From Literature of the Sacred to the Sanctity of Literature: A Study of Problems and Formation

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Abstract

++Objectives: This study presents a comparative analysis of various teaching **Objectives:** This study examines the literary relationship between sacred and artistic texts, focusing on their mutual influence in form and content. A key goal is to explore the dynamics of impact and exchange between them.

Methods: The study employs a comparative approach, analyzing religious themes in Western literature and artistic elements in sacred texts. It examines selected Western poetry and draws from the Quran and Hadith.

Results: The study highlights that literary texts derive much of their eloquence from sacred texts and their mythical connotations, while sacred texts incorporate artistic structures in their narratives. It also reveals that sacred texts contain rich metaphorical and artistic elements that inspire literary imagination, particularly in Western literature.

Conclusion: The study recommends engaging with sacred texts not only for their religious significance but also for their literary qualities, which can enrich literary studies and open new research avenues.

Keywords: Sacred literary; mythology; fantasy; proverbs; wisdom.

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من أدب المقدَّسِ إلى قداسة الأدبِ : دراسة في الإشكاليات والتكوين

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ملخّص

الأهداف: غاية هذا البحث هي النظر في طبيعة العلاقة الأدبيّة بين النصّ المقدّس والنصِّ الأدبيّ، وذلك بالوقوف على مدى استفادة كلٍّ منهما من مُنجَزِ الآخر شكلا ومضمونًا. وقد فرَّع البحث تلك الغاية إلى مجموعة من الأهداف، لعلّ أهمَّها النّظر في مظاهر التأثير والتأثّر التي تحكم علاقة النصّ الأدبيّ بالنصّ المقدّس.

المنهجية: اعتمد البحث الموازنةَ سبيلاً منهجيّةً إلى كشفِ المضمون الدّينيّ في النصّ الأدبيّ الغربيّ، وكشفِ الأشكال الفنية العربيّة في النصّ الدينيّ: فتخيَّر لذلك بعض الأشعار الغربية القديمة والحديثة متنًا للمبحث الأوّل، واعتمد القرآنَ الكريمَ ومدوّنةَ الحديث النبويّ فضاءً للمبحث الثاني.

النتائج: أفضى البحث إلى استخلاص بعض النتائج من أهمّها أنّ النص الأدبي يستمدّ كثيرا من بلاغته من النص المقدس وإيحاءاته الأسطورية، كما أنّ النص المقدس يعتمد على البناء الفني للنص الأدبي في سرد محكياته. كما كشف البحث عن حقيقة أنّ النصوص المقدسة تتوفّر على مخزون استعاري وفني، يمثّل مادّة إلهام لخيال الكتاب على حدّ ما يظهر في كثير من نصوص الأدب الغربي.

الخلاصة: يوصي البحث بضرورة العودة إلى النصّ الدّيني ومحاورته، ليس من جهة حمولته الإيمانية؛ وإنما من جهة ما ينهض عليه من "أدبيّة"؛ لأنّ في ذلك ما سيُغني دراساتنا الأدبية، ويفتح لها آفاقا بحثيةً وسيعةً.

الكلمات الدالة: الأدب المقدس، الأساطير، الخيال، الأمثال، الحكمة

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Introduction

Literature serves as a realm where the reverberations of all disciplines of human knowledge resonate. It is a space wherein such disciplines undergo dissection, interpretation, and reassembly in an artistic language infused with profound metaphorical power and an extensive array of symbolism.As such, literature is turned into a vibrant stage for diverse ideas where human issues relative to material and immaterial human reality are discussed. It is a discussion where the self is present,and it is influenced by the self'sdesires through which it explores its perceptions of existenceand the way it connects to all the elements of the universe.

In our opinion, the literary text isn't only a tool to express and describe existents and perceptionsor to envisiontheir conventional connotations, neither is it a way to push such existents and perceptions into imaginary inter-relations that goal to produce a meaning that the recipient is relaxed about and to which his soul is reassured. It is rather, in addition to all of the above, a proposedway of thinking, where such certainties are to be dialogued and debated in a manner that breaks through their institutional wall, in an attempt by the literary text'screator to shake the reader's convictions and get him involved in a game of exploring the underlying essenceof things with tireless diligence.

In this context, the "sacred" emerges as a preferred object for literary writing and a sourcefrom which its forms are derived, considering the blurring of the idea it is based on, its prevalence in most aspects of humandaily life, and its prevalence into its cognizance of the universe. "Sacred" is a moving concept that actions restlessly among intellectual, social, and individual connotations without settling on one of them, so they direct the sameto the concept of pure at some instances, or the forbidden,the prohibited(haram), the horrifying and the wonderful at other instances. Guided by this, theworld's stuff and phenomena are divided into two opposing categories: one sacred and the other profane. The sacred, meanwhile, keeps drawingits meanings from the dictionary of social and cultural worldly connotations that represent its primary incubator, considering that the holiness of things isn't inherenttherein, but instead,it is granted thereto by man, since man and his social group are the ones who create the sacred object, and they may rather be the two elements to which that sacred object is connected to rise them up then from their ordinary status to the level of sacredness.

