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FORM AND STRUCTURE OF SURA MARYAM: A STUDY FROM UNITY OF SURA PERSPECTIVE

Bilal GÖKKIR*

ABSTRACT

The language of the Qur'anic text has been always an interest for the western scholars of Islam. Western studies on the vocabulary/lexicon of the Qur'an, syntax and style of the Qur'an, not always free from orientalist prejudice, has stimulated some intellectual responses in Muslim world. Scholarly works, for example, on the syntax and stylistics of the Qur'an have been developed under the classical orientalist discourse which emphasis the so-called 'discontinuous character of the Qur'an'. It is, naturally, regarded, as a challenge to the Qur'anic theory of 'inimitability of the Qur'an' (*Ijaz al-Qur'an*). The modern development of "thematic interpretation' and "theory of sura as unity" in Muslim world seems to be the intellectual response to this modern criticism. In this article, Sura Maryam will be studied as a case. The Sura will be examined from literary and linguistic point of views and the content and the formal characteristics of the sura will be investigated. Maryam is the only female figure identified by name in the Qur'an and more than 70 verses of the Qur'an refer to her, thirty-four of these verses specifically name her. Furthermore she has special honour of having one of its chapters, namely Sura Maryam, titled after her. Sura Maryam is one of the Meccan Suras.

Key words: Language of the Qur'an, stylistics of the Qur'an, Form and structure analysis, sura as a unity, sura Maryam, Tafsir

Introduction

The classical orientalist allegations of the so-called 'discontinuous character of the Qur'an' or 'loose structure of the Qur'anic units' contradict with the Qur'anic theory of 'inimitability of the Qur'an' (*Ijaz al-Qur'an*). Two modern developments in modern Muslim *tafsir* movement seem to be the end result of- or response to- this western criticism: "Thematic interpretation" of the Qur'an and the

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"theory of the sura as a unity. By breaking the whole body of the Qur'an into pieces first and then bringing the relevant parts together in a different textual combination, thematic interpretation, however, provides not only 'an interpretative process' for the Qur'anic text, but also produces 'a new textual combination for the Qur'an.[1] On the other hand, as the modern version of the classical "*Ilm al-Munasabat*", the theory of "the sura as a unity", treats a given sura as an independent unit and analyses it accordingly.

In this paper, sura Maryam will be studied as a case of 'the sura as a unity' genre. In order to do this, first, some information will be given on the classical and modern background of the theory of 'the sura as unity'. Secondly, general information will be introduced on sura Maryam as a context of our study here. Finally, as our analysis of literary form and style ended up with two structural parts in the sura namely narrative and polemic, we will aim to demonstrate the verbal links within and between these two parts in order to find out probable coherence of Qur'anic text in the case of sura Maryam19 as a unity.

The Unity of the Sura: Classical or Modern Development

Regarding the beginning and the development of this approach in modern Muslim world, Mustansir Mir informs us that although 'the view of the sura as a unity is indigenous to the Muslim intellectual world' there is an indirect western influence on the development of the idea in modern time. Mir observes:

> It seems that at least some of the Muslim writers, in trying to dispel the notion that the Qur'an is discontinuous, have in mind western criticisms of the Qur'an, which may have reached them through secondary sources, such as Christian missionaries in the Muslim world. To these criticisms may be added the doubts and reservations expressed about the structure of the Qur'an by the so called westernized Muslims. But perhaps a more important factor is at work. In the twentieth century there has been a growing realization among Muslims that the task of reinterpretation of Islam has to begin with the Qur'an. The Qur'an has always been regarded as the primary source of Islam. But when one notices numerous writings emphasizing

[1] For further information about thematic interpretation see: Hasan Hanafi (1996), "Method of thematic interpretation of the Qur'an" The Qur'an as Text, ed. by Stefan Wild, Leiden-New York-Köln: E.J. Brill, pp.195-211. For critique of thematic interpretation see: Rotraud Wielandt, (2002) "Exegesis of the Qur'an: Early Modern and Contemporary" in *Encyclopedia of the Qur'an* ed. by Jane Dammen McAuliffe vol. 2 p. 138-140.

