The Semiotics of the Quraysh Surah based on Ferdinand de Saussure and Roland Barthes Models

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Abstract

Where the structuralist semiotic model Ferdinand de Saussure developed addresses a text's linguistic style and aesthetics without analyzing its implicit meanings, the poststructuralist model propounded by Roland Barthes examines various semantic implications of a text. This study aims to critically read the Surah of Quraysh by applying the two theorists' models on its textuality to examine the formation of meaning and implicit layers of meaning. Pinpointing the difference between the two models and reading the Surah of Quraysh based on the structuralist and poststructuralist semiotic models in order to decode the multiplicity of semantic layers according to Barthes' theories constitute the significance of this study. Also, the linguistic contrasts of the Surah are examined based on Ferdinand de Saussure's model. The research finds that the main difference is between declarative sentences (solidarity among the Quraysh) and imperative sentences (the necessity of worshiping God), which are also manifested in other linguistic elements (lexical and syntactic). Barthes' model examines narrative codes' semantic layers. The hermeneutic code highlights solidarity and unity for all societies and groups, which is reinforced by the repetition of Eilaf and Quraysh as semantic and cultural codes. While symbolic codes depict the consequences of the refusal to worship God, probiotic codes refer to the result of worshiping God in the past. While reading the Surah based on Ferdinand de Saussure's model shows that its literal meaning can be understood in syntagmatic structures, which refer to the invitation of the Quraysh to Islam during the time of the Prophet (PBUH) to make peace, a reading based on Barthes' model indicates that the call to Islam and the promotion of monotheism is not limited to the Quraysh but addressed to different societies and groups throughout the ages.

Keywords: Semiotics, Quraysh Surah, Structuralism, Poststructuralism.

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