



Arabic Literature: Ali Ahmed Ba-Kathir's Omar ibn Al-Khattab an Epic Verse Drama (1)



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Abstract

This paper attempts to cast light on a leading poet-playwright who signifies several Arabic cultures, proficiencies, and skills. The study aims at revealing to what extent the play Omar is a modern Arabic poetic play. Omar is a historical drama that deals with social problems. Omar presents a vision of Arabic drama in the modern age, but it is also a poetic play. For that, it is the task of the researcher to try to prove that Omar bears several grounds, such as poetic devices and connotative symbols, to be called a poetic drama. The investigator adopts the critical-descriptive method in analyzing the first scene of the introduction of the play, Omar. The paper is planned with an introductory overview dealing with a brief view of poetic drama and blank verse. The second part deals with Ali Ahmad Ba-Kathir as a pioneer poet-dramatist. The main part of the study deals with the epic play Omar with reference to the first scene of the introduction, shedding light on the skillfulness of the writer in manipulating poetic and musical devices. The task finishes with recommendations and a brief conclusion.

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1 Introduction

Drama in general is one of the most attractive literary signs of brilliance and the most satisfactory expressive measure. A person knows how to communicate his message by performing a play. In the beginning, drama was a technique to bring people closer to faith, cultivate them, and edify them. It occupies a noticeable position among the scientific and traditional spheres and sometimes surpasses other genres of literature. Drama provides the dissimilarity between right and wrong, good and evil, until it grows into an autonomous genre like the other literary categories, for instance, novels, poetry, and short stories. It was primarily a mode to bring people closer to certainty, educate and teach them, as well as entertain them. Drama, all over the ages, is deepened by poetry and symbolized by the actors. It has survived among all the peoples of the globe since the primeval epochs. As existing official documents specify, this art might have been commenced in Greece, developed there, and then extended through diverse centuries and countries. The plays' themes focused primarily on gods, sacred ceremonies, and idols and then thrived in the royal houses of kings, dukes, and princes, which they relished. Arabic drama is a significant literary genre. Many principal dramatists considerably contributed to its advancement and improvement. Arab playwrights were inclined to achieve dramatic drawings in several Arabic realms all the way through places and time (Al-Kandari & Gaither, 2011; Al Omoush et al., 2012; Al-Zubaidy, 2014; Zaidi, 2016).

2 Materials and Methods

Objectives of the study

Knowing about the many aesthetic advancements in poetic drama may be useful to viewers. The goal of the study is to shed light on the development and relevance of poetry in play as a noteworthy literary form. The aim of this analysis is to investigate and demonstrate the degree to which the play Omar is a contemporary Arabic poetry play. This investigation aims to demonstrate that Omar meets various criteria for being classified as a poetic drama, including poetic techniques and connotative symbols.

Research method

A detailed analysis of the literary devices would have revealed the facts uncovered by this kind of investigation. Particularly when presented analytically, these are essential. It demonstrates the value of a comprehensive analysis that takes into account the play's use of both visual metaphors and portrait insertion. The initial part offers an overview of a few analytical viewpoints, ideas, and evaluations of the innovative Arabic poet-dramatist Ali Ahmed Ba-Kathir. Next is the illustration and analysis of verse in drama and Ba-Kathir, and after that, the main section of the study is a critical analysis of Omar ibn Al-Khattab as a poetic play. In the final phase, the investigation is summed up with a terse conclusion.