There is no question that the relationship between the literary text and the religious sacred has two aspects that alternate in influencing and being influenced: the first aspect reveals how the religious sacred benefits from the author's art and eloquence, while the second reveals how the religious sacred is present in the literary text. In any case, there remains in every religious literary work a sacred element that seeks completion through imagery and metaphors it spreads all over the text from itsmythical universe, yet it never reaches completion either for a deficiency in its fluidity or for the failure to be guarded by its symbolic assistants; hence, the language of the author preys upon such an element and fragmentsits structure to its primary elements, transforming it into a number of imaginative objects from which it forms its aesthetic myth, according to its writing strategies, it even uses them to establish its own sanctity.

The problem

The nature of the relationship between literature and the sacred raises a set of questions that require us to search for possible answers to discover its limits.Here isa list of some of these queries: Isn't literature's engagement with the sacred an attempt to obtain the sublimation quality from the sacred to have such a quality in its creation? Does literature bring about transformations from the sacred nature? What is the effect of this on the narrative discourse? Also, wouldn't bringing the sacred into the literary realm be seen as a prelude to inciting its violation? Is it true that literature while trying to desecrate the sacred, contributes to more consecration of the same by attracting more attention thereto?

If it is valid for us to say that literature is a form of rationalizing the world, we may wonder: When did literary creativity get rid of spirituality and asking metaphysical questions, as we say, "today, metaphysics does not mean an aspect of thought or a branch of studies, according to Heidegger, but rather it is present in various cultural forms that man knows or has known, it is present in literature, and even in language"? (Ben Abdel Ali, 2009). Is there anything in literature that is not considered sacred? Yet rather, is there anything sacred in literature? To what extent can we be confident in saying that the crossing of the modern Arabic novel into the field of experimentation, and the consequent violation of the prevailing artistic

and social norms, does not conflict with its tendency to exploit elements of the narrative heritage,especially in its mythological aspect?

Literature and the "mythical universe" of the sacred

In this element, we start by examiningthe following question: Did religious texts contribute to the grounding of literature phenomenon? This question truly prompts us to examine the relationship between religious texts and literature, and to what extent such religious texts have benefitted from the narrative reserve of myths and epics found abundantly in ancient mythological texts, starting from those in the tablets of the Sumerian era (3000 years BC) to the Buddhist teachings (600 BC), as well as the texts of the three heavenly scriptures. It is undeniable that this question leads to anotherone which is: What would be left of a literary text if all its sacred religious references were removed?

In no case, when it comes to critically analyzing literary texts, we can deny that most of them have benefitted from the religious mythical reservoir of narrative patterns and imaginative arts. This benefit is justified by the shared tendency of literature and religion, as two activities that are mutually influenced by human reality and influencing it, to spread universal human values such as goodness, justice, and freedom; and it is demonstrated by their joint use of myth to achieve such a tendency. As a result, it is crucial to acknowledge the role of literature in supporting the advancement of thought in that it offers a space that can comprehend the sacred in its absolutenessand a means to investigate it freely and independently. In fact, it is necessary to develop a conception of literature that recognizes it to record the manifestations of the sacred, a space for its movement, a tool to question it beyond the constraints of religious institutions, and even to explore it from a creative perspective" (Bélanger-Michaud, 2011).

The distinctive quality of this knowledge is undoubtedly its "literality," which means that it is only a subjective representation of human reality shaped by the creator's aesthetic visionand so the special perceptions that govern it regarding the sacred things within it. "Literature serves not only a mediator between the sacred and the pursuit of understanding it,but also as the intellectual form that preserves the textual record of the movement of the sacred, enabling the recipient to internalize and reinterpret it subjectively. Perhaps this is what makes literature a stage for the movement of the sacred.as it permeates various aspects of human life that regulates its rhythms and reflects human desires tocomfortably exist in the universe without intellectual stress, considering that literary writing is also a form of thinking and residence in the universe. To achieve some of these desires, literary innovations in religious texts, in almost all civilizations, have found their way to explore the possibilities of narrative phantasy, beyond the constraints of place and time,through the worlds of strangeness, wonder, and fantasy (Halify, 2008), contained in such texts that remained for long periods intended to serve issues of faith and theology; yet, literature transformed them into richly infused artistic expressions that are filled with everything that falls in the field of the strange and the absurd (Al-Salami, 2012), which enables writers to employ all mysterious events or entities that are veiled in meaning and shrouded in illusion from all sides, particularly those that aim to imitate the phenomena of reality without conforming to it, because they do notexpress any real aspect thereof, considering that they are always contrary to the natural order, such as miracles, wonders (Karamat), mysticism (Sufism) and climates of apostasyand spectra. The imaginary aspect within the realm of the absurd even permeates the reality of objects and beings and reshapes their forms in a unique manner. Indeed, the myth,which enters the literary text and becomes intertwined with its symbolic system, is onlyan embodiment of such inspirational energies that enriches the literary phantasyand purifies its aesthetic secrets.

