

# A QAFIAH OF AL-AKHTAL (UMAYYAD POET 640-713M) AND ITS STYLISTIC ANALYSIS

By: Tengku Ghani Tengku Jusoh\*

## Abstrak

Pada dasarnya, *Qafiah Qaf* mempunyai 41 bait. Secara puitis, *Qafiah Qaf* ini melukiskan dinamika perkemahan padang pasir (bait 1-6), wanita berjalan dalam sekedup (bait 7-14), binatang tunggangan, (bait 15-17), lembu jantan liar (bait 18-23), anjing pemburuan (bait 24-29), ulangan deskripsi tentang binatang tunggangan (bait 30-35) dan bagian syair pujian (bait 36-41). Dinamika kehidupan *al-Akhtal* mencerminkan toleransi bermakna kehidupan sehari-hari umat Islam. Pendidikan toleransi tidak sekedar dijadikan wacana, tapi terlibat dari kenyataan dan tercermin berbagai karya sastrawan pemeluk Nasrani yang utuh. Apalagi *al-Akhtal* dikenal sebagai salah seorang sastrawan Nasrani yang dapat menikmati berbagai fasilitas yang cukup menggiurkan dalam istana Dinasti Umayyah pada saat itu

القافية أو الكلمة الأخيرة من البيت في قول الشاعر. تناول البحث قافية القاف في أبيات الأخطل الشاعر المشهور في عهد الخلافة الأموية. وعدد الباحث أن شعر الأخطل واحد وأربعون بيتا من بينها ترسم الحياة في المخيمات الصحروية بكل طبيعتها ومشاكلها ومزاياها إضافة إلى الأبيات التي تثنى الدولة وأسر الخليفة. وبعد نظر وتحليل متأن بلغ الباحث إلى نتيجة بأن أبيات الأخطل تضمن معنى التسامح المتصلة بحياة المجتمع الإسلامي آنذاك. واعتبارا من هذا وتلك فإن تربية التسامح لم يكن آراء مطروحة وأفكار منتشرة فحسب بل أصبح مظاهر تشهدا الأخطل الشاعر النصراني المعروف في زمانه وتتمتع هو بالحياة الرفاهية والرخاء داخل القصور في عهد الخلافة الأمية.

*Key words: al-Akhtal, Qafiah Qaf, and Bani Umayyah.*

\* Associate Professor Dr. Lecturer Department of Arabic Studies and Islamic Civilization-National University of Malaysia, Bangi, Selangor, Malaysia.

*A. Introduction*

Qafiah Qaf of al-Akhfal (41 lines) is poetically being categorized into Omayyad classical Arabic poem: The poet systematically rhymed this poem to praise Salm Ibn Zayyad one of the Omayyad elite group.

The objective of this article is academically to present an examination of accurate translation of the poem. Furthermore it is also to look into stylistic analysis which that is successfully invented by al-Akhtal. He has imaginatively, metrically and stylistically achieved to prove his craftsmanship in this poem and the stylistic analysis in this Qafiah Qaf is entirely examined to strengthen it.

*B. Al-Akhtal*

Al-Akhtal (d.92h) is obviously-known as one of the famous Umayyad court poet from tribe of al-Taghlib. His contemporary poets are Jarir and al-Farazdaq. This three poets are poetically well-known in al-Naqaid. He has metrically invented panegyric poems to praise the caliphs and governors especially Yazid bin Mu'awiyah. Furthermore one of the interest thing here is that al-Akhtal<sup>1</sup> a Christian poet has successfully been chosen to be a court poet to defend one of the Omayyad caliphs.

*C. Content*

This article has systematically been divided into two parts. Part one is academically dealing with translation (pages 1 – 11) and part two is poetically a stylistic analysis, conclusion and bibliography (pages 12 – 22).

*a) Translation*

1

يا مي: هلا يجازى بعض ودكم أم لا يفادى أسير: عندكم غلق

O! Mayyah, why is some of your love not to be given as a reward? And why is a prisoner whose pledge is forfeit to you not ransomed.