3 Ali Ahmed Ba-Kathir: An Innovator Arabic Poet-Dramatist

Ali Ahmed Ba-Kathir is believed to be one of the most notable Arab literary authors of the twentieth century. He is unique in fabricating many diverse literary genres, such as poetry, novels, and drama. Ba-Kathir wrote a huge number of literary works in prose and poetry, both voluminous and short. The works of Ba-Kathir dealt with numerous social, historical, and religious Arabic concerns. He "supported and helped to legitimize the growing Arab-Islamic historical awareness developing in Egypt through the presentation of Arab and Islamic history in [the] fictional form" (Gershoni & Jankowski, 2002). Ba-Kathir was born in Indonesia, in the city of

Surabaya, in 1910, to Arab parents from Yemen (Zyl Smit, 2016; Carlson, 2005). In addition to that, "he is a man of multiculturalism, in which his birth was in Indonesia, his family originally is from Yemen, and he lived in Egypt as an Egyptian citizen" (Dahami, 2021).

Our poet-dramatist was one of the most well-known Arabic playwrights during the middle of the twentieth century. Ba-Kathir is a great playwright and poet. At the age of ten, his father moved with him to the governorate of Hadramout, Siyoon City, to be cultivated in an Arabic and Islamic state with the rest of his family. His story with poetry started early. He began writing poetry at approximately the age of thirteen. He joined the school and did his education at The Scientific Renaissance School (An-Nahthah Al-Elmiah).

During his life in Siyoon, Ba-Kathir married when he was young, as is the nature of marriage in Yemen, but was disturbed by the death of his wife in her youth soon after the marriage. He left Siyoon in 1931 to live in Aden. Nevertheless, he did not remain for long. He traveled to Al-Hijaz after visiting Somalia and Ethiopia (Ba-Kathir & Muhammad Abū Bakr Ḥamid, 1997; Swmahi, 1982). In Al-Hijaz, he stayed for a quite good period of time, during which he had the chance to organize and compose a prominent literary work identified as Al-Burdah (البرده) or The Memory of the Prophet.

The fame of Ba-Kathir is less than that of some of his colleagues since he favored isolation from the focus of public attention, evading self-regarding talk about himself without missing sight of the frenzied attacks against him late in his life. It has been said that Ali Ahamad Ba-Kathir is one of the leaders of contemporary Arabic literature. Yet, it is true that the most conspicuous literary field in which Ba-Kathir surpassed and is known for his copiousness of production is drama on the whole and poetic drama specifically. "Though Bakathir is well known as a dramatist and novelist, his poetic talent and interest can be seen clearly even in his plays and novels. He wrote poetic drama—the plays that were written in free verse—and he called for using literary standards in writing novels and drama" (Al-Shami, 2016). Also, "modern Arabic poetry is inclined to have a bit of freedom in its regulations. Many poets prefer to be closer to free verse or unrhymed verse in writing poetry because it is a little easier than classical rhymed poetry" (Dahami, 2021). Ba-Kathir has achieved and shaped more than thirty-five various prose dramas, going from publication to document.

As a knowledgeable and experienced author, Ba-Kathir used to publish a short drama weekly. He penned about fifty short dramas and five bulky dramas. He has left many poetic dramas of various sizes, contents, and strategies. They are principally Arabic and Islamic since they express the Arabic tongue and its culture and traditions, in addition to several other non-dramatic works. The huge number of literary works Ba-Kathir has produced has made him a pioneer in Arabic literature at large. Several critics have emphasized that Ali Ahmed Ba-Kathir is conspicuous in most of his dramatic and theatrical inventions that exhibit Islamic teachings. He is a school that has not yet earned a respectable place through suitable analysis and sufficient study.

4 The Verse in Drama and Ba-Kathir

Ba-Kathir was interested in free verse similar to Eliot. T.S. Eliot preferred to write poetic drama but the verse in drama ought to be innovative, contemporary, and natural to the ear of the addressees.

Abdulghani (2013), comments on the success of the usage of verse in drama by Ba-Kathir saying that he continued to produce poetic drama until 1959, for approximately 19 years, and was very vital, energetic, and lively. Ba-Kathir's experience, as critics of this period note, is a pioneering one, confronting the issue of the employment of poetry and its rhythms and measures in suitable dramatic form, taking advantage of Shawgi's previous attempts at positive experimentation. Ba-Kathir is a contemporary of Abdul Rahman Al-Shargawi's subsequent experience in dealing with rhythms in a new way. He used several rhythms and committed himself mostly to one foot. He explained his new work by dispensing with the rhymed poetry, saying that the rhymed poetry is far from valid as the language of the theater (pp. 74-75).