In this regard, writers and critics noticed the richness of religious texts with the elements of imagination that form epics therein. Thus, they returned to such text searching for a spring source for their writings through reading them in a way that does not give concern to the dogmatic content therein as much as the artistic and aesthetic aspects therein. Northrop Frye's (1912-1991) attempt to read the Torah from a literary stand is considered one of the boldest research attempts related to the Holy Bible in terms of its attempt to focus on the artistic components of the religious text away from any theological understanding thereof. In our opinion, this attempt falls within the scope of an intellectual project that has been labeled modern and has been raised since the beginning of the twentieth century by some Western writers and researchers,

whosepurpose was to free the sacred text of the common traditional concepts, especially those related to theological studies, and to present new conceptual alternatives thereto that overlook its divine nature that ensures its sublimity and transcendence, to establish a semantic structure for the same based on the human cognitive experience, and to resemble the reality of man, in strength, weakness, unity and so in his general common existence.

Frye's reading, however, takes a different approach to the issue of literature's relationship with the sacred text, as he admits that the Holy Bible is a rich reservoir of images and metaphors from which most Western literary production drew artistic inspiration, as we find him in his book entitled: ***Le Grand Code. La Bible et la literature*** (Frye, 1984) insists that those metaphors that the Torah is full of are still effective in Western literary works till the present day. Fryealso calls the entirety of these literary images "the mythical universe" saying that "the elements of the Holy Biblecould form an imaginative framework, which is what I call here "the mythical universe", within which Western literature has operated from the eighteenth century until today"(Frye, 1984). Since Frye saw in the five books that make up the Torah a literary unit with a special internal artistic coherence, he considered that the model of the Holy Bibleis not just a means of reading, but rather a means of writing as well.He confirmed that by stating that: "The biblical model is a form of rhetoric that we can study like any other form of rhetoric" (Frye, 1984).

Considering that the biblical text has a structure of harmonious elements, where metaphors interact with the gathering of imaginative and tangible images to establish evidence of its literary character and that it is a self-referential text, the above-said researcher proceeded to inventory such metaphors and images and classified them in the form of tables, some of which were relative to the types of linguistic uses, others were specific to the artistic images, and others relative to illustrations. Taking guidancefrom these tables, he concluded by acknowledging the existence of a kind of literary cohesion within this text that historical studies had not noticed, as he noted that "there is anaggregate of sensory images (the city, river, mountain, tree, oil, spring, etc.) that are repeated often within the Holy Bible, which clearly indicates that it contains a pattern of unified perception of things" (Frye, 1984). After identifying the mythological structures in the Holy Bible, being the narrative structures that have a plot (which he calls **Mythos**) and a known verbal sequence, Frye searched for indications of their presence in the Western literary texts, ancient and modern, such as the works of Ezra Pound, Baudelaire, Yeats, Wallace Stevens, and Pierre de Corbie reveal, in samples of their texts, a significant presence of artistic images connected to those found in the Bible—indeed, they imitate them in linguistic styles and content.Regarding stylistic imitation, Frye suggests Ezra Pound's poem "In a Station of the Metro," in which the poet writes:

"The apparition of these faces in the crowd: Petals on a wet, black bough."

The linguistic structure of these two poetic lines is based on a synecdoche (and not on a metaphor, as Frye claims), which enhanced their rhetorical connotations. The poet did not use any logical link between the compared element (the first line) and the element to which it is compared (the second line), such as phrases like "like," "resembles," or "as if." This shifted the comparison from explicit presence to implicit presence within a framework of clear stylistic juxtaposition. In the context of this metaphorical formation of Pound's poem, Frye cited the linguistic structure of a verse from the sacred text, considering it the metaphorical background that Ezra Pound imitated. We read in the Book of Proverbs (11:22):

"A gold ring in a pig's snout, So is a beautiful woman who lacks discretion"

Here, the metaphorical similarity between the sacred text and Ezra Pound's text is evident in the absence of comparison tools between the compared element and the element to which it is compared, confirming Frye's assertion that the sacred text is not only a text for reading but also a text for writing.

As for the imitation of the sacred text's content in literary texts, Frye illustrated this through the resemblance he found in the depiction of nature in the sacred text and its depiction in Baudelaire's text, where he writes:

"Nature is a temple where living pillars Sometimes letout confused words; Through it, man passes amidst forests of symbols That watch him with familiar glances."

This is because nature appears in Baudelaire's poem with a dense symbolism, as the poet perceives nature as a temple that links the worldly with the divine, facilitating man's connection with his Creator. The living pillars and forests of symbols are elements filled with mystery, requiring spiritual revelations to reach their essence. This image of nature drawn

by Baudelaire aligns with the image presented in the Bible, where nature serves as a space for spiritual revelation and a mirror reflecting divine truth.

For example, in the verse where Jesus says: *"I tell you, if these were silent, the stones would cry out!"* (Luke 19:40), it affirms that the truth of Christ cannot be concealed; if His disciples are silenced, the stones will cry out and proclaim it.