2

ألا يكون هذا عهدنا بكم إن التوى، بعد شحط الدار، تتفق

Shall not this be my compact with you; Our ways will coincide again after our dwellings have been distanced from one another.

<sup>1</sup> According to Mujahid M. Bahjat, lecturer in al-Hashemite University, Jordan for reading and revising through Tengku Ghani's research said that: "His choice of al-Akhtal poems is mainly based on his field of specialty, which is the Umayyad poetry. Al-Akhtal is considered as one of the best poets of his era in our poetic heritage. (Mujahid M. Bahjat, "Foreword", Tengku Ghani Tengku Jusoh (2001), *Stylistic Analysis of Selected poems of Diwan Al-Akhtal Al-Taghlibi*, Kuala Lumpur: Univision Press, p. xi)

3

إما تريني حناني الدهر من كبير وألبستني له ديباجة خلق

If you see me affected by time with old age and clothed in a ragged brocade of its.

4

فقد تمازني المستقتلات، وقد تعاقني عند ذات الموتة، الأثق

Yet reckless girls sometimes sport with me, and beauty, in a languorous woman, sometimes detains me.

5

وقد يكلفني قلبي، فأزجره ربعاء، غداة غدوا أهواؤهم فرق

And my heart although I try to restrain it – imposes upon me the difficult task of visiting a camp-site, on the morning when the tribe sets off with varied intentions.

6

وقد أقول لثور: هل ترى ظعنا يحذرو يهن حذارى مشفق شفق

I say to thaur; Can you see women travelling in litters driven by a man anxious, because of my reputation, to keep them away from me.

7

كأنها، بالرحا، سفن ملحجة أو حايش، من جواثا. ناعم سحق

As if they were ships putting out to sea near al-Rahha or a grove of tall mature palm trees of Ju'atha.

8

يرفعها الآل للتالي، فيدركهم طرف حديد وطرف دونهم غرق

The mirage raises them up for one following to see; they are glimpsed by an eye now keen and now dulled by tears.

9

حتى لحقنا، وقد زال النهار، وقد مالت لهن، بأعلى خيف، البرق

Finally we caught up with them the day had gone and the hard ground was stretching down towards them on the heights of khaynaf.

10

فهن يرميننا من كل مرتقب بأعين لم يخالط كحلها الزرق

They cast glances at us from every vantage-point with eyes the blackness of which was not mixed with any blue.

11

يظنون ذا الشيب، والإسلام همته ويستقيد لمن الأهيف الروق

They make reckless the white-haired old man whose aspiration should be Islam; and the slim youth who, still has all his teeth, is captivated by them.

12

وفتية غير أنذال، رفعت لهم سحق الرداء، على علياء، يثتفق

I put my threadbare rida' fluttering on some high ground (as shade) for some noble fellow.

13

رفعته، وهو يهفو في عمائمهم كأنه طائر، في رجله علق

I set it up and it flapped among their turbans, as if it were a bird fastened by the leg.

14

نفسي فداء أبي حرب، غداة غدا نخالط الجن أو مستوحش فرق

May I be the ransom of Abu Harb! On the morning when there set out one who associates with the Jinn, or is lonely and afraid.

15

عن مذكرة، ترمي الفروج بما غول النجاء، إذا ما استعجل العنق

On a strong she-camel that runs quickly, with which you hurtle through the passes, when her pace is increased.

16

وظل حرباؤها للشمس مضطخدا كأنه وارم الأوداج محتق

While the chameleon remained basking in the sun as though strangling with swollen jugular veins.

17

والرجل لاحقة منها بأولها وفي يديها، إذا استعرضتها، دفق

Her hind-legs overtake her forelegs and she has great speed in her forelegs when you look at her sideways

18

كأنها، بعد ضم السير جبلتها من وحش غزة موشي الشوى لهق

After the journey has emaciated her body, she looks like a white oryx of Ghazzah with speckled legs.