Altogether, such a verse should be profound, evocative, and dramatically justified. Eliot, in his critical writings, clearly suggested that poetic drama has to defend itself dramatically. He "wanted the verse drama to bear a kind of rhythm that echoed the normal twentieth-century speech. He did not want it to imitate the old Shakespearean blank verse but [the] free verse, which can merge with the modern language" (Dahami, 2017). Furthermore, Shakespeare "is fittingly deemed to be one of the principal pioneers in English poetic drama" (Dahami, 2021). "Bakathir's study of English literature and Shakespeare, in particular, guided him to some of the innovations the dramatist pioneered, such as the use of running blank verse and free verse, which became

a medium of later Arabic verse drama" (Hussain, 2015). Furthermore, "in his quest for a new verse drama convenient to contemporary spectators of the modern period, Eliot wants to create a new form for new theater that can be used as a vehicle for developing new watchers" (Dahami, 2018). Besides, "an effective verse drama assumes a kind of poetic expression that is both dramatic, proper, and justifiable for the action that it instigates or represents. A poetic play has something more to offer. In a poetic play, there is a type of musical pattern and design" (Dahami, 2020). The subject matter is almost identical to Ali Ahmed Ba-Kathir. Ba-Kathir enjoyed studying English poetry, particularly free verse and has a preference for writing in blank verse after attaining its basis from reading and reviewing English poetry.

It is evident that the Elizabethan dramatists struck a mean note, adhering to the new blank verse brought from Italy by the Earl of Surrey, a type of verse rhythmical in utterance yet closer to the language of real life than any species of verse of the riming type. With occasional lapses into decasyllabic couplets here and there and the infrequent introduction into the dialogue of poetic forms such as the sonnet (as in *Romeo and Juliet*), blank verse dominated the whole of tragic endeavor in England, from Sackville and Norton's *Gorboduc* to Shirley's *Traitor* and *The Cardinal*. As the drama advanced, however, there may have been two reactions to this employment of blank verse. In the rimed couplets and in the heightened style of our own late seventeenth-century heroic tragedy (Dahami, 2017; Allardyce, 1969).

Furthermore, Ba-Kathir believes in a new modern blank verse fit for theater and modern audiences. For Ba-Kathir, blank verse is as natural as free verse, which makes the audience unconscious of listening to rhythmical cadence and intonation in the speech of the actors. Munaif (2006), states that Ba-Kathir was among the first to apply this sort of innovative poetry (p. 360). He has a story about the possibility of using this sort of verse in the Arabic language. There is a stimulating story about such an inclination. Several critics comment on the way Ba-Kathir became skilled at blank verse.

Ali Ahmad Ba-Kathir informs about the motive for this occasion, revealing that once he was in a lecture on English literature, the English teacher had the lecture on blank verse in English. The lecturer said this type of poetry did not prosper in any other language, as it was cultivated in English. The lecturer adds that the French themselves sought to emulate this form of English verse but were unsuccessful, as is the case in English; certainly, he adds that there is no such thing in this language, referring to Arabic. Ba-Kathir stood, showing his objection: I opposed the lecturer's opinions and told him that every language has its own resourceful traditions and practices in its poetry. Ba-Kathir confirmed that there is nothing to prevent making such a type of poetry in the Arabic language since it can deal with linguistic alternatives that are not available except in Arabic. He adds that it is the convention of the Arabs to follow one style of rhythm and rhyme. It is their quality of phrase and expression as well as their artistic design. The lecturer showed his displeasure, and I still recall his reaction. He said 'nonsense' (Al-Azhari, 2007; Moawath, 2005; Hamid, 1991; Ba-Kathir, 1985).