Furthermore, nature in Baudelaire's text grows within language and has the ability to speak at times, even if its speech consists of "confused words." This is the same form in which nature appears in the sacred text, as we read: *"Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin" (Luke 12:27).*

In Northrop Frye's view, one of the reasons for writers returning to the myths and epics mentioned in the Holy Bible, working on them and absorbing them in their texts is their awareness of the value of those myths, which in their entirety constitute a human cultural heritage that contributed to settling the movement of societies in their cultural soil, given that "myths rooted in a particular society transmit a legacy of verbal signals and precedent shared experience, thus, they contribute to creating the cultural history of that society" (Frye, 1984). There is no doubt that the creation of the cultural history of societies represents a part of the ideological function of myths as they constitute a unified system of perceptions built about the universe, which system is adoptedby man in creating his relationships with his human groupand resorts thereto in much of his moral and ethical activity. Accordingly, this makes it possible to say that "the true function of myth is about drawing a perimeter around human society and looking at the same from the inside, rather than investigating the processes of nature... Myths are not a direct response to the natural environment, they are part of the imaginary insulating layer that separates us from that environment" (Frye, 1984), as those myths represent a method of thinking that was invented by man to explain the weight of the phenomena that fall upon him, and it may rise, in some of its intellectual connotations, to the level of the explanatory model that summarizes the predecessors' experiences.

No matter how diverse the researchers' viewpoints are in grounding the mythological thought, and "whether they start from the individual perspective and consider myths to be manifestations of the worlds of the soul and thought or the first archetypes, or rather start from the society perspective and look at them as stories that contain a narration of an event that the concerned parties thereof believe to be real and they revivethem through ritual practices, or as systems of images in which we find the hidden tendencies that attract a people and represent a call to action, which is essentially true for political myths,or they start from another stance and look at them in a way that holds them as phenomena of the human consciousness in general, namely, within human universals and what is called mythical consciousness or mythical thought, for all of them give myths a prestigious intellectual status no less than other forms of thinking through abstract concepts or other symbolic forms"(Ajena, 1994).

Perhaps one of the most important things that Frye noted in his reading of the relationship of the sacred text to literature is that the religious sacred text, in its imaginative aspect, experiences a constant movement of transformations, as it does not settle on a single narrative content, but rather it constantly develops the same in a way that meets the needs of human reality in its multiplicity and in its multiplicity of facts. This is the matter that ***Claude Levi-Strauss*** (1908-2009), while he was examining the process of myths within the contexts of human thought, called "*Le Bricolage*," where he states in this regard that "mythological thought has a wealth of images accumulated as a result of viewing the natural world, including its animals and plants, their environments, distinctive features and functions within a particular culture. This thought brings together all these images to build a new meaning, just as a skilled craftsman does when he undertakes a specific task, where he chooses the most appropriate materials for it to give it a meaning that is different from the first meanings that those materials had" (lévi-strauss,1960).

This is because the mythological thought, while experiencingthese transformations, undergoes a disintegration of its narrative potential meanings that leave their traces in the form of scattered patches that human cultures record in their historical records. Literature intervenes, according to Frye, to be the mirror that reflects the effects of the transformations of the sacred text as they cohere together to re-form it into new mythical narrative forms that allow that thought to rebuild its edifices by patching up the ruins of its old discourses. Hence, it may be said that literature represented, and represents, the private space to which ideas that contradict the general norm migrate. This is a thing that grants literary writing the

ability to embrace ideas that discuss the sacred issues, question the function of the traditional institutions incubating them, whether religious or political, and remove the illusions in them and sometimes condemning it, in order to derive an authentic meaning for human existence within the framework of a confrontation between self-awareness of the world and the collective awareness achieved by it in history. It seems that the boldness with which we described Northrop Frye's reading of literature's relationship with the sacred text sparked many reactions and motivated some scholars of Western literature to criticize it. One example is that his definition of literature as "a verbal structure that exists only for itself" (Frye, 1984), and his attempt to project such a definition onto the nature of the Holy Bible in terms of the fact that it represents a homogeneous structure in which the dominance of metaphors and other imaginative images indicates its self-referential literary nature, found sharp opposition from one scholar considering that "this theory, which represents the center of Frye's thinking in his book *"Le Grand Code"*, is weak from the point of view of the theory of literature and also with regard to describing the nature of the Holy Book [...], and is even questionable because it is based on a different set of wrong interpretations to the biblical texts" (Alter, 2001).

What is evident in this matter is that Frye relied in his reading on a specific written style of the biblical text that served the goals of his research, and overlooked the rest of the other written styles, and "while his focus in his book was on praising the heavy presence of metaphor within the poetic texts included in the Holy Bible, it is clear that the percentage of poetry in the Torah is very small compared to the percentage of presence of the other narrative genres. Poetry presence was limited to its presence in the Psalms, the Book of Proverbs, the Song of Songs, and in some passages of the books of Prophets, in addition to brief inclusions thereof in the narrated stories. However, Frye neglected to pay attention to the heavy presence of unrestricted assonance (Missing the truth in considering it a metaphor) which represented the basis of storytelling in the Holy Bible and one of the greatest innovations of the writers of the Torah" (Alter & Frye, 1970).