19

بات إلى جانب منها، يكفئه ليل طويل، وقلب خائف أرق

Which has stayed on one side of Ghazzah, made restless by a long night and the fearful sleepless heart.

20

باتت له ليلة هاجت بوارحها ومرزم من سحب العين يأتلق

It spent a night in which the winds raged, and flashes came from the thunder-clouds of al-<sup>C</sup>Ayn.

21

فالقطر كاللؤلؤ المتثور يفضه إذا اقشعر به سرباله لثق

The rain was like scattered pearls, shaken off by it, when its wet pelt made him shudder.

22

يلوذ، ليلته، منها بغرقدة والغصن ينطف فوق المتن، والورق

It takes refuge all nights from the rain under a box-thorn with the branches and leaves dripping upon its back.

23

حتى إذا كاد ضوء الصبح يفضحه وكاد عنه سواد الليل ينطلق

Until when the light of morning had almost revealed it, and the blackness of night had almost departed from it.

24

هاجت به ذبل، مسح جواعرها كأنما هن من نبعية شقق

Lean, narrow-haunched (dogs) like splinters of a bow roused it.

25

فظل يهوي إلى أمر يساق له وأتبعته كلاب الحي تستيق

It proceeded to advance swiftly towards something to which it was driven, while the dogs of the tribe competed to overtake it.

26

يفرج الموت عنه، قد تحضره وكدن يلحقته، أو قد دنا اللحق

It warded off from itself the death that had menaced it, while they almost caught up with it, coming very close indeed.

27

لما لحقن به أنحى بمغوله يملا فرائصها من طعنه العلق

When they overtook it, it lunged sideways with its horns, and a blood covered their shoulders from its thrust.

28

فكر ذو حربة، يحمي حقيقته إذا نحا لكلاها الروق بمترق

It charged as a spearman (i.e. The Oryx), defending its vitals, piercing their kidneys when it directed its horns at them.

29

فهن من بين متروك به رمق صرعى، وآخر لم يترك به رمق

Some of them were left prostrate, still just breathing; others were left no longer breathing.

30

يوم لقيناك ترمينا السموم، وقد كاد الملاء من الكتان تحترق

On the day I met you, the simoon struck me, and my linen robe almost caught fire.

31

على مسانيف يجري ماء أعينها إذا تلغهن السربخ القرق

(Travelling) on saddle-slipping camels, the eyes of which ran with water, when they found the flat desert too much for them.

32

في غمرة من سحب الآل، ترفعهم يطفون فيها، قليلا، ثم تنحرق

In the depths of the mirage producing clouds, which raised them up for a little while, floating in them, and then split apart.

33

عن ذبل اللحم تمديهن معجلة إذا تفصد من أقرابها، العرق

Leaving visible lean-fleshed camels led by one that gave birth prematurely, when the sweat flowed from her flanks.

34

كان أنساعها من طول ما ضمرت وشح تققع فيها رفرق قلقي

Their girth-thongs were, because of the length of the time they had been emaciated, like women's belts, the ornaments of which clinked restlessly.

35

تعلو الفلاة، إذا حف السراب بما كما تحب ذياب الفقرة الورق

They floated above the desert, when raised up by the mirage, just as the ash-grey wolves of the barren land slink along.

36

إلى امرئ لا تخطاه الرفاق، ولا جذب الخوان، إذا ما استبطيء المرق

To a man, past whom no companies of travellers go-and not to meagre hospitality, when the meat sauce is slow to arrive.

37

صلب الحيازم، لا هذر الكلام، إذا هز القناة، ولا مستعجل زهق

Firm-hearted, not speaking wildly, when he brandishes his lance, or hasty and rash.

38

وأنت يابن زياد عندنا حسن منك البلاء، وأنت الناصح الشفق

And you o! Ibn Ziyad, we enjoy favours from you/we find your infliction of trial on us pleasant; you are our sincere adviser and the one who has compassion on us.