Consequently, Ba-Kathir translated a scene from the tragic romance play, *Romeo and Juliet*, by Shakespeare into Arabic. He could, to a great extent, make it in suitable blank verse. This experiment opened the gate for him to the revitalization of the new system of Arabic poetry; however, he did not bring the work to an end. When he finished writing the principal play, *Akhenaten and Nefertiti*, he went back to Shakespeare's drama *Romeo and Juliet* and completed it in full with a combination of free verses and blank verses. Blank verse is a form of poetry that is free from the control of rhyme and is flexible and variable in its rhythmical accents (Makaryk & McHugh, 2012). However, "Shakespeare did not only influence poets of his age who dealt with blank verse and poetic dramas but also greatly influenced poets and dramatists of the twentieth century" (Dahami, 2021; Dahami, 2020).

5 Omar ibn Al-Khattab: A Poetic Play

The epic drama of Ba-Kathir, called *Omar's Epic*, is composed of eighteen or nineteen plays. It was originally part of a great Islamic epic that he intended to publish if death had not preceded. This epic is a feat of boasting about the ruler's biography, which is an example of injustice and the power of the character of Caliph Omar ibn Al-Khattab. In preserving historical honesty, Ba-Kathir collected materials with great understanding and then reshaped his ideas in the correct and truest of the historical texts, which resulted in this masterpiece (Bulbul, 2001; Muhabbak, 1989). This epic drama may answer an important question posed by critics: 'Why is all this interest in history taken by the author?' The reaction to such a question about Ba-Kathir heading for

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history was with the intention of reviving the positions of heroism and struggle in the lives of Caliph Omar and the Companions (As-Sahaba), may Allah bless them all (Tantawi, 1977; Ba-Kathir, 1958).

Ba-Kathir is the playwright of the epic drama called *The Great Islamic Epic: Omar* (Al-Malhama al-Islamia al-Kubra: Omar). The play deals with the story and life of the second great Caliph, Omar ibn Al-Khattab. It is one of the voluminous literary works similar in size to *The Dynasts*, Thomas Hardy's epic drama (Omotoso, 1972). The *Dynasts* "chanced that the writer was familiar with a part of England that lay within hail of the watering-place in which King George the Third had his favourite summer residence during the war with the first Napoleon, and where he was visited by ministers and others who bore the weight of English affairs on their more or less competent shoulders at that stressful time" (Millgate, 1994).

Like Hardy's epic, Ba-Kathir's epic drama is divided into three voluminous fragments and nineteen acts. The work of Hardy covers ten years of fighting and confrontation with Napoleon, just like Ba-Kathir's drama, which covers ten years of the reign of Caliph Omar ibn Al-Khattab. Islam has built up the personality of Omar ibn Al-Khattab as the next simple to Prophet Mohammad after Caliph Abo Bakr As-Sedig. Caliph Omar is considered the creator of the Arab realm insofar as he not only regulated the military inaugurations but also established the governmental basis of the Islamic realm. His strongest trait was his vigor of will.

Omar began as a declared opponent of Islam and ended by sustaining caring for it with all his powers. The caliph was more of a councilor than an army person. In spite of everything, Omar was independent in the view that he took verdicts and followed their implementation with such singleness of attention, such firmness of purpose, and such a principle of his perfection that it was challenging for his consultants to question him. However, he had a humble and unpretentious lifestyle that must have impressed Ba-Kathir at a time when he was becoming uninspired by the affluence of administrative leaders in Egypt.

Omar ibn Al-Khattab is one of the most distinctive modes of all the qualities of Islam. He is a fit subject for a great epic since a person admits that an epic is a work focusing chiefly on the doings of one or more dominant figures, men who revolutionize history. The epic drama, as a planned literary work, covers more than one thousand pages and shows pride in the involvement of one hundred main characters through its nineteen acts (Abandah et al., 2022; Al-Shaibani et al., 2020; Feghali, 1997; Hashem & Muhi, 2021).