Then, how could Frye's theory be correct when he combines two opposing opinions: the first is the saying that the metaphorical language of the Torah is in fact a self-referential linguistic phenomenon, as it describes to us a reality whose veracity can be verifiedin that it sources its images from the material world and transfers them into the text;while the second is his insistence on the opinion that the biblical text is metaphorical? Here, we add that Fryefailed to analyze in his study what might result from transferring the "mythical universe" of religious texts to the space of literary writing of violations of the sacred elements therein, whether at the level of content or at the level of expressive form.

Literature of the Sacred

In the above discussion, as we looked into the relationship of the sacred text to the literary text, we tried to present a reading of this relationship where Northrop Frye focused on the aspect of the interaction of Western literary texts, ancient and modern, with the imagery and narratives intensely found in the Holy Book, which he called "the mythical universe," whether in terms of drawing inspiration from its narrative contents or in terms of benefiting from its expressive arts. In this element, we intend to consider a second aspect of that relationship, which form can be expressed in the following question: Is it permissible to acknowledge that the sacred text is artistically influenced by the literary text? In case of positive answer, can we find out the manifestations of this in the Qur'anic text and the text of the Prophetic Hadith in their connection with the corpus of Arabic prose and poetry? And how big are the semantic transformations that the literary aspect imposes on the religious one?

Most scholars of the Qur'anic text argue that it has utilized the Arabic language and its various modes of expression, such as storytelling, parables, and wisdom, to convey a set of universal values to the believers, whether those that were present in the tribal cultural environment by further valuing and examining them, or those that it presented as an alternative to what was prevalent at the emergence time of the Muhammadan call that was contradictory to its teachings. Hence, understanding this text was conditional on the necessity of getting acquainted with the Arabic literature for the important illumination it provides to the scholar that enables him to grasp its verbal contents. As such, it is not enough for a person to believe in the Book and read it to know its superiority. "(Verily,) superiority of the Qur'an is known to the one who knows the speech of the Arabs, so he knows the Arabic linguistics, syntax and rhetoric, and who is familiar to the poetry of the

Arabs, their sermons, and their expressions in cases of pride, their messages, their poems, and their prostrations, so he can recognize the coloring of speech, its meaning, and the arts rhetoric speech, types of eloquence, and genres of assonance, wonders of innovation, virtues of wisdomand proverbs. By understanding these aspects and examining the Qur'an, one can appreciate the eloquence, rhetoric, and artistic elements that Allah Almighty has embedded therein.This leads to a profound admiration for its articulate speech and eloquence, which captivates hearts and opens doors that would otherwise remain closed. Qur'anaddressed the Arabs in their own tongue so that it could be a validargument against them;it even kept abreast of their high-standard eloquence so that it could reveal their inability and default and prove that it is not their kind of speech to them..." (Al-Jawziyyah, 1986), It is apparent in the above quote that Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah (d. 751 AH) emphasizes the importance of Arabic linguistics and literature as a prerequisite for understanding the Qur'anic text;since good understanding thereof helps reveal the Qur'anic meanings, mastery of its syntax makes it easy to comprehend Qur'anic contexts of speech, and knowledge of its poetry reveals the connotations of the Qur'anic words and the unusual uses of the same, as stated in the noble hadith: "If you come across something strange in the Qur'an, seek its explanation in poetry, as poetry is the anthology of the Arabs"(Al-Suyuti, 1998). Fakhr al-Din al-Razi (d. 606 AH) further highlights the significance of learning Arabic in order to comprehend the Book of God and fulfill religious obligations. He states, "Since our law is based on the Qur'an and hadiths, which are expressed in the language, grammar, and conjugation of the Arabs, knowledge of our law is dependent on understanding these aspects;snice absolute duty cannot be fulfilled without this knowledge, and it is within reach for every accountable person, then it is obligatory" (al-Razi, 1997).

It is important to note that when Arabic assumed the function of explaining the hidden meanings of the Qur'anic text, it became its helping tool to consolidate the good morals that the Messenger was sent to complete its dissemination among people, as it represents, thanks to its rich literature, an encyclopedia of human values, and even a repository of moral teachings that included too much of generosity, benevolence, selflessness, sacrifice, help, loyalty, honesty, patience, and forbearance. Thus, learning the Arabic language was the way for believers to advance their morals to the level of morals that the Qur'an calls for and the Prophet's hadith encourages them to possess. Perhaps this is what made Omar ibn Al-Khattab draw attention to its virtue in preserving people's morals by saying, "Learn Arabic, for it increases chivalry"(Al-Khati, 1983).

