذ انتبتت من أهلها مكانا شرقيا • فاتخذت من دونهم حجابًا فأرسلنا إليها روحنا فتمثل لها بشرًا صبيًا • قالت انى أعوذ بالرحمن منك ان كنت تقيا • قال انما انا رسول ربك لأهب لك غلامًا زكيا • قالت انى يكون لى غلام ولم يمسسنى بشر ولم أك بغيا • فان كذلك قال ربك هو على هين ولنجمه آية للناس ورحمة منا وكان أمرا مقضيا • فحملته فانتبتت به مكانا قصيا • فأجاءها المخاض الى جذع النخلة قالت يا ايبنى مت قبل هذا وكنت نسيا منسيا • فناداها من تحتها الا تحزنى قد جمى ربك تحتد سريًا • وهزى اليك

بجذع النخلة تماقط عليك رطباً جنياً • فكلى واشربى رقرى عينا فاماً ترين من البشر أحدا
فقلولى انى ندرت للرحمن صوتاً فلن أكلّم اليوم انسياً • فأتت به قومها تحمله قالوا يا مريم
لقد جئت شيئاً فريباً • يا أخت هارون ما كان أبوك امرأ سوءً وما كانت أمك بغيباً • فأشارت
إليه قالوا كيف تكلم من كان في الصهد هيبياً • فان انسى عهد الله آتانى الكتاب
وجعلنى نبياً • وجعلنى مباركاً أينما كنت وأوصانى بالصلاة والزكاة ما دمت
حياً • وبرا بوالدى ولم يجعلنى جباراً شقياً • والسلام على يوم ولدت ويوم
أموت ويوم أبعث حياً • ذلك عيسى ابن مريم قولى الحق الذى فيه يمترون • ما كان
لله أن يتخذ من ولد سبحانه ادا قضى أمراً فانما يقول له كن فيكون • وان
اللسرى وربكم فاعبدوه هدا صراط مستقيم • فاختلف الأحزاب من بينهم
فويل للذين كفروا من مشهد يوم عظيم • اصمع بهم وابصر يوم يأتوننا لكن الظالمون
اليوم فى ضلال مبين • وأندرههم يوم احصره ادا قضى الامر وهم فى غفلة وهم لا يؤمنون •
انا نحن نرت الارس ومن عليها والينا يرجعون • وادكر فى الكتاب ابراهيم الله كان
صديقاً نبياً • ادا قال لابيئه يا أبت لم تعبد ما لا يسمع ولا يبصر ولا يغنى عنك شيئاً •
يا أبت انى قد جاءنى من العلم ما لم يأتد فاتبعنى أهدك صراطاً سوياً • يا أبت لا تعبد
الشيطان ان الشيطان كان للرحمن خصياً • يا أبت انى أخاف أن يمسك
عذاب من الرحمن فتكون للشيطان ولياً • "

It is clear that in spite of the calm throughout all the verses, there is still a difference between the two groups of verses. Sadness and grief are prominent in the verses of the two rhymes, Al nūn and Al mīm.

If we move to the second part of the sura we realize that verses are normally short, and the rhyme turns into two strong letters, Addāl and Azzāy which go with strong expressions, short verses, quickly changed ideas and different meanings. We can recite the last group of verses of the sura as an example.

" وقالوا اتخذ الرحمن ولدا • لقد جئتم شيئاً ادا • تكاد السماوات يتفطرن
منه وتنشى الارس وتخر الجبال هدا • أن دعوا للرحمن ولدا • وما ينبغى
للرحمن أن يتخذ ولدا • ان كس من فى السماوات والارس الا آتى

الرَّحْمَنُ جِدَا • لَقَدْ أَحْصَاهُمْ وَعَدَّهُمْ عَدًّا • وَكَلَّمَهُمْ آتِيَهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ فَرْدًا
 إِنَّ الدِّينَ أَمْنٌ سَوَاءٌ وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ سَيَجْمَعُ لَهُمُ الرَّحْمَنُ وِدًّا • فَاتَّقُوا
 يَسْرَنَاهُ بِلِسَانِكَ لِنُبَشِّرَ بِهِ الْمُتَّقِينَ وَتَنْذِرُ بِهِ قَوْمًا لُدًّا • وَكَمْ أَهْلَكْنَا قَبْلَهُمْ
 مِنْ قَرْنٍ هَلْ تَحْسِبُ مِنْهُمْ مِنْ أَحَدٍ أَوْ تَسْمَعُ لَهُمْ رِكْزًا ۝

Some general remarks on the rhymes of this sura will now be made in two main groups.