39

والمستقل بأمر، ما يقوم له غس من القوم، رعديد، ولا فرق

Independent in a matter in which no weak and cowardly or fearful man the tribe fails.

40

وأنت خير ابن أخت، يستطاف به إذا ترعزع فوق الفيلق الخرق

You are the best son of a sister to be surrounded (by troops), when the standards flap above the army.

41

موطأ البيت، محمود شمائله عند الجمالة، لا كز ولا وعق

One whose house is frequented, whose nature is praise-worthy; one who is not niggardly or mean when paying the blood-wid.

### b) A Stylistic Analysis

Line 1; begins with an apostrophe which is followed by two parallel passive verbal sentences. Variety between these two is achieved in two ways; the first is the fact that they have different subjects, one being abstract (and also compound), the other being personal (A single indefinite noun, reinforced by an adjectival phrase); the second is the fact that both sentences refer to the personal subject of the second sentence, from a slightly different view point, the first by implication and the second directly. The adjectival phrase at the end of 1b cannot be called a gratuitous adjectival adjunct, since, it adds further valuable information.

Line 2; The first hemistich of line 2 is a simple question. The second hemistich, which is dependent upon "هذأ", clarifies the first. The structure of the second hemistich separates subject and verb, putting the verb, as the most important word, last. There is a *tibaq* between "النوى" and "شحط" on the hand and "تنفق" on the other.

Line 3 consists of the protasis of a conditional sentence followed by two circumstantial sentences. Each of these concentrate on the object of each verb, which is the same in all three cases, whereas the subject of each is different. Variation between the two circumstantial sentences is achieved by means of variation in the pattern of subject; in the first the subject is a simple definite noun followed by a prepositional phrase linking it with the verb and object, in the second the subject is an indefinite noun and adjective, the prepositional expression attached to which appears to refer to "كبر" in the first sentence.

Line 4 consists of a double-apodosis to the conditional sentence, in which variation is again achieved by the use of different types of subject, the first personal, the second abstract; the second part separates the verb from its subject by an adverbial phrase. It is noticeable now, in roughly parallel hemistich, the poet follows a straightforward statement with the more complex one.



Line 5 provides a further apodosis to the conditional sentence, this time made more complex first by the parenthetical insertion of "فأزجره" and secondly by the addition of an adverbial clause followed by a circumstantial clause.

Line 6 should strictly be regarded as yet another apodosis to the conditional sentence, but, in fact, it acts as a development of the narrative beginning in line 5. It also marks a shift in the direction in which this section of the poem is proceeding, by diverting attention from "Mayyah", to whom the preceding lines have been addressed to a new addressee. This permits the poet to develop the image and the narrative more freely. The relative clause, which occupies the second hemistich, is one again interrupted by an adverbial phrase "شئق" is a gratuitous adjectival adjunct.

Line 7 consists of two parallel comparative clauses, both, in this case, interrupted by an expression containing a place name, slightly varied in their relationship with the other components of the clauses. The final adjective of the second hemistich is functional, rather than gratuitous.

Line 8: This line consists of a simple statement followed by a consecutive clause with two subjects. The lack of a conjunction at the beginning of the line suggests that the first element is technically to be regarded as an additional relative clause, dependent on line 6. The positioning of the verb of the consecutive clause, at the end of the first hemistich is a favourite one, and here permits the poet to vary his double-subject by making the second longer than the first.

Line 9 consists of a short statement followed by two circumstantial clauses, the second of which has an adverbial interruption. "حتى" is only vaguely connected in sense with the preceding line. The sound "ل" predominates in this verse with subsidiary "ن".

Line 10 consists of a main clause lasting to the first word of the second hemistich. The structure of the line is relatively straightforward. The sound pattern is much same as in line 9. "ن" and "ل" have parity here.

Line 11 consists of two more or less parallel statements; the first of which is followed by a circumstantial clause. Variation between the two is achieved by reversing the subject and object. "الروق", which also serves to vary the second statement, is almost but not quite a gratuitous adjectival adjunct.