> this primacy, the message, it is not difficult to see, is that the extra-quranic sources, the use of which has so fundamentally conditioned Qur'an interpretation, have to be subjected to critical scrutiny. In other words, the Qur'anic text must become the primary arbiter of quranic meaning. But if the rigour of the extra quranic hermeneutical constrains is to be removed or relaxed, then other hermeneutical constrains must be supplied-from the Qur'an itself. This would logically result in attaching decisive importance to the quranic context. But the context of the Qur'an cannot have this importance on the view that the Qur'an has an atomistic character and that the verse-by-verse approach to the Qur'an is the best approach. It can have that importance only if the Qur'an is regarded as a book possessed of a significant degree of coherence and continuity. Modernity thus may be said to have created conditions under which the view of the sura as a unity became possible, even necessary, view to take.[2]

As we understand from Mir's statement above, in the development of the idea of 'the sura as a unity' in modern times, the western influence shows itself in three dimensions:

First, the Muslim attempt to respond to the western allegations on the textual style of the Qur'an is one of the main motivations behind the development of the view of 'sura as a unity'. Although these allegations, as Mir states, came through the secondary sources of missionaries in the Muslim world, they were developed and evolved to some extent in the western orientalist scholarship. It was these western scholars who played role by their works and writings with 'orientalist' and 'missionary' characteristics.[3]

The second dimension is that, as a result of westernisation and secularization, there has been a change in the idea of scripture of in the minds of the Modern Muslim. Parallel to Mir's statement, Neal Robinson also observes:

> In the modern world, most literate people are accustomed to dealing with documents that are furnished with subheadings and broken into paragraphs. Hence, when they read the Qur'an, they tend almost instinctively to divide the suras into section on the basis of changes in

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2 Mustansir Mir, (1993) 'The Sura as a Unity A Twentieth Century Development in Qur'an Exegesis' *Approaches to the Qur'an* (ed: G. R. Hawting and A. K. A. Shareef) London: Routledge, pp.218-219

3 For an example see: Sir W. Muir, *The Coran: Its Composition and Teaching*, London p.7. See for further information Bilal Gökkır (2002), Western Attitudes to the Origins of the Qur'an *Theological and Linguistic Approaches of Twentieth Century English Speaking World from William Muir to William M. Watt*, Manchester University, unpublished PhD Thesis.

> subject matter. In my experience, this is the case with Muslims who can recite many of the suras from memory. Like everyone else, they are part of a culture that has long been dominated by the conventions of the written word.[4]

The third dimension is the modern movements towards the "reinterpretation of the Qur'an". Mustansir Mir does not go further to explain these movements but we know that these movements are not homogenenous character. On the contrary they are in fundamental contrast with each other. One shows modernist, westernised and secular characteristics and the other shows salafi-traditionalist characteristics. What brings them together is that both argue for the 'return to the Qur'an'. While the modernist and secularist attitude relies on the western basis, the salafi-traditional attitude seeks the basis for this methodology in Muslim tradition. Not surprisingly, it is observed that the discussions on 'the sura as a unity' take place in the classical tafsir literature such as Zarkashi's *al-Burhan*[5] and Suyuti's al-*Itqan.*[6]

In respect of classical tafsir literature, Fahr al-Din al-Razi[7] refers to the context and internal relationships in his Tafsir *al-Tafsiru'l-Kabir*. He also mentions the core message of the suras. Biqai's *Nazm al-Durar fi Tanasub al-Ayat wa'l-Suwar*[8] The employment of this methodology and approach is also observed in the modern tafsir works of Sayyid Qutb's *Fi Zilal'il-Qur'an*, Muhammad 'Izzat Darwaza's *al-Tafsirü'I-Hadith*, Muhammad Husayn al-Tabatabai's *al-Mizan fi Tafsir'il Qur'an*.[9] The main characteristics of this approach are that as each sura is regarded as a unit in itself, interpreted as an independent unit, and consequently reached a core message of the sura.

However, we observe some differences in the western-oriented application of the methodology. In the analysis of the western

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4 N. Robinson (2001) ' 'Hands Outsterched: Towards a Re-reading of Surat al-Maida' *Journal of Qur'anic Studies*, vol.3/1 p.2

5 Badr al-Din Abu 'Abd Allah Muhammad Ibn Bahadur al-Zarkashi, *al-Burhan fi Ulum al-Qur'an* (edition critic: Muhammad Abu'l Fadl Ibrahim), Egypt: Dar al-Ihya al-Kutub al-Arabiyya 1957, vol.1, pp.35-52

6 Jalal ad-Din 'Abd al-Rahman Ibn Abi Bakr al –Suyuti *a-l-Itqan fi Ulum al-Qur'an* (edition critic: Dr. Mustafa Deeb a-Bugha. Damascus and Bairut: Dar Ibn Kathir 1987 vol.2, pp.976-994.

