

Grammatical Parallelism in the Qur'ān

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Abstract : Parallelism—, or as it is called in Arabic, al-muqābala, occupies a central position in the rhetorical discipline of 'ilm al-bayān. Parallelism is used as a figure of textual ornamentation or embellishment and can be divided into several types that are based on the semantics of parallelism and its formative structure. Parallelism in Arabic has received a considerable amount of attention from the Arab rhetorician, which enables understanding the essence of parallelism in Arabic – its types, structure and meaning. However, there are some lacunae in their descriptions concerning the function and thematic restrictions of parallelism in the Qur'ān. In my presentation, which focuses on grammatical parallelism where the two stichos of the parallelism are the same with respect to syntax and morphology, I will show that parallelism has some important roles in the textual arrangement; it may, for example, conclude a thematic section, indicate a turning point in the text or to clarify what has been said previously. In addition, it will be shown that parallelism is not used randomly in the Qur'ān but rather is restricted to repeated themes which carry the most important messages of the Qur'ān, such as God's Might or behavioral patterns of the believers and the non-believers; or it can be used as a stylistic device.

Keywords : grammatical parallelism, half-line, symmetry, Koran

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