Al-Wujuh Wal-Nada'ir in the Qur'an: Homonyms or Interpretive Accounts

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Abstract
Tafsir was initially compiled along with the science of Hadith in the early phase of Islamic history and later separated as a distinct field. Afterwards, Islamic scholars wrote purposely on the repeated words that have multiple connotations, to clarify the literal association of the Quranic wording under the so-called "Al-Wujuh wal-Nadair", "Al-Ashbah wal-Nada'ir or "The same wording but different meanings". Linguistics, however, criticized such works for treating the repeated terms as homonyms. This paper tends to identify the basis upon which al-Wujuh wal-Nada'ir books compiled, and led the writers to refer to various meanings for a single word. The data collected through library research by tracing the related literature, and deductive approach was employed for analysis. The paper concluded that the compilation of al-Wujuh wal-Nada'ir was based upon tafsir and ta'awil, not homonymy. Therefore, Wujuh can be regarded as any other interpretive narrations.
Keywords: Al-Wujuh wal-Nada'ir, Al-Ashbah wal-Nada'ir, Qur'an, Homonyms, Interpretation, Al-Marad

Introduction
The earlier writings on *al-wujuh wal-nada'ir* can be traced back to the first Islamic century. According to Ibn Jauzi (died in 597 AH), a book of *al-Wujuh wal-Nada'ir* was attributed to Ikrimah on the authority of Ibn Abbas, and another book to Ali bn Abi Talib on the authority of Ibn Abbas. Nevertheless, the first book reached us within the existing books was "Al-Wujuh wal-Nada'ir in the glorious Qur'an", written in the second Islamic century by Muqatil bin Sulaiman (died in 150 AH) (Ibn al-Jauzi, 1984, p. 82).
In the third century, the evolution of this science witnessed a noticeable transformation. Initially, the antecedent scholars acknowledged that a single word can bear and refer to

multiple meanings. On the contrary, another trend emerged at the hand of Al-Hakim Al-Tirmidhi (died in 258 AH) in his book "*Tahsilu Nada'ir al-Qur'an*", he argues that all *wujuh* of a word are referred back to a single linguistic origin. Moreover, recent studies adopted the view of al-Hakim al-Tirmidhi, criticised and declared void the multiple meanings attributed to a single word of the Qur'anic verses.

It is noticeable that the critics laid down this argument upon considering *al-wujuh wal-Nada'ir* as polysemous. Al-Munajjid said: "Thus we see that the interest of those working in the field of Qur'anic sciences -with regard to homonymy- was focused primarily on collecting homonymous words contained in the Holy Qur'an, which is called the science of *al-Wujuh wal-Nada'ir* (Al-Munajjad, 1999, P. 86).

Hence, the aforementioned views underlie the significance of this study, being trying to identify the basis on which the books of *al-Wujuh wal-Nada'ir* compiled, whether the authors meant by *al-Wujuh wal-Nada'ir* homonymous or tafsir and *ta'awil*.

Preamble

Linguistics opined that the authors of *al-Wujuh wal-Nada'ir* books treated *alfaz al-wujuh* as homonymous. For instance; Zidan stated that it is imperative to know that the *wujuh* of the Qur'anic wording compiled by Muqatil and his imitators were neither tafsir and *ta'awil* nor synonyms in their perceptions, but rather perceived them as the original meanings, such as the meanings of homonymous (Zidan, 2016, P. 25).

In line with the above, he criticized the *wujuh* associated to *al-Nada'ir* and labelled them as fabricated *wujuh* compiled by Muqatil bin Sulaiman and his imitators.

Concept of *al-Wujuh wal-Nada'ir*

According to the work of Muqatil bin Sulaiman in his book "Al-Wujuh wal-Nada'ir fil Qur'an al-Azeem*"* and other authors, the idea behind the compilation of *al-Wujuh wal-Nada'ir* was to notify a reader that *al-nada'ir* have different connotations, and the intent of this expression is distinct from the other (Ibn al-Jauzi, 1984, P. 83).