7 Muhammad b. Omer Fakhr al-Din al-Razi (606/1209)

8 Burhan al-Din Ibrahim ibn 'Umar al-Biqa'i (885/1480)

9 For the evaluation of their work from this respect, see Mir, 'The Sura as a Unity' pp.211-224

scholars, in addition to the core message of the sura, a linguistic analysis is also pursued on the lexemes (more morphological, less etymological and semantic analysis), syntax, style, form and structure of the sura. The works of Angelica Neuwirth,[10] Neal Robinson,[11] Mustansir Mir,[12] and Hussain Abdul- Raof[13] focus on the form and structure analysis of a given sura of the Qur'an. [14] This article will be an attempt to adopt this western literary and linguistic approach to the study of the sura.

The Context: Maryam in the Qur'an

The main story of sura Maryam is the story of Maryam and Jesus: Maryam's dialogue with angel, the birth of Jesus from virgin Maryam and her people's reactions to her. Maryam, the mother of Jesus ('Isa)[15], is the only woman identified by name in the Qur'an. Three Meccan suras (*Maryam19*, *al-Anbiya* 21, and *al-Muminun* 23) and four Medinan suras (Al-I İmran 3, al-Nisa 4, *al-Maida* 5, and *al-Tahrim* 66) give place to her story. Among these, sura Maryam 19 is

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10 Angelika Neuwirth (1981), *Studien Zur Komposition Der Mekkanischen Suren* Berlin and New York: De Gruyter; 'Images and Metaphors in the Introductory Sections of the Makkan *Suras*' in *Approaches to the Qur'an* (ed: G. R. Hawting and A. K. A. Shareef) London: Routledge, (1993) pp.3-36

11 Major works of the author on this subject is as follow. Neal Robinson (1996) *Discovering the Qur'an, A Contemporary Approach to a Veiled Text*, London: SCM Press.; 'The Structure and Interpretation of *Surat al-Mu'minun*', *Journal of Qur'anic Studies*, (2000), vol.2/1, pp.89-106; "Hands Outstretched: Towards a re-reading of *Surat al-Maida"*, *Journal of Qur'anic Studies*, (2001), vol.3/1, pp.1-20; "*Surat Al'Imran* and Those with the Greatest Claim to Abraham", *Journal of Qur'anic Studies*, (2004), vol.6/2, pp.1-21

12 Mustansir Mir (1986), *Coherence in the Qur'an*, Indianapolis: American Trust Publications; 'The Qur'anic Story of Joseph: Plot, Themes and Characters' *The Muslim World* (1986), vol. 76, pp.1-15; 'The Sura as a Unity: A Twentieth Century Development in Qur'an Exegesis' in *Approaches to the Qur'an* (ed: G. R. Hawting and A. K. A. Shareef) London: Routledge, (1993) pp.211-224

13 Hussein Abdul- Raof, (2000), "The Linguistic Architecture of the Qur'an", *Journal of Qur'anic Studies*, vol.2/2, pp.37-52; "Conceptual and textual Chaining in Qur'anic Discourse", *Journal of Qur'anic Studies*, (2003), vol.5/2, pp.72-94

14 For further information see: Necmettin Gökkır, (2005) "A Western Impact on Contemporary Qur'anic Studies: The Application of Literary Criticism" *Usul*, v. 3, pp.67-90

15 In this article, "'*Isa*" will be used as it is the original Qur'anic usage particularly for the Qur'anic context.

named for her. Seventy verses of the Qur'an refer to Maryam and she is named specifically in thirty four of these verses, twenty three of which is *Isa ibnu Maryam*.

It is interesting to put here that, comparing with the Qur'an, the name of *Maryam* for 'the mother Jesus Christ'[16] is only mentioned nineteen times in the New Testament- twelve of which are in the form '*Mariam'* and seven in the form '*Maria'*.[17] *Maryam* is the Semitic-Hebrew form of the name. On the other hand, *Maria* is an adaptation to Greek usage. Although in Christian world, the Greek adaptation, *Maria* is commonly used instead of original Semitic-Hebrew form *Mariam*, Patsch states:

> The people of Nazareth called the Mother of Jesus *Mariam*: "Is not his mother called *Mariam*?" (Matt. 13.55) Jesus himself uses this form of the name. When he appeared to Mary Magdalen and she did not at once recognize him, he called her by her name: *Mariam*. This manner of address went straight to her heart. Yes, that was he, that was Jesus, and in her excess of her joy she could only say the one word, *Rabboni* ("My Master!")
>
> It is a pity that we now use the name of God's Mother only in the mutilated Greek form rather than in the full form of her mother-tongue: *Mariam*, as she herself pronounced it, as Jesus and Joseph addressed her, as her relatives and townsmen called her.[18]

