

Narrative techniques in the writings of Abd al-Karim al-Qushayri -Al-Risala al-Qushayriyya- an example

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Introduction

The Qushayri Epistle is one of the ancient literary heritage sources that contains within it news effects represented by morals and everything related to the individual's upbringing and religious education. Researchers saw it necessary to study these news effects from the perspective of narrative techniques. The reason for this is due to this type of study, because after reading and examining these news, it became clear to them that they contain narrative techniques and their means.

This article seeks to address a form of constructing the Qushayri message, namely the narrative technique and its composition in light of the ideological affiliation of its creator. We seek to establish the connection between the literary ideology conveyed by the narrative text and the narrator's general ideology, with the goal of introducing a portion of the literary heritage written in the Arabic language and enriching society with Sufi news and works.

The concept of narration, as encapsulated in the phrase "He narrated the hadith and the recitation," implies a meticulous process of following and mastering a sequence of transmitted knowledge or artistic expression. This process positions narration as a dynamic act of production, where the narrator assumes the role of a producer, the narratee serves as the consumer, and the narrative itself—whether a text, oral recounting, or performance—functions as the commodity. This framework provides a lens through which to explore narration as a multifaceted phenomenon, encompassing the recounting of reports, events, or imaginative constructs, and situating it within the broader structure of narrative discourse, particularly in the dimension of "voice."

Narration, in its essence, is a generative act. The narrator, akin to a producer in an economic model, crafts a narrative by selecting, organizing, and presenting material—be it historical reports, religious hadith, or fictional tales. This material is not merely relayed but is shaped into a coherent sequence that adheres to cultural, aesthetic, or doctrinal conventions. The narratee, as the consumer, receives and interprets this product, engaging with it through intellectual, emotional, or spiritual faculties. The narrative itself, as the commodity, carries value derived from its ability to inform, persuade, entertain, or inspire. This production model highlights the intentionality behind narration. Unlike spontaneous speech, narration involves deliberate choices regarding structure, tone, and perspective. For instance, in the context of hadith narration, the narrator must adhere to a chain of transmission (isnad) and ensure fidelity to the content (matn), thereby maintaining the authenticity and authority of the narrative. Similarly, in literary narration, the storyteller weaves events—real or imagined—into a cohesive plot, employing techniques such as foreshadowing, flashback, or dialogue to enhance the narrative's impact. In both cases, the act of narration transforms raw material into a consumable product, tailored to the expectations and needs of its audience.

Methodology

This article relies on the analytical approach to deconstruct these texts in the Qushayri Epistle, and aims to demonstrate the narrative techniques in the Qushayri Epistle, including: the techniques of time, place, sound, plot, and others.

Discussion and Results

Narrative techniques play a pivotal role in shaping the structure of a text and its impact on the reader. Writers use them to weave their story and communicate their ideas. They are important tools for understanding and appreciating narrative texts. One of these techniques is the technique of space, which is a fundamental component of narrative text. It "is part of the referential space belonging to the space in stories, regardless of the dimensions of space-house or universe, and regardless of its affiliation, open or closed." (Al-Qadi & Others, 2010: 418) A closed space is considered to be

"all limited, confined spaces isolated from the outside world and with a narrow perimeter." (Mabrouk & Others 2020: 45) This type of place, in Al-Qushayri's narrative, is represented by Jerusalem and similar places. An open space is defined as "a spatial area that suggests freedom and openness and provides the ability to move and transition." (Al-Dakhili & Hamid, 2022: 176) Time is also one of the effective elements in narration, as it defines the basic components that constitute the narrative and contributes to its exceptional discourse, because it seeps into all aspects of the narrative text and then it is indispensable. (Ghafali, 2018: 287) Time is divided into recollection or recall, and anticipation. The anticipation technique is specific to epic or sacred books, or all predictive analyses, as it results in a temporal prediction that renders the plot uneven in the narrative. (Ameri & Bakhshash, 2018: 650) As for recollection or flashback, it is a contradiction to the continuation of the narrative, whereby the narrator returns to a previous event that is opposite to the anticipation, and this contradicts the word time, and with it a sub-story is generated within a main story. (Mabrouk & Others 2020: 33)

The narrator is one of the components of the narrative technique of a literary text. He controls the narrative material within the discourse and acts as a link between the narrator and the narratee. (Al-Dakhili & Hamid, 2022: 63) The narrator is divided into the theatrical, semi-theatrical, and non-theatrical narrator. The plot is based primarily on the selection and organization of the narrated events and actions, which creates a complete, unified story from the narrative material, with a beginning, middle, and end. (Al-Qadi & Others, 2010: 141) Therefore, it is considered a collection of successive and sequential events that form a story, with an emphasis on the interconnectedness of these events to create an artistic or emotional impact on the viewer. In the process of conveying and communicating what is being narrated to the person being told, the narrator relies on dialogue as the sharing of speech between the characters within the story or play. (Othman, 2015: 82) With the flow of consciousness technique, the narration and storytelling timelines coincide simultaneously through immersion, and this has its place in the overall structure of the story. The technique of description is defined as the representation of situations, objects, events, or facts in their spatial, rather than temporal, presence and function. The narrator identifies

the described from the beginning of the description to facilitate the reader's understanding and follow-through.(Zitouni,2002: 171)

Conclusion

Al-Qushayri employed in his book, called Al-Risalah Al-Qushayriyyah, techniques such as the closed and open space technique, the time technique of recollection and anticipation, the narrative voice, the plot technique, description, and the stream of consciousness. He also employed forms of narrative styles such as subordinate, forward, and immediate narration.

In terms of location, the study revealed a tangible diversity of settings, including both indoor and outdoor spaces. This is due to their realism, and their distinctive role as a space for events and incidents; Al-Qushayri skillfully utilized the setting to serve the event. As for arrangement, recollection occupies a larger textual space than foreshadowing, in order to keep the reader engaged in these events. The lack of foreshadowing is due to the fact that revealing what will happen before it happens does not match the artistic elements of surprise and suspense.

The message is built on multiple vocal levels, but the author takes on the greater task as the primary source of the narrative. However, he does not exclude the voices of others, but rather allows them space to take it upon themselves to tell their own stories.

The plot is flavorless without which the narrative is incomplete. We see it as the foremost priority in his message, because it is linked to the causal relationship between them and is never separate from the characters. The narrator always presents his characters as they are affected by the events and interact with them. As for the stream of consciousness and the dialogue it contains between the characters, the dialogue is expressive and concise, characterized by brevity and condensation. Al-Qushayri excelled in its use and utilized it well according to the needs of the event. Description took its effective purpose in the structure of the news. It is a drawing of pictures of things in an accurate manner using words that make the reader imagine that he is seeing what is being described with the eye, and not just with words.

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