Critics' Position on *Al-Wujuh Wal-Nada'ir* Books

Al-Hakim al-Tirmidhi believes that regardless of multiple meanings a word connotes; their return is to a single linguistic origin (Al-Tirmidhi, 1969, P. 19; Abbas, 1997, Vol. 2, P. 241), Abbas concluded that Al-Hakim al-Tirmidhi denies the existence of literal association in the Quran, meaning that a single word bears to only one connotation in its various usages (Al-Zarkashi, N.D, Vol. 1, P. 102).

Indeed, several studies supported the view, namely, Al-Munajjid in his book "*Al-Ishtirak al-Lafzi fil Qur'an al-Karim bain al-Nadhriyyah wal-Tadbiq"*. Likewise, Zidan in "*La Wujuh wala Nada'ir fi Kutub al-Wujuh wal-Nada'ir"*. The two authors conducted an applied study and restored all the associated *wujuh* of a single word to its linguistic origin.

Primarily, their claim and criticism were based on the view that the authors of *al-Wujuh wal-Nada'ir* books intended to compile homonymous in the Qur'an. Zarkashi (died in 794 AH) was similarly of the view that *al-wujuh*; a homonym that is used with multiple meanings, such as *ummah*, and *al-nada'ir* like synonyms (Ibn Taimiyyah, 2005, Vol. 13, P. 276). Furthermore, Ibn Taimiyyah (died in 728 AH) asserted that *al-wujuh* in homonymous nouns (*Asma Al-Mushtarikah*), and *al-nada'ir* in synonymous nouns (*Asma Al-Mutawati'ah*) (Al-Balkhi, 2006, P. 28-29).

Wujuh of "al-*Marad*" as a Sample

In his book "*Al-Wujuh wal-Nada'ir*", Muqatil bin sulaiman mentioned that "*al-marad*" has 4 *wujuh.*

First *wajh*: *Al-marad* means doubt, and that is where the Almighty Allah says: "*Fee quloobihim mara dun fazaadahumul laahu maradah*" (Al-Baqrah: 10).

Second *wajh*: *Al-marad* means immorality, and that is where the Almighty Allah says: "*Falaa takhda'na bilqawli fa yatma'al lazee fee qalbihee marad*" (Al-Ahzab: 32).

Third *wajh*: *Al-marad* means wound, and that is where the Almighty Allah says: "*Wa in kuntum mardaaa aw 'alaa safar*" (Al-Nisa: 43).

Fourth *wajh*: *Al-marad* means sickness, and that is where the Almighty Allah says: "*Faman kaana minkum mareedan*" (Al-Baqrah: 184), means all kind ailment and ache (Zidan, 2016, P. 95-96).

Zidan pointed out that the semantic meaning of *al-marad* in this verse does not secede from its linguistic origin. He stated that this *wujuh* mentioned, are all included either in the metaphor category, or within the types of spiritual or cardiac diseases, and therefore, it is incorrect to consider one of them *wajh*, as it does not envisage real meaning, and that is why there was a contention between an interpreter and another interpreter, and between *wujuh* and other *wujuh*. Indeed, the intended sense of *al-marad* for these four *wujuh*, is ailment itself, and for the first 2 *wujuh* it is concerned with heart disease, and body ailment for the last 2 wujuh" (Al-Tabari, 2000, Vol. 1, P. 280).

Study and Analysis of the *Wujuh* of "*al-marad*"

First *wajh*: (*Al-marad*: Doubt). Al-Tabari narrated on the authority of Ibn Abbas and Ibn Mas'ud that "*al-marad"* there means doubt. On the authority of Rabi'e bin Anas "*Fee quloobihim mara dun*" said: These are the people of hypocrisy, and their heart sickness is doubting about God, Tabari narrated that. Similarly, Al-Dahhak narrated on the authority of Ibn Abbas, that "*al-marad"* there is hypocrisy (Al-Tabari, 2000, Vol. 1, P. 280).