Because Maryam has a significant and central place in Christian theology, western scholars have been interested in her status in Islam. Jan Knappert in his article 'The Legend of the Virgin Mary in Islam'[19] and Jane I. Smith and Yvonne Y. Haddad in their co-written article 'the Virgin Mary in Islamic Tradition' discussed the understanding of Isa's birth from virgin Maryam which is a central dogma in Christian theology.[20] J. D. McAuliffe compares exegetical data on Maryam and Prophet's daughter Fatima in 'Chosen of All

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16 Apart from Maryam 'the mother Jesus Christ', there are six women sharing the name. Therefore, the appearance of the name in total is fifty three times. For further details see: J. Patsch, (1958), *Our Lady in the Gospels*, London: Burns&Oates, p.25

17 For further details see J. Strong, *The New Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible* Nashville, (1990) p.686; J. Patsch, *Our Lady in the Gospels*, p.25

18 J. Patsch, *Our Lady in the Gospels*, p.26; for the place of Mary in the Bible and Christian Theology see also John de Satge (1976), *Mary and the Christian Bible*, London: SPCK

19 *Orientalia* (1989), Leuven, vol.18, pp.177-186

20 *The Muslim World*, (1989), vol.79/3-4, pp.161-187

women: Mary and Fatima in Qur'anic Exegesis'[21]

Structure and Formal Characteristics of the Sura

Sura Maryam is a Meccan sura and has 98 verses. The major divisions of the sura seem to be twofold:

1. Narrative part (verses 2-58)
2. Polemic part (verses 59-98)

I- Narrative Part (2-58)

1. Zakariyyah-Yahya (2-15)
2. Maryam-'Isa (16-40)
   - 2.1 Maryam and birth of 'Isa (16-33)
   - 2.2 Criticism of some beliefs about 'Isa (34-40)
3. Ibrahim (His father, Ishaq and Yaqub) (41-50)
4. Musa-Harun (51-53)
5. Ismail (54-55)
6. Idris (56-57)
7. Conclusive verse for the part one, mention of Adam and Noah (58) and transition to criticism and preaching (59-98)

II- Polemic Part (verses 59-98)

1. Following generations (59-63)
2. Who neglected prayers, followed lusts-meet deception (59)
3. who repent and embrace the faith and righteousness-Gardens of Eden (60-63)
4. Interruption with words from angels (64-65)
5. polemical criticism of the deniers of the resurrection (66-72)
6. polemical criticism of the arrogance of deniers on believers (73-80)
   - 6.1 Arrogance with position and arm (73-76)
   - 6.2 Arrogance with wealth and children (77-80)
7. polemical criticism of having gods other than Allah (81-87)
8. polemical criticism of claim that God has a son (88-95)
9. Conclusive verses for part two (96-98)

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[21] *Islamochristiana*, (1981), vol.7, pp.19-28

9.1 Believers (96)
9.2 Emphases on revelation/the Qur'an (97)
9.3 Destroyed generation for their sins (98)

Structure of the Sura

Narrative (2-58)	**Polemics (59-98)**
• Zakariyya-Yahya • Maryam-Isa - Maryam and birth of 'Isa - Criticism of some beliefs about 'Isa • Ibrahim • Musa-Harun • Ismail • Idris • Adam • Noah	• who neglected prayers, followed lusts - meet deception • who repent and embrace the faith and righteousness- Gardens of Eden • Interruption with words from angels • polemical criticism of deniers of the resurrection • polemical criticism of arrogance of deniers on believers • polemical criticism of arrogance of deniers with position and arm • polemical criticism of arrogance of deniers with wealth and children • polemical criticism of having gods other than Allah • polemical criticism of claim that God has a son • Conclusive verses-believers, revelation-destroyed nations for their sins

Table-1: Sura Maryam has two structural parts: Narrative and Polemics.

With two principal parts, the structure of the sura is quite symmetrical. The narratives of the prophets are not in chronological order. It follows as Zakariyya/ Yahya- Maryam/'Isa, Ibrahim, Musa/Harun, İsmail, İdris (*see table-1*) whereas the chronological order of these prophetic figures is as Idris, Ibrahim, Ismail, Musa/Harun, Zakariyya/ Yahya- Maryam/'Isa. In the narrative part of the sura, the story of Maryam is the longest one. Zakariyya's story is second in length and yet more common motifs to compare with Maryam's story. Ibrahim's is the third longest narrative however very few motifs to compare with other narratives of the sura. Musa-Harun, Ismail and Idris are mentioned very briefly.