On the Walls of Damascus (Ala Aswar Dimashq) is a historical and religious play in verse that starts with an introduction and is divided into two parts, or scenes. The introduction deals with the passing away of Caliph Abo Bakr and decides on Omar as the new successor. The first scene opens with Abo Bakr on his deathbed. He sends for Omar ibn Al-Khattab and asks his judgment of the two Muslim keen and strong generals, Abo Obaidah ibn Al-Jarah and Khaled ibn Al-Waleed, as possible rulers of Islam; however, Omar cannot appreciate either of the two as a successor caliph. Abo Bakr makes Omar agree against his will that no other strong individual could best supervise the young Muslim realm at that time but Omar ibn Al-Khattab himself.

Omar presents a vision for Arabic literature in the modern age. In the first scene, the dramatist put it like this: A room in the house of Abo Bakr has a low bed that does not rise from the ground except a little. It has a skylight overlooking the Prophet's Holy Masjid. The curtain rises on Abo Bakr lying on his bed with his wife, Asma bint Umays. From the very beginning, we find the play to be poetic to a great extent.

الصبي: يا أمه، أين خذروفي يا أمه؟
 أسماء: (بصوت خافض) صه .. اسكت يا غلام،
 لا تزعج اباك من نومه
 الصبي: اين وضعت خذروفي؟
 أسماء: خباته
 الصبي: الآن أبي مريض تمنعيني من اللعب؟
 أسماء: نعم
 الصبي: لن العب في البيت. سألعب في الطريق.
 أسماء: صه. لا في البيت ولا في الطريق (Ba-Kathir, 1969, pp. 9-10)

The Boy: O Mother, where is my drooping, o mother?

Asma: (in a low voice) Hush. Shut up, boy.

Do not disturb your father from his sleep

The Boy: Where did you put my thighs?

Asma: I hid it

The Boy: Is it because my father is sick, so you prevent me from playing?

Asma: yes

The Boy: I will not play at home. I will play on the way outside.

Asma: Hush. Neither at home nor on the road.

The above lines are the opening of the play. The dramatist wanted to shift the audience into a real-life situation. What concerns us is the dramatic style and the poetic design the dramatist has used. A problem might face the researcher with the perfection of verse translation because poetry is difficult to translate, both the meaning and the poetic devices. Consequently, the researcher tries to rely on the analysis of the original Arabic lines supported by the approximate interpretation. In the first line above, (O Mother, where is my drooping, o mother? يا أمه، أين خذروفي يا أمه؟), as a natural situation, we find the child – any child – cares only about what makes him/her satisfied, even through playing.

It is the skill of Ba-Kathir to make the line poetic. There is a clear example of reiteration of the alliteration as seen in the word (يا أمه) which is a style of calling mother. In this line, we conceive the wide knowledge of the poet-dramatist by nicely using the Arabic classical language, as in the word (خذروفي) which denotes the playing tool for children, a drooping or spinning top. I can guess that the author has thought a lot about what kind of words to use to fit the situation.

In Arabic poetry, as in English, the reiteration of similar adjacent or near sounds or words is important to create a sort of musical rhythm. The calling interjection 'يا' 'o' is repeated in the same line as a way of internal rhythm. The idea is the same with the usage of the word (أمه) mother, which is reiterated twice for the purpose of creating an identical internal rhythm. Rhythm is a "standard example of sound, with intervals of time taking place generally in verse. Regular and reliable rhythm is known to be comforting to humans, while irregular, random, or rapidly changing rhythm is troubling" (Dahami, 2017).

We find an indication of recurrence as a way of increasing or intensifying the process of intonation, but this time not in the same line; the recurrence occurs in the first line and the fourth line with the word (خذروفي) which means the drooping. The word is said by the same character, the boy, speaking to and imploring his mother in both lines, the first and fourth.