Line 12 consists of an anacoluthic phrase, emphasizing this element of the line followed by a straightforward sentence, in which the anacoluthon is referred to by a pronoun. The "ر", "ف" and "ق" in the line imitate the fluttering of the garment.

Line 13 again has a very simple structure. The initial anaphora is followed by a circumstantial clause, which in turn is followed by a comparative clause. There is a fainter echo of the fluttering in the “ر”, “ف” and “ق”.

Line 14 again is a simple structure, consisting of an exclamatory phrase, followed by a temporal clause.

Line 15 begins with the customary “التضمين” that is associated with the beginning of the *rihlah* followed by a relative clause; the second hemistich begins with a descriptive phrase in apposition to the beginning of the first hemistich, followed by a temporal clause.

Line 16 consists of a main clause followed by a comparative clause. “محقق” is a gratuitous adjectival adjunct. In this section, there is quite a high proportion of line in which there is a break in sense at the end of the first hemistich.

Line 17 consists of two main clauses, both of which are interrupted, the first, slightly awkwardly, by “منها”, the second, very characteristically by a temporal clause.

Line 18 consists of a comparative clause, interrupted by the first word by a temporal clause, occupying the remainder of the first hemistich; the natural order of the first two components of the second hemistich is reversed. “لهق” is virtually a gratuitous adjectival adjunct.

Line 19 the straightforward line consisting of a main clause occupying most of the first hemistich, followed by a circumstantial clause, beginning in the first hemistich, with two subjects, the second of which is longer than the first. There is a predominance of the sound “ل”.

Line 20 is again straightforward, consisting of a main clause, occupying half of the first hemistich, followed by a relative clause occupying the second half of the first hemistich. The second hemistich consists of a circumstantial clause, associated with the relative clause, but only loosely attached to it; it is interrupted by an adverbial phrase. One unusual feature here is that the natural subject and object of the main clause are grammatically reversed, presumably to avoid repetition of “بات” from line 19. The “ل” sound is echoed here.

Line 21 follows much the same pattern as lines 19 and 20, but with a further variation in the second part. It begins with the main clause, followed, at the end of the first hemistich, by a one-word circumstantial clause, loosely attached, but serving as a relative clause; the second hemistich is occupied by a temporal clause, the natural subject of which is again indirectly expressed. Yet again the “ل” sound predominates.

Line 22: The same pattern is once again repeated in line 22, with further variation. The first hemistich consists of a main clause; the second hemistich consists of a circumstantial clause, this time introduced by “و”. “الورق” is a gratuitous nominal adjunct. The four lines 19-22 are linked both by structure and by predominant sound, since the “ل” sound is prominent in this line as well.

Line 23 consists entirely of a temporal clause, acting as the protasis to line 24’s apodosis. It is divided into two almost parallel halves, differentiated only by the unusually placed “عنه”. The abrupt transition from description to action is perhaps mitigated by the three “ل” sounds at the end of second hemistich.

Line 24 reverts to the pattern of lines 19 to 22. It begins with a main clause followed by a relative clause; these divide the first hemistich almost equally between them. The second hemistich consists of a comparative clause, the last two components of which are reversed, in the manner of the components of the second hemistich of line 18.

Line 25 also conforms to this pattern, with some variations. The first hemistich consists of a main clause followed by short relative clause. The second hemistich consists of a second main clause. There is nothing particularly remarkable about the sound pattern.

Line 26, while appearing to begin with the same pattern, is in fact rather different. The clause at the beginning of the first hemistich is in fact parallel to “يهوى إلى أمر” of line 25 and is dependent on “فظل”. The clause at the first hemistich acts as a relative clause, even though it is not formally connected with the previous clause. The second hemistich consists of two main clauses, almost identical in meaning.

This similarity is emphasized by the *Tajnis* (تجنيس) between “يلحقنه” and “اللحق”. The first hemistich of line 27 consists of the protasis and apodosis of a temporal clause. The precise connection of the second hemistich with the first is problematical. The use of the jussive “لا” suggests that this clause may be a second apodosis to the temporal clause; it is more likely, however, that it is merely a circumstantial clause with the jussive form employed *metri gratia*. The order of subject and object in this clause is again reversed, and it is interrupted by a prepositional phrase.