Not only in this sura 19, but also in suras 3, and 21, Mary's

story is intertwined with that of her guardian, the prophet Zakariyya. In Suras 19 and 21, Zakariyya's prayer for a child in old age and the birth of Yahya (19/2-15; 21/89-90) comes just before the passages on Mary's conception of 'Isa (19/16-35; 21/91). In Sura 3, however, Zakariyya's story (3/38-41) is mentioned just in the middle of the story of Mary's birth and childhood (3/33-37) and the angel's message to Mary of God's special grace upon her, followed by their annunciation of the birth and the prophethood of 'Isa (3/42-51) Interestingly, the angel's words announcing the birth of Yahya to Zakarriyya (3/39) are similar with those of the birth of Jesus to Mary (3/45). Likewise, Zakariyya's (3/40) and Mary's (3/47) questioning of the message and the divine or angelic affirmation of God's omnipotence to Zakariyya (3/40) and Mary (3/47) also shows similarities. Furthermore, the wording of God's praise and blessing on Yahya (19/12-15) is almost identical with Isa's words of blessing about himself spoken in the cradle (19/30-3).

More specifically speaking for the analysis of Sura Maryam, we see that the sura starts with the story of Zakariyya after the letters (كهيعص). (3) اذ نا دى ربه نداءا خفيا (2) ذكر رحمت ربك عبده زكر يا (2. *This is a recital of the Mercy of thy Lord to His Servant Zakariyya* 3. *Behold! He cried to his Lord in secret*.) The story of Zakariyya starts with these verses. Main subject matter of the story is Zakariyya's having a son named Yahya. Despite the fact that Zakariyya, according to the description given in the sura, was an *old man whose bones became rotten* (اني وهن ا لعظم مني) and *his head was shining with grey hair* (واشتعل الراءس شيبا)) and his wife, in the meantime was *barren* (عاقرا). he was, as a response to his request from his Lord, given the good news of a son whose name was Yahya that *no one was named with before*. However, what he requested was rather an heir (وليا) who shall inherit of him and inherit of the house of Yaqub than a son, when *he secretly called* (نداء خفيا) his Lord. Therefore, it was, in fact, not without surprising for Zakariyya who, having put his and his wife's unsuitable biological situation to have a child, responded in an astonished mood: *How shall I have a son.* (رب ا ني يكون لي غلام . But it was easy (هين) for his God, for *He created him when he was nothing before* (وقد خلقتك من قبل ولم تك شيءا)

Having a child as a miracle from God as a recurring motif of Sura Maryam also is shared by the story of Maryam and 'Isa which is the second narrative of the sura. Maryam, (verses 16-33) according to the Qur'anic portrait of her in the sura, was not touched by any man, she, however, had 'Isa as a result of a miracle. The crucial role in this miracle is of the spirit (روحنا) that God sent him who appeared in a proper human shape (فتمثل لها بشرا سويا) to Maryam who had withdrawn

herself from the people to a place. Here we have to mention the striking elements and the distinctive parallel themes between two narratives of the sura that are particularly worth to compare in the story of Zakariyya and of Maryam. (*see table-2*) Both the births of Yahya and Jesus are introduced in the sura as miracles. However, while Yahya's miraculous birth lays in his father's age and mother's barrenness, 'Isa's miracle birth is to be born without father. Since the miracle is something unusual and unexpected for the human mind the miracle birth of both Yahya and Isa led to responses such as Zakariyya's astonishment and happiness while that of Maryam is rather mixed with fear. However a similar formula is used by Zakariyya and Maryam to show their reaction: "*How shall I have a son?*" (انى يكون لي غلام). 'Fast of silence' is a striking common motif for both Zakariyya and Maryam too. Zakariyya was told that his sign (اية) was not to speak to anybody (الا تكلّم الناس) for three nights and therefore he communicated to his people by sign. Similar 'fast of silence' is asked of Maryam if she meets the people: "*Say I have owed a fast (of silence) to the Compassionate God and I will not speak with any human being this day*". Yahya and Isa themselves, born as miracles, have some common motifs in the sura too. As Yahya is recommended *to hold fast to the book* and moreover *the wisdom is given when he was an infant* so is Isa also given the Scripture (Book) and is appointed as a prophet- that is what Isa expressed in his cradle as an infant. They both are kind toward their parents, not arrogant, rebellious or wicked.