In addition to the role of the Arabic language in supporting the effort of the Qur'anic text in promoting good morals in what we call the moral function, we found another jurisprudential function thereof that has enabled fatwa officials and jurists delve into the deeper meanings of religious texts and derive legal rulings therefrom, according to what Al-Shafi'i (d. 204 AH) acknowledges in his saying: "I only wanted it - meaning: the Arabic language and heritage - to help me with jurisprudence"(Al-Dhahabi, 1996).

Although it is revealed that the Arabic language is the responsible tool for explaining statements of the Qur'anic text and the recorded hadith of the Prophet, as above demonstrated, its influence on the form of expression in them through what we have termed the aesthetic function requires us to clarify, as the rhetorical and declarative style of these texts indicates that they rely on various narrativepatterns in a way with which they sought deviation from the prevailing discourse and challenge thereof at the level of its verbal formulation. In this respect, we find in both of the Qur'anic text and the recorded hadith of the Prophet a distinctive impact of the Arabic report patterns, and its artistic forms that were common at that time, such as the story, the proverb, the sermonand others, given that "religion in its first form was nothing more than the story, tale, or myth, represented on the stage of life through the experiences, dangers, obsessions, and delusions of the first man"(Al-Khatib, 1975).

It is worth noting here that discussing stories, proverbs, and sermons before the advent of Islam is essentially a discussion about prose forms preserved within the realm of oral memory, or what is referred to as the 'archive of the heart,' transcending generations and eras through a group of narrators who carried with them the wisdom of their ancestors, the glimpses of their imagination, and the stirrings of their emotions. We will focus our effort on illustrating the extent to which the Qur'anic text and the prophetic hadith utilized the formal structure of this prose repository—narrative, proverbial, and sermonic, without considering the conformity of the content of these prose forms with the content of the stories mentioned

in these two texts.

We claim that human life before Islam was not devoid of the art of storytelling. Stories were his means of recording his struggles with the scarcity of nature and the cunning of its beasts, as well as his tool for transmitting the experiences of his ancestors in travel and migration, helping to enrich his thought with vivid images of the nature of his relationships with the elements of his reality. Thus, 'we can already anticipate the existence of stories in Arab life before Islam and in pre-Islamic Arabic literature, both in poetry and prose. It is inconceivable that the Qur'an, with its significant emphasis on storytelling in the context of calling to God and establishing faith on strong foundations of lessons and morals derived from these stories. We say, it is inconceivable that storytelling would hold such a prominent place in the Qur'an, the greatest book of the Arabs—without there being, at the time, a reservoir of stories woven from their lived experiences or from the specters of their hopes and dreams (Al-Khatib, 1975).

We tend to say that the story has the most prominent presence in the Qur'anic text compared to other types of narratives. The density of this presence can only be justified by the role of the narrative style in facilitating communication, through comparing the circumstances of the present with the conditions of the past with much evidence and proof. Indeed, it may be said that the story 'has always been and remains a natural gateway through which messengers, callers, guides, and leaders reach people, their minds, and hearts, to instill in them the ideas, beliefs, and actions they wish [...]. It is, indeed, the most powerful tool of influence in leading human groups, in both war and peace.' The Qur'anic storytelling took on the task of either recounting the miracles of the prophets and the stages of their call to their people to the religion of God, such as the stories of Noah, Abraham, and Moses, or discussing the conditions of past nations and the experiences of ancient peoples, like the stories of Qarun, Thamud, and the People of the Cave. Some stories chronicled the course of the Muhammadan call, such as the migration and the Isra, as well as the battles of Badr, Tabuk, and the Confederates, as in His, the Almighty"This is how We relate to you ˹O Prophet˺ some of the stories of the past. And We have certainly granted you a Reminder from Us." «كَذَٰلِكَ نَقُصُّ عَلَيْكَ مِنْ أَنْبَاءِ مَا قَدْ سَبَقَ وَقَدْ آتَيْنَاكَ مِنْ لَدُنَّا ذِكْرًا» (Al-Razi, 1979).

It is evident that the construction of the artistic Qur'anic text tends to make it a major story carefully chosen by divine wisdom as a way of calling people to learn from the events of the past "as it is part of the Sharia law propriety to know the history of the predecessors in terms of their legislation and prophets with their laws, so the Qur'anic inclusion of the stories of the prophets and their peoples was a culmination of the importance of Islamic legislation by mentioning the history of the legislators" (Bin Ashour. 1984), which contributes to removing negligence from the believers according to the Almighty's saying: "We relate to you, [O Muḥammad], the best of stories in what We have revealed to you of this Qur'ān although you were, before it, among the unaware."

«نَحْنُ نَقُصُّ عَلَيْكَ أَحْسَنَ الْقَصَصِ بِمَا أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ وَإِن كُنتَ مِن قَبْلِهِ لَمِنَ الْغَافِلِينَ» (Yusuf, Verse, 3).