The first hemistich of line 28 consists of a main clause followed by a circumstantial clause. The poet chooses to represent subjects as a new one, in the indefinite, thus, unusually producing a metaphor rather than a simile. The second hemistich may be analyzed in different ways. It may be the protasis and apodosis of a temporal clause—the apodosis being in the imperfect; on the other hand it may

be the delayed protasis of a temporal sentence of which “كر” begins the apodosis, in which case “يمزق” would be a circumstantial.

Line 29 consists of a common initial expression followed by two parallel clauses governed by “من بين”. The extended *Tajnis*, or rather quasi-repetition is remarkable; the repetition of the same words at the end of the first hemistich and at the end of second hemistich avoids exact parallelism by the addition of “صرعى” at the beginning of the second hemistich, and a kind of chiasmus is produced by the intervention of “أحر” at the beginning of the second clause. The sound of “ر” predominates in this line.

Line 30 consists of an adverbial temporal clause, followed by two apodoses, in different tenses; the imperfective of the first suggests, at the same time, a circumstantial clause. The second apodosis begins at the end of the first hemistich and then proceeds in a normal manner. There is a preponderance of *mim* sound in this line.

Line 31 begins with the usual *Tadmin* (التضمين) associated with the *rahil* followed by a relative clause, which itself is followed by a temporal clause.

Line 32 begins with a *tadmin*, prepositional expression, followed by a relative clause; the central portion of the first hemistich, which, at first sight, appears to be a characteristic interruption, is not in fact one, since it qualifies “غمرة” in a natural position. The second hemistich begins with a circumstantial clause, followed by the second part the relative clause in the first hemistich.

Line 34 begins with a comparative clause extending into the second hemistich, interrupted by a prepositional expression, incorporating a relative clause. The remainder of the second hemistich consists of another relative clause. The predominant sound in this line are “ر”, “ع”, “ف” and “ق”.

Line 35 begins with a main clause, followed by temporal clause, followed again by a comparative clause. The sound “ب” predominates in this line.

Line 36 begins with a prepositional phrase, constituting *tadmin* (التضمين) which is only loosely connected with the last six lines. This is followed by a relative clause, which again is followed by an adjectival expression, beginning at the end of the first hemistich, which is an apposition to “إمرى” and equally governed by “إلى”. The second hemistich ends with a temporal clause.

Most of the first hemistich of line 37 consists of two parallel adjectival expressions, both in apposition to “إمرى”. These are followed by a temporal clause

beginning at the end of first hemistich. The final word of the second hemistich is a gratuitous adjectival adjunct.

Line 38 begins with an isolated pronoun, which is taken up, after the apostrophe in a prepositional expression, in a main clause which spans the caesura. This is followed by a second main clause which completes the line. There is a predominance of the “ن” sound in this line.

Line 39 begins with an adjectival expression, parallel to the complements of the second main clause of line 38. This is followed by a relative clause, beginning in the first hemistich and occupying the whole of the second hemistich. It has two subjects, the first of which is interrupted by a prepositional expression. There is a Tajnis between “يقوم” and “القوم”.

Line 40 begins with the main clause followed by a relative clause; the second hemistich consists of a temporal clause, interrupted by a prepositional expression.

Line 41 consists of four adjectival phrases, all dependent on “أنت” in line 40, and all different in construction from one another. The fourth “ولا وعق” is a gratuitous adjectival adjunct.

#### D. Conclusion

This Qafiah (41 lines) stylistically consists of an apostrophe, protasis of a conditional sentence, a double – apodosis, parallel comparative clauses, parallel statement, an anacoluthic phrase, exclamatory phrase, implication (*al-Tadmin*), adverbial phrase, temporal clause, prepositional phrase and adjectival phrase.

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