Although the sura does not provide us the detail of Ibrahim's having Ishak as a miracle -as we know from the Quran[22]- Ibrahim's having Ishak is also similar thematic motif. In the sura, the theme is mentioned with the word ' ووهبنا له... ' (we have given him as a gift). Having the other stories of the sura in our comparison, another noticeable recurring motif of the stories in Sura Maryam is that the person has been given either a child or brother to help, to strength their mission or to prove their innocence Zakariyya already asked of God an 'heir' (*وليا*) who shall inherit of him and inherit of the house of Yaqub. In the cradle, Isa speaks to prove his mother's innocence. Ibrahim is given Ishaq and Yaqub (grandson from Ishaq) as a gift from God to approve Ibrahim's attitude to his people, father and their gods. Musa, on the other hand, is strengthen by his brother's appointment as a prophet in his mission.

[22] Hud 11/71-73

Thematic and Formulaic Similarities between two narratives

Zakariyya-Yahya	**Maryam-Isa**
biological obstacle to have a child: old age	biological obstacle to have a child: virgin
birth of Yahya is miracle: his father‘s age and mother’s barrenness	birth of ‘Isa is miracle: born without father
The reaction of Zakariyya: “*How shall I have a son?*” (ا ني يكون لي غلام)	The reaction of Maryam:“*How shall I have a son?*” (ا ني يكون لي غلام)
‘Fast of silence’	‘Fast of silence’
Yahya is recommended *to hold fast to the book*	Isa is *given the Scripture*
the wisdom is given when (Yahya) was an infant	*Isa* is appointed as a prophet-that is what Isa expressed in his cradle as an infant
Yahya is kind toward his parent, not arrogant, rebellious or wicked	Isa is kind toward his parent, not arrogant, rebellious or wicked
وليا	*وليا*
ذكر رحمت ربك عبده زكر يا	مريم واذكر في الكتاب
قال رب اني يكون لي غلام	قالت اني يكون لي غلام
قال كذالك قال ربك هو علي هين	قال كذالك قال ربك هو علي هين
وبرا بوا لديه ولم يكن جبارا عصيا	وبرا بوا لدتي ولم يجعلني جبارا شقيا
وسلام عليه يوم ولد ويوم يموت ويوم يبعث حيا	و السلام علي يوم ولدت ويوم اموت ويوم ابعث حيا

Table-2: Thematic and formulaic similarities between two narrative.

Apart from the verse 2 (ذكر رحمت ربك عبده زكر يا), the beginnings of the stories namely introductory formula for each one are same واذكر في الكتا ب ... (remember in the book.....').

2 (Zakariyya) ذكر رحمت ربك عبده زكر يا

16 (Maryam) واذكر في الكتا ب مريم

41 (Ibrahim) واذكر في الكتا ب ابراهيم

51 (Musa) واذكر في الكتا ب موسى

54 (Ismail) واذكر في الكتا ب اسمعيل

56 (Idris) واذكر في الكتا ب ادريس

Exegetes did not seem to need to draw attention to the relations of these verses which all starts with ذكر. Razi mentioned only that the reference in واذكر of Ibrahim (verse 41) is to Zakariyya's story.[23] Alusi, however, preferred to link it to the immediate context rather than to link all the واذكر each other: for him it links to the verse 39 ' *wa anzir'*.[24]

On the other hand, the recurring locutions in both Zakariyya and Maryam story and one in both Zakarya and Ibrahim story are noteworthy:

4 Zakariyya
ولم اكن بدعاءك رب شقيا
48 Ibrahim
عسي الا اكن بد عا ء ربي شقيا

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8 Zakariyya- Yahya
قال رب اني يكون لي غلام
20 Maryam-Isa
قالت اني يكون لي غلام

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9 Zakariyya-Yahya
قال كذالك قال ربك هو علي هين
21 Maryam-Isa
قال كذالك قال ربك هو علي هين

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[23] Razi, *al- Tafsiru'l-Kabir*, Beyrut: Daru Ihya al-Turath al-Arabiy, vol.21, p.222

[24] Alusi, *Ruhu'l Maani*, Beyrut: Daru Ihya al-Turath al-Arabiy, vol.16, p.95

14 Zakariyya-Yahya
وبرا بوا لديه ولم يكن جبار عصيا
32 Maryam-Isa
وبرا بوا لدتي ولم يجعلني جبارا شقيا

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15 Zakariyya - Yahya
وسلام عليه يوم ولد ويوم يموت ويوم يبعث حيا
33 Maryam- Isa
و السلام علي يوم ولدت ويوم اموت ويوم ابعث حيا