The Qur'anic stories were built according to narrative methods that adhered to the trajectories of storytelling, that is, its narrative structure, including a beginning, a complication, and a resolution., but they diversified the introduction of these structures artistically according to many methods of presentation, the most common of which are two methods:

The first in which the story begins with a mention of its action contentfollowed by the narration thereof in detail, "Among the features of this method is avoiding the mention of implicit meanings comprehensible by the words mentioned, such as Allah Almighty's saying in Surah Yusuf, "So they raced with one another to the door" the statement didn't mention the presence of their lord, his knocking on the door, and their rushing to the door to open it, so Yusuf's rushing was to avoid the harm he expected from her to show her lord that he intended an evil design to her. And she rushed for the opposite, that is to be the first to tell the story, and to avoid the complaint she had expected from Yusuf. This is indicated by what follows, where Allah the Almighty said that "They both found her lord (i.e. her husband) at the door. She said: "What is the recompense (punishment) for him who intended an evil design against your wife,…" (verses).Also, among the features of this method is that the stories were presented in a wonderful manner, as they presented them in ways to learn from them, while preserving the original purpose of the Qur'an, i.e. legislation and ramifications"(Bin Ashour, 1984).

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the Almighty's saying: valley. "Until, when they came upon the valley of the ants, an ant said, "O ants, enter your dwellings that you are not crushed by Solomon and his soldiers while they perceive not. So, Solomon smiled in amusement at her words, and prayed, "My Lord! Inspire me ˹always˺ to be thankful for Your favours which You have blessed me and my parents with, and to do good deeds that please you. Admit me, by Your mercy, into ˹the company of˺ Your righteous servants.

«حَتَّى إِذَا أَتَوْا عَلَى وَادِي النَّمْلِ قَالَتْ نَمْلَةٌ يَا أَيُّهَا النَّمْلُ ادْخُلُوا مَسَاكِنَكُمْ لَا يَحْطِمَنَّكُمْ سُلَيْمَانُ وَجُنُودُهُ وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ. فَتَبَسَّمَ ضَاحِكًا مِن قَوْلِهَا وَقَالَ رَبِّ أَوْزِعْنِي أَنْ أَشْكُرَ نِعْمَتَكَ الَّتِي أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيَّ وَعَلَى وَالِدَيَّ وَأَنْ أَعْمَلَ صَالِحًا تَرْضَاهُ وَأَدْخِلْنِي بِرَحْمَتِكَ فِي عِبَادِكَ الصَّالِحِينَ» (An-Naml, verses 18-19)

Whatever the methods of presenting the Qur'anic story and its artistic methods, which do not deviate much from what modern literary critics say in the field of narration (Genette, 1972), the density of its presence in the sacred text, according to what we mentioned, indicates that this text imitated its verbal structure and adopted its ability to influence and argue as a way to motivate recipients to imagine past events and learn therefrom in order to overcome the problems posed by the present. It is not only a reminder of past events, but rather it is also appropriate to the events of the present both in details and tasks, which makes it rise up in the levelsas reminders and lessons to be learned, noting that "the stories in the Qur'an did not come successivelyin one surah or more just as is the case in a history book. Rather, they were separated, and distributed into positions that fit them, because most of the benefits gained from them are related to that distribution. They are a reminder and an admonition to the people of religion, so theyare more like a sermon. Qur'an has a special style, which is expressed to be reminders and remembrance in verses that will be explained; Its style was a judge for both purposes, and it was superior to the style of storytellers in telling stories simply to know them, because telling them on appropriate occasions gives them two qualities: the quality of proof and the quality of clarification"(Bin Ashour, 1984). Although we infer from this evidence a prejudice against the role of the literary story (**with regard to the style of storytellers in narrating stories simply for the purpose of knowing them**), our opinion, based on the extensive relevant critical studies available to us which were not available to the author of **The Interpretation of Liberation and Enlightenment**, is that the Qur'anic story remainsa literary story, regardless of the artistic narrative speech present therein, and even if it aims to achieve religious goals, as linking the "literary nature" of the text to its content would strip it of its aesthetic elements and categorize it as an insensible reporting of events, which is not consistent with literature.

The presence of proverbs in the Qur'anic text and the Prophet's hadith does not differ from the presence of the story in the same, as we recognize their widespread throughout their entire areas. If we were to explain this spread, we would say that these two kinds of texts have aptly recognized the necessity of relying on the purest artistically complete narrative genres in Arab culture in the pre-Islamic times to influence people and implant the religiously sacred objects in their new culture, by establishing the Islamic call in their hearts, as stated in the introduction by the author of **"Latent Proverbs in the Holy Qur'an"**where he stated that "many things can be benefited from proverbs in the Qur'an: such as reminders, admonition, encouragement, rebuke, consideration and determination, bringing what is intended simply to the mind, and depicting it as a tangible object, noting that proverbs have a stronger impact on the mind" (Bin Al-Fadl, 1992). Hence, proverbs emerged as a space in which the religiously sacred objects were present with all their symbolic and moral load, and a way through which the social sanctities of the people prevailing in the pre-Islamic times crossed over to the era of Islam, simply to be integrated into the new system of preaching and to enter into the formations of the sacred elements therein, because proverbs had great importance among the Arabs, who were fond thereof, as they usedto recall them in their prose and poetic creations, carry them as part of their travel luggage, and wish its circulation among people to transfer their wisdom, pure experiences, traditions, and characters to others. Rather, "perhaps the proverbial system is the closest verbal system to the Arabs in general, and particularly the Arabs in the pre-Islamic period; as it contains features that almost embody what the pre-Islamic person desired from words, being beautifulformulations to a metaphor that captures the meaning, to a brevity that shortens the distance between the statement and its meaning. The proverb, by combining these qualities, fulfills the pre-Islamic Arabs' need for clarification" (Abu Ali, 2007).