In the sixth line, we find a sort of protest from the side of the child, but it is still a polite protest, indicating that the age of the boy is approximately six years or older. Some other pictures of internal beating regularity we find The words (اللعب، اللعب، سألعب) are instances of such a measuring pattern, which means playing, I play, and I shall play. In such an example, we remember what Coleridge said about the definition of poetry when he said that poetry is "the best words in the best order" (Dahāmi, 2018; Crystal & Crystal, 2000; Blodgett & Burges, 1942). Here, the poet-dramatist shows his skill and experience in the best manipulation of the language to satisfy his poetic goals. Similarly, in the last two lines above, we find another portrait of echo as a poetic device in the phrase (في الطريق), in a reference to the road or path.

أسماء: كيف تجدك الساعة؟
 أبو بكر: الحمد لله. إنما مثل المرء في حياته يا أسماء
 كمثل خذروف الصبي، بينما هو يدور حتى
 لا تضبطه العين من شدة دورانه، إذ هو
 اللقي لا حراك به! اتسمعين هذا الطائر
 يا أسماء؟
 أسماء: هذا الدبسي يا خليفة رسول الله فوق
 غصون الشجر.
 أبو بكر: طوبى لك يا طير: تأكل من الثمر
 وتستظل بالشجر، وتصير الي غير
 حساب. يا ليت أبا بكر مثلك (ص 10-11).

Asma: How are you now?

Abo Bakr: Thank God. Just like a person in his life, Asma,

Like a boy's drooping, while he's spinning until

The eye cannot control it due to the intensity of its rotation, if it is

Dropped, seen motionless! Do you hear this bird?

O Asma?

Asma: This laughing dove, O successor of the Messenger of Allah above
Tree brushwood.

Abo Bakr: fortunate you are o bird: you eat of the fruit,
Shaded by trees, and passes away without
Interrogation. I wish Abo Bakr were like you.

In the above lines, we find several more poetic and musical devices as well as connotative indications, which the poet-dramatist created in order to elevate the level of this dramatic epic. The Caliph Abo Bakr replies to his wife, who asks about his health after being ill for a while. The answer of the Caliph is full of wisdom. Ba-Kathir draws, through the mouth of Abo Bakr, a portrait of the insignificance and triviality of this ephemeral life, saying that – after thanking and praising Allah – life is like the drooping top of the boy, which revolves in a continuous movement. There is a simile comparing life with all its dignity, importance, impressiveness, and majesty to something trivial in an everlasting motion. Abo Bakr intends to make it clear that life without the satisfaction of Allah is worthless. Critics might imagine that it is a metaphorical picture.

The eighth, ninth, and tenth lines show an ending rhyme through the repeated word (الشجر) which means trees, and the single word (التمر) which refers to the fruit. The poetic representation is between Caliph Abo Bakr and the bird. Abo Bakr, in a trance mood, speaks with the bird. Allegorically, the Caliph mentions that the bird is better than Abo Bakr for the reasons that both of them eat and get shelter either under the tree like the bird or in the house like Abo Bakr, but the bird, after passing away, will not be subjected to interrogation on the Day of Judgment. Abo Bakr and all human beings will be subjected to questioning and interrogation. He is very terrified of thinking of the situation in case Allah will not show mercy for the guilty and sinners. In this case, Abo Bakr believes that birds are better than humans. An impossible wish we hear from the Caliph when he desires to be like the bird named (الدبسي) laughing dove.

صوت: يا آل ابي بكر! يا آل ابي بكر!
أسماء: هذا صوت عمر بن الخطاب.
أبو بكر: أجلسيني أسماء (تعينه على الجلوس
وتضع الوسادة خلف ظهره) قولي له
يدخل، ولا يدخلن أحد علينا حتى
ينصرف عمر.
(تخرج أسماء ثم يدخل عمر) (ص 12).

Voice: O family of Abu Bakr! O family of Abu Bakr!