For Zamahşari, the article ال in و السلام contrary to وسلام in Zakariyya-Yahya story is mainly because of the curse on those who accused Maryam of fornication and '*as if he says all the salam on me and on my followers and nothing remains form my enemies but curse* (*la'n*).' He adds that the context (*makam*) is the context of denial (*munakara*) and stubborness (*inad*) therefore it comes as (*ta'ridh*).[25]

41: Ibrahim
صد يقا نبيا
56:Idris
صد يقا نبيا

In respect of polemic section of the sura, Allah is presented here, as the saviour and the destroyer**.** (*See table-1*) The verse 72 points out this reality in a very clear statement: *Then we shall rescue those who kept from evil and leave the evil-doers therein crouching*. While the destruction and punishment by God mentioned here is generally *eschatological* one, sometime transition from *eschatological* destruction to *historical* destruction of some nations is noticeable in the Sura (verses. 74, 98). This transition from one to the other exists out of pattern and in both verses has the same introductory formula (وكم اهلكنا من قرن ...) (*But how many countless generations before them have we destroyed*). However this transition is not accompanied with any rhyme change at the end of the verses. Emotive language and dialogue type reflects in polemic part of the sura in strong polemical tone. قل من كان/ قال الذين كفروا / أولا يذكر الانسان / ويقول الانسان . They imply warnings and reproaches to the deniers.

Arguments put in the polemic part are the reality of resurrection, revelation and *tawhid* that God did not beget a son.

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[25] Zamakhshari, *al-Kashshaf*, Riyad 1998, vol.4, p.19 see also Razi, 21, 216; Alusi, 16, 90

These central themes of polemic part which could well be labelled as *tawhid*, *nubuwwat* and *akhirat* as the central concepts of the Islamic creed are also the subject matter of the narrative part. Razi believes that these are also the central theme of the sura.[26] This thematic phenomena namely the correlation between narrative and polemic part of the sura is supported also by some verbal and linguistic links such as ....وقد خلقتك من قبل ولم تك شيئا (verse 9: Narrative-Zakarya) is almost repeated انا خلقناه من قبل ولم يك شيئا (verse 67: for Human-being). Also the word تقيا is repeated for *Yahya* (19:13), *Jibril* (19:18) and *Ahlu'l-Jannah* (19:63).

In polemical part, there is a rhyme change in the verse 75. The first direct address to the Prophet takes place in this verse (Say 'if any man...') and the following verses namely 76, 77 and 83, 84 have also direct address to him. Although the rhymes of verses 2-33 are يا , the rhyme changing starts, with subject matter changing at the end of 34 (يا- to *ون*) and turns back again to يا - with the beginning of the story of Ibrahim (40).Although we observe the subject matter changing with verse 58 totally from narrative to homily we do not see any rhyme changing from يا - until verse 75 that rhyme turns to دا- (sometimes - زا) and the sura end up with this form. Here again subject matter changing in criticism part does not affect the rhyme continuity. As a provisional conclusion, therefore, it is hard to establish a literary relation between subject matter and rhyme use of the sura. Numerically, the name الرحمان (15 times) as a divine attribution, has more frequency than the name الله (8 times) in the sura. The frequency increases towards the end of the sura. Above all however the use of epithet ربي ,ربك instead of any proper name of Allah worth to note.

To conclude, thematic and structural analysis of Sura Maryam indicates that the sura exhibits a thematic unity. The matter of content namely parallel themes and common motifs in the sura 19 seem to have led to some common formulaic items and repeated locutions recur in different parts of the sura. These formulaic items and locutions in Sura Maryam, linguistically speaking, exist at the levels of sentence, phrase and lexeme. The parallelism between the story of Zakariyya and of Maryam shows itself in terms of lexical choice, sentence structure and rhyme. While common recurring locutions in sentence and phrase form are mostly concentrated between the stories of the narrative part, recurring lexical items are shared between

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[26] Razi, in Ibrahim's story gave the overall theme of the sura Maryam: '*Know that the purpose of this sura is explanation of tawhid, prophethood and resurrection.*.' for further information see: Razi, *al- Tafsiru'l-Kabir*, vol. 21, p. 222.

narrative and polemic part of the sura that in this way linguistically establish a verbal link between two formal parts of the sura. Close examination of various features of literary style of the sura shows that, the sura is not a composition of unrelated passages. There is coherence between the two parts of the sura namely narrative and polemic sections.