Perhaps the significant presence of proverbs in the Qur'an and the Prophet's Hadith indicates that they rely on proverbs to benefit from their verbal structure and their artistic and suggestive energies, thanks to their brevity, eloquence, wisdom,

and analogy that help in achieving argument and persuasion. As evidence for this we provide two references: The first is mentioned by Al-Suyuti (d. 911 AH) in his exhibition of proverbs where he stated that: "They are the wisdom of the Arabs in pre-Islamic times and thereafter; they suffice them to express thoughts in very few words, so they communicate their needs implicitly without express statements, thus three advantages are combined: brevity of the pronunciation, accuracy of the meaning, and good simile. Prophet, may Almighty Allah bless him and grant him peace, used them as well as his successors.(Al-Suyuti, 1998)" The second is in the **Jamharat Al-Amthal**, where Abu Hilal Al-Askari (d. 395 AH) mentions the virtue of proverbs and the significance of their purposes in his saying, "The virtue of the same is indicated in the revelation of the Almighty Allah's saying: (O mankind! A similitude has been coined, so listen to it (carefully)… - Al-Hajj: 73)... and anywhere else where He indicated the benefits of proverbs in different positions, and their good incitement to be fit for their purpose"(Al-Askari, 1988).

Conclusion

In conclusion, this research highlights the fact that the connection of the sacred text with the literary text helped to enrich both of them both in terms of the significance and the artistic construction; the literary text found its mythical universe in the religious text, according to Northrop Frye, so its fiction scope expanded, symbols turned more intensified, pure experiences of those people of the past were present therein and the rhetoric invaded its linguistic texture, this is what made it rise to the higher levels of rhetoric and magic. On the other hand, the (Islamic) religious text found in the structure of the literary (its narrative framework in storytelling and its concise expression in proverbs and wisdom) to spread the Muhammadan message and the way to establish it in the believers' hearts and urge them to noble morality, in addition, it became a flexible instrument that enables the formulation of wisdomand helps the easy communication of the same through systems that consider the conditions of the present against the conditions of the past in so many arguments, evidences, and the suitability of all of this to the nature of the needs of human reality.

The research findings can be summarized as follows:

- The literary text draws its eloquence from the sacred text and its mythical implications, while the sacred text relies on the formal structure of the literary text in narrating its accounts, such as narrative frameworks and linguistic conciseness.

- Studying sacred religious texts from a purely artistic perspective, away from theological interpretations, is not only possible but is also a core aspect of literary studies. This aligns with Northrop Frye's attempt to read the Bible as a literary text and his observation that sacred texts are not only meant to be read but also serve as a model for literary writing."

- Sacred texts are filled with images and artistic metaphors that can inspire writers and stimulate their creative imagination. This is what Northrop Frye observed in his book The Great Code, where he highlighted that the Bible is rich in imagery and metaphors that have inspired Western literature for centuries. He describes it as a "mythical universe," wherein its literary elements formed an imaginative framework within which literature operated. This is evident in the influence of the sacred text's eloquence and mythical connotations on the poems of Ezra Pound, Baudelaire, Du Corbière, and other ancient and modern Western poets.

- Literary texts are not merely a reflection of the sacred but rather a tool that utilizes the sacred to shape human consciousness and interpret myths within societal culture. Literature has the ability to reshape the sacred within new, non-religious contexts.

- The influence of the Islamic religious text by the artistic forms of oral literary genres that were prevalent in the Arabian Peninsula at the time, such as stories, proverbs, and sermons.

Although we have made an effort to address some of the issues that surround the connection between the sacred and literature, it seems that the responses serve as a cover for other queries, particularly such as: Since we agree that the literary text, while interacting with the space of the religious text, effects some significant transformations in the latter both in its form and content as per what we termed regarding the three functions of the Arabic language: jurisprudential, moral, and aesthetic; accordingly, is it valid for us to say that literature is the back doorfrom which authors can enter the realm of the religious text without fear of the guarding institutions thereof so that they can violate its sanctity? Is the literary nature of

texts, in several forms thereof, based on breaching the prevailing norms, violating sacred beliefs, and changing its structure in favor of a new structure?

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Qur'anic surahs in order:
- Al-Baqarah.
- Al-Ma'idah
- Yunus
- Hud
- Yusuf
- Ibrahim
- Al-Hijr
- Ta-Ha
- Ash-Shu'ara
- An-Naml
- Qaaf