1. As the common rhyme is Ya' and both the mind and the ear are familiar with this soft rhyme, so it will be much better if there is a preparative notice to give the feeling that the rhyme will be changed, and the impression of the kind of the new rhyme. All this does, in fact happen. To give the feeling that the rhyme will be changed, the last verse has a single rhymed letter, while the rhyme of all the previous verses consists of double letters. Here is the verse whose rhyme is a single letter:

۝ وَكَمْ أَهْلَكْنَا قَبْلَهُمْ مِنْ قَرْنٍ هُمْ أَحْسَنُ أَثَانًا وَرِئِيًّا ۝

The impression of the new rhyme is given in three different ways.

(a) As the new rhyme is in the letter Addal, it was preceded by a similar inner rhyme, this is the verse:

۝ قَسٍ مَنْ كَانَ فِي الضَّلَالَةِ فَلْيَمْدُدْ لَهُ الرَّحْمَنُ مَدًّا ۖ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا رَأَوْا
 مَا يُوعَدُونَ أَمَّا الْعَذَابَ وَأَمَّا السَّاعَةَ فَيَسْئَلُونَ مَنْ هُوَ شَرٌّ مَكَانًا وَأَضْعَفُ
 جَنْدًا ۝

The inner rhyme is in مَدًّا and the outer one is in جَنْدًا

(b) This inner rhyme which gives the impression that the outer rhyme will be the same or at least a similar one, is preceded by a letter, whose pronunciation is very close to the new rhyme, namely Addad, which came in the word الضَّلَالَةِ It is good to be able to state that this verse includes the letter Addad twice, and also that none of the next twenty-three verses till the end of the sura, has this letter even once.

(c) The new rhyme Addal is repeated in this verse six times more than any verse of the next twenty-three verses.

2 The rhyme of the the letter Al Ya' is single only in the last verse, and the rhyme of the letter Azzāy is single, only in the last verse of the sura. This is the last verse of the sura whose rhyme is the letter of Azzāy:

۝ وَكَمْ أَهْلَكْنَا قَبْلَهُمْ مِنْ قَرْنٍ هَلْ تَحْسِبُ مِنْهُمْ مِنْ أَحَدٍ أَوْ تَسْمَعُ لَهُمْ رِكْزًا ۝

THE UNITY OF THE TEXT IN THE QURAN

The Quran has its own logical method to unite the universal meanings and its partial meanings in each chapter, whether it is long or short. Azzamakshari in the past, declared, for example, in *Al Kashshaf* the relationships among the verses of the sura of *Al Fatiha* and Dr. Muhammad Abdullah Diraz, in the present time, declared in his book entitled *Annab' ul'Azhim*, the strong relationships among the subject with which the longest sura of the *Qura Albaqarah* deals. Whoever examines each sura individually, can find out its centre and aim according to the stage through which the Islamic mission is passing, till the whole Quran was revealed and became once again in its first shape in heaven.

We tried from our side to study carefully four Meccan suras. They are *Yasīn*, *Mary*, *Alisra'*, and *Joseph*, and to find out the relations among the subjects of each sura. Dealing with the two suras of *Yasīn* and *Mary* we could say that the centre of each sura and its aim is resurrection and the last day of Judgement, and dealing with the two suras of *Al Isra* and *Joseph*, we could say that its object was to console the prophet and the Muslim minority who were wronged by the non-believers.

The sura in which the unity of the text is complete and very strong, is the sura of *Joseph*. The story occupies the biggest of the two parts of it. The second part is a complementary one. It might be considered as a comment or a conclusion, mainly because its last verse refers to the lesson which should be taken from the stories of the sura. At the very beginning of the sura, it has been referred to the fact that the Quran contains the best stories.