Asma: This is the voice of Omar Ibn Al-Khattab.

Abu Bakr: Asmaa, sit me down (help him to sit down).

And put the pillow behind his back) Tell him

To enter, let non enters until

Omar leaves.

(Asma exits, then Omar enters).

It is the first utterance of the main personality in this epic drama, Omar, who visits Abo Bakr at the request of the Caliph. The repeated voice of Omar is rhythmical. The attentive listener might find musical intonation in the first line through the reiteration of the whole phrase (يا آل ابي بكر! يا آل ابي بكر) O family of Abu Bakr! O family of Abu Bakr! In the fifth line, the reader finds in the phrase (يدخل، ولا يدخلن أحد) 'To enter, let non enters an internal rhythmical beat in the repeated word (يدخل) 'enter. However, the regularity of the sound is emphasized by the contrast of the meaning intended by Abo Bakr. The skill of the author is palpable when he makes the contrast in the middle of the utterance to support his poetic purpose when he puts 'let non' between the verbs enter and enter.

عمر: السلام عليك يا خليفة رسول الله.
أبو بكر: و عليك السلام ورحمة الله. اين كنت يا ابن
الخطاب فقد افتقدت منذ أمس؟
عمر: إن الله لا يستحي من الحق. جاءتني تجارة

من اليمن فشغلتني عنك.
أبو بكر: فهل انتهيت منها اليوم؟ (ص 12)

Omar: Peace be upon you, O Caliph of the Messenger of Allah.
Abu Bakr: May the peace and mercy of Allah be upon you too. Where have you been
O Ibn Al-Khattab? I have missed you since yesterday.
Omar: Allah is not ashamed of the truth. I received a trade
From Yemen. It distracted me, not to see you.
Abu Bakr: Have you finished it today? (p. 12)

The author, in the first and second lines, skillfully rhymes the phrases (السلام عليك) Peace be upon you and (وعليك السلام) May the peace and mercy of Allah be upon you too. However, it is internal rhyming, particularly the words 'Peace be upon you' in both lines. The internal rhyming is the opposite, in which the Arabic phrase (وعليك السلام) in the second line is a response to the phrase in the first line (السلام عليك). Contemplating both phrases, discover a musical intonation if it is pronounced. The idea is similar to the word (الله) Allah that is repeated in both lines, the first and the second. Ba-Kathir has shown another picture in the third line and the sixth, in which we can find in the English translation a clear ending rhyme with the words yesterday and today. Furthermore, the same words, but in Arabic, bring up an allegorical contrast between (أمس) yesterday and (اليوم) today. Sometimes the contrasting device is an indirect emphasis on an idea or another the poet wants his listeners to conceive.

أبو بكر: هذا الفء الذي كنت اقسمة بين المسلمين
على السواء لا اميز فيه أحدا منهم على أحد
فما رأيك اليوم في ذلك؟
عمر: رأيي اليوم في ذلك كرايي أمس. لا يستوي
السابقون الى الإسلام والمتخلفون. والله
لا اجعل من قاتل رسول الله كمن قاتل معه.
أبو بكر: يا ابن الخطاب، إن السابقين انما أسلموا لله
وعليه اجرهم يوفيههم ذلك يوم القيامة،
وانما هذه الدنيا بلاغ.
عمر: يا أبا بكر إنك سألتني رأيي، فهذا رأيي. (ص 13)

Abo Bakr: This is what I used to divide among Muslims
Either way, I do not distinguish one of them over another
What do you think of that matter today?
Omar: My opinion today is my opinion yesterday. Not equal
The formers to Islam and the backward. I swear
I do not make the one who fought the Messenger of Allah like the one who fought with him.
Abo Bakr: O Ibn Al-Khattab, the forerunners only submitted to Allah
He shall have their reward, and he shall pay them that on the Day of Resurrection.
But this world is communication.
Omar: O Abo Bakr, you asked me my opinion, and this is my opinion.