ÖZET

Kur'an-ı Kerim'in dili batı oryantalist çalışmalarında önemli bir yer tutmaktadır. Bunların bir kısmı Kur'an kavramlarının semantik analizleri gibi Kur'an'ı sözcük temelinde incelemekte, diğer bir kısmı ise Kur'an'ın üslup ve belağatini tartışmaya açarak genel dilbilim açısından ele almaktadır. Kur'an'ın 'dağınık' bir üsluba sahip olduğu tezini sıkça dile getiren oryantalist polemik yaklaşımların gölgesinde gelişen dilbilimsel çalışmalar bu tezlerin paralelinde ürünler ortaya koymaktadır. Kur'an ve Müslümanlar tarafından sıkça dile getirilen 'Kur'an'ın icazı' teorisini de sorgulayan, Kur'an metnine ve metninin dil ve üslubuna yönelik batılı bu eleştiriler İslam dünyasından bir kısım entelektüel yanıtlar ve yankılar doğmasına neden olmuş gözüküyor. Kanaatimizce günümüz tefsir hareketleri içinde ortaya çıkan iki yaklaşım, Kur'an'ın dil ve üslubuna yönelik bu batılı eleştirilere modern birer yanıt mahiyetindedir. Bunlar Konulu Tefsir (*et-tefsirü'l-mevzui*) ve Sure bütünlüğü teorisi dir.

Kur'an ayetlerini vahye dayalı kendi doğal bağlamından koparan. Konulu Tefsir' metodu bu ayetlerin yeni bir kompozisyon içinde bir araya getirmektedir. Bu nedenle konulu tefsir esas itibariyle sadece bir 'tefsir metodu' olmayıp aynı zamanda yeni bir 'Kur'an metni oluşturma' ameliyesidir. Bu nedenle konulu tefsir Kur'an metni üzerine batılı eleştirilerin kabulü gibidir. Bunun aksine sure bütünlüğü tezi daha yerinde bir yaklaşım gözükmektedir. her şeyden önce Tefsir geleneği içinde yer alan *'İlmü'l-Münasebet'* Sure içi ve sureler arası ilgilere bağlantılara işaret etmekle bu konuda ilk örnekleri vermektedir. Tefsir usulü eserlerinden Gerek Zerkeşi, *el-Burhan*'da ve gerekse Suyuti *al-Itkan*'da bu konunun önemine dair bizleri bilgilendirmektedir. Modern çalışmalarda 'sure bütünlüğü' konusunun İslam dünyasında gündeme gelmesi büyük ölçüde batılı-misyoner eleştirilerin etkisiyle açıklanmaktadır. Batılılaşma ile birlikte kutsal metin anlayışındaki değişmeler ve Kur'an merkezli din anlayışlarının da bunda payı tartışılmaktadır.

Bu makalede sure bütünlüğü incelemesine bir örnek olarak Meryem Suresi ele alınmıştır. Meryem Kur'an'da adı geçen tek kadındır. Yaklaşık 70 ayette Meryem'den bahsedilmekte ve 34 ayette bizzat adı anılmaktadır. Meryem suresi Mekke'de inmiş bir sure olup 98 ayettir. Sure bütünlüğü

konusunda sure üzerine yaptığımız incelemede surenin yapısal anlamda iki edebi bölümden oluştuğunu görmekteyiz: Kıssa (2-58) ve Cedel (59-98).Ana teması Tevhid, nübüvvet ve ahiret şeklinde özetlenebilen surenin kıssa ve cedel kısımları oldukça simetrik bir yapı içinde olup birbirine bir kısım dil ve konu elementleri ile bağlı olduğunu ve söz konusu ana temanın her iki kısımda da vurgulandığını görüyoruz. Sure birbirinden kopuk ve ilgisiz pasajların birleşmesinden meydana gelmemiş olup aksine edebi anlamda uyumluluk içinde bir yapı arz etmektedir. Paralel temalar ve ortak motifler belli sözcük kalıplarının bir insicam içinde tekrarını doğurmaktadır. Bu paralellikler kıssalarda tekrarlandığı gibi kıssalarla cedel kısmı arasında da paylaşılmaktadır. Sözcükler ve sözcük kalıplarıyla oluşturulan bu ağ sureye bir bütünlük kazandırmaktadır.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Kur’an’ın dili ve üslubu, Sure bütünlüğü, Meryem Suresi