The unity of the text means that its parts are linked together strictly, so each part should be built on the previous one, nothing can be omitted or added. In the light of this understanding we have studied the sura of *Joseph*. We did not intend utterly to compare between the Quran and literature. What we intended to do was merely to explain the unity of the sura, and reveal the links among its parts. We also stated the fact that the Quran combined delicately between its precise technical nature and its religious aim. Its technical nature is always a criterion for its aim. One can never separate between its shape and its contents.

The eternal disagreement among scholars around the most important in literature, mainly in the drama, the characters or the events, has no place in Quranic studies, because Quranic character or characters are always positive. As the Quran has its own certain aim, to make mankind happy in this life and the life hereafter, so it always deals with facts. There are two main characters in the sura of *Joseph*, *Jaqūb* and his son

Joseph (may peace be upon them). The prophet Jaqūb gave the best example for the human being who believes in the complete ability of Allah. He was so optimistic that desperation of the mercifulness of Allah did not penetrate through himself, in spite of losing his beloved son Joseph, in spite of poverty, and in spite of losing his second beloved son, Beniamīn, his elder son and lastly losing his sight, because his sadness mainly was for the loss of Joseph. Jaqūb was a most active and energetic person because of his acceptance of events and being patient for the sake of Allah, he was rewarded by gathering the scattered members of his family, including his beloved son Joseph.

The character of Joseph is considered the most important character around which all events circled. All characters, without any exception, were forced to move because of the character of Joseph.

Joseph was the motivator of his father and brothers throughout the story, the caravan, the nobleman of Egypt and his wife, the women of the city, those who wronged him and put him in prison, the steward of the king and the King of Egypt who saw a dream explained by Joseph.

When Joseph refused to leave the prison till his innocence was declared, the king studied his case carefully. When Joseph's innocence was proved the king addressed the guilty women saying 'What was your affair when you did seek to seduce Joseph from his (true) self?' Joseph's innocence was crowned by the confession of all the women. According to what happened the king asked for Joseph, talked to him and addressed him saying 'Be assured this day you are, before our own presence, with rank firmly established and fidelity fully proved.' Joseph volunteered to be the Governor of Egypt.

The seven easy years passed over and were followed by the seven difficult years. The character of Joseph, good reputation and treatment for those who wanted food, persuaded his brothers and others to go towards him each time they wanted food.

Joseph persuaded his father indirectly to allow his sons to take his smallest one with them to Egypt, by his generosity and putting the price for the goods taken by the brothers in their saddlebags. The brothers do not take anything which does not belong to them.

Joseph was the mover of events during his brothers' second trip to Egypt, because he declared, to his smallest brother, the truth of his identity, put the king's chalice in his brother's saddlebag and ordered the crier and his servants to look for the stolen chalice. The brothers were asked about which law they would want to be practised if the thief was one of them. They chose their own religious law which keeps the thief

as a slave for one year, and not the Egyptian law which forces the thief to repay double the price of the things he stole. The brothers found themselves in a very critical position, because the chalice was found in the brother's saddlebag. Joseph refused to take one of the brothers instead of the thief, so the elder one decided to stay in Egypt, and said 'therefore will I not leave this land until my father permits me or God shows that I did not wrong my brother (who stole the chalice) and he is the best to Judge' Verse 80.

The brothers returned to their father as nine, after setting out as eleven. Jaqūb ordered his sons to go and seek Joseph and his brother. They must not despair of the mercifulness of God. Although Jaqūb did not appoint the direction of their journey, they decided to go nowhere but towards the Governor of Egypt. There are their two brothers and the generosity of the nobleman.

Joseph revealed the secret of his identity. His brothers practised what he ordered them to do.

The departure of Jaqūb and his family towards Egypt was because Joseph wanted that.

The last scene is the expression of Joseph's dream in the first scene of the story. Joseph talks alone in this scene.

The consolation of the prophet and the small group of the believers occurs in the first part of the sura indirectly. The members of Jaqūb's family were united together at the end of the story as a reward from God for Jaqūb and Joseph in particular. The consolation in the second part occurred directly and in another tone, very much appreciated by the mind and the ear, which know the need for such a tone and the high value of it.