In the above lines, the poet-dramatist draws more than one picture, either through the usage of poetic devices or the implementation of connotative symbols and images. In the second line, the poet has used internal rhythmical cadence when he mentioned the Arabic phrase (أحدا منهم على احد) which means 'one of them over another'. First, in dealing with the Arabic idiom, we find that the word (أحدا) rhymes with the word (أحد) but is not identical. There is a sort of variation in the sound to distinguish the beat, which increases the musical intonation.

The fourth line bears a similar situation where the repeated words (رأيي my opinion) and (كرايي as my opinion) evince the same inner rhyme in the same line. In the next line, number five, we find two allegorical and figurative contrasts in meaning but similarities in the regularity of the beating foot. They are (السابقون formers) and (المتخلفون and the late ones). The contrast brings clear pictures and shows different notions and

philosophies between the first Caliph Abo Bakr and the second Omar. The first is merciful, and the second is just.

Moreover, both the two caliphs have positive perspectives on the issue, but everyone looks at the point from a different angle. On the one hand, Abo Bakr believes that all Muslims are totally equal and no difference between those who joined Islam early and those who joined late because, as he thinks, Allah is the creator who is able to question the wrongdoers on the Day of Judgment. He is true. On the other hand, Omar believes that those Muslims who joined Islam early and defended the Prophet and sacrificed themselves for Islam are not equal to those who joined Islam lately; not only that, but they stood against the Prophet and Islam. In his opinion, the two groups are not equal, and he is right because he judges things as a human.

In the sixth line (لا اجعل من قاتل رسول الله كمن قاتل معه), the poet continues the process of making the lines poetic by arranging rhythmical words with poetic pulse such as (من قاتل) and (كمن قاتل). They are alliterative. The last line also shows alliteration when Ba-Kathir repeats the words (رأبي) and (رأبي) which mean 'my opinion'. The repetition is consonant and assonant.

Thus, by taking an interest in history, Ba-Kathir has been able to raise and increase his experience in understanding what the play is in general and the historical play in particular, and thus realize the features of its success. In his book *The Art of Drama*, Ba-Kathir declares his opinion about historical plays, saying that if a writer deals with a historical subject, his task is not to record what happened in real history as it occurred (Al-Zoubi & Al-Zoubi, 2022; Boudad et al., 2018; Abandah et al., 2022). That task is related to historians. However, the mission of the dramatist is to create within that piece of history a new world in which events occur, where people act, where problems are complicated, and results are produced, not as proven by the records of history. Moreover, the dramatist should conceive of his work as a general picture he imagined in the light of his knowledge of the life of that era in particular and his experience of human life in general. He is guided in all of these by the goal he aims at and the message he wants to send (Ba-Kathir, n. d: 44-46).

6 Conclusion

The foregoing has been an effort to summarize and recapitulate the first six acts of Omar. As an epic play, it is a promising achievement. And nowhere else in the works of Ba-Kathir does subject matter affect the form so catastrophically. This achievement would appear to demonstrate that a literary method could be imposed upon determinately by the area under discussion. The epic, initially constrained to verse narratives of military undertakings, has been stretched by critics, authors, and authors who have employed the epic arrangement for dramatic writing as well as for prose works. An essential characteristic of all these points is the dignity, grandiosity, and heroic standing common both to the subject matter and to the structure. The area under discussion is vast and worldwide in dimension; the structure is dignified and decorative.

With a surprising literary method, he was able to bring together the scatterings and unite them with impressive unity, enjoyment, and persuasion. One of Ba-Kathir's goals was to present this theatrical epic in a new literary garb, and he thrived. What is more, it aims to stir up the national and ideological spirit of resistance to colonialism and, at the same time, to defame the unfair and unjust rulers who are failing their nation, taking history as a cover to protect themselves from the tyrannous rulers. In doing so, he metaphorically deplores their courage and strength over their distressed people.

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