Second *wajh*: (*Al-marad*: Immorality). On the authority of Qatadah "*Fa yatma'al lazee fee qalbihee marad*", He said, Ikrimah said: The desire for fornication (lust) (Al-Tabari, 2000, Vol. 20, P. 285).

 Qurtubi narrated, it was said: lust; and its debauchery and flirtation, Ikrimah said that. And this is more correct, hypocrisy has no relevance in the verse (Al-Qurtubi, 2006, Vol. 17, P. 138), Third *wajh*: (*Al-marad:* Wound). It was narrated on the authority of Ibn Masoud "*Wa in kuntum mardaaa*"; The sick person for whom tayammum has been permitted is the broken or wounded. On the authority of Suddi "*Wa in kuntum mardaa*"; *Al-marad* is the wounded. Similarly, narrated on the authority of Saed bin Jubair and Mujahid (Al-Tabari, 2000, Vol. 8, P. 388).

Fourth *wajh*: (*Al-marad*: Sickness). This last *wajh* is not problematic, as it is the basic meaning of the word as clearly stated by al-Zubaidi (Al-Zabaidi, 2000, Vol. 19, P. 53-54).

Considering these narrations, it can be deduced that the three different meanings above of *al-marad* are interpretive narrations, named wujuh by the authors of *al-Wujuh wal-Nada'ir* books*.*

Based on that, *wujuh* can be referred to the intended meanings of a word according to the interpretive accounts or context at various scenes in the Qur'an.

In line with that, the linguistic definition mentioned by Ibn Manzur that "*Wajhul kalam*": the course you intended by it (Ibn Manzur, 1994, Vol.13, P. 555), Al Ragheb said: it is said to; "intent": "*al wajh*" (Al-Ragib, N. D, P. 514).

In view of the foregoing definition, Salwa arrived at a conclusion that if we perceive the word *al-wajh* as referring to any change in the intended meaning of a word at its position, we would have no criticism against considering this to be among *alfaz al-wujuh*, such as *qaryah*, *al-hudah*, *al-ummah*, notably, if we take into account that the authors of those books were exegetes, explaining the Qur'an, its uses and purposes, not linguistic expressions and its usages (Al-Awa, 1998, P. 46).

Therefore, the Authors of *al-Wujuh wal-Nada'ir* compiled their books basically on that definition, as if the *wajh* is the interpreter's understanding of what God Almighty meant in a certain way, and the other *wajh* is the interpreter's view of what God Almighty meant at the other place in another way, and so on (Al-Awa, 1998, P. 43).

Imam Munajjid also concluded that *al-Wujuh wal-Nada'ir* books are books of exegesis and *ta'awil*, concerned with the general concept of a word contextually, preferring expressions based on narration, contemplation, revelation, or otherwise, and such books are not linguistically concerned with the semantic accuracy of the terms in their positions (Al-Munajjad, 1999, P. 273).

Eventually, Zidan opined that such *wujuh* were synonyms, explanations and interpretations (Zidan, 2016, P. 183).

Thus, the interpreters along with *ahl al-qira'at* showed interest in the books dealing with this science and art (Abdelgelil, 2018; Abdelgelil, 2019) in view of the worldly and eschatological notability of the Noble Qur'an (Abdelgelil, 2019; Abdelgelil, 2010), Likewise, a large number of universities and publications such as scientific books, researches and international conferences have shown interest in this subject (Abdelgelil, 2020).

To recapitulate, the linguistics' criticism upon the authors of *al-Wujuh wal-Nada'ir* for compiling "the same wording different meanings, namely *al-Wujuh wal-Nada'ir* was not correctly positioned, as it refers by that not homonyms, but the intended meanings at various scenes based on interpretative narrations, both subjectively and contextually.

Conclusion
The analyses of this study lead to the following conclusions:

1. The books of *al-Wujuh wal-Nada'ir* adopted the same pattern in terms of addressing the topic. Another trend emerged by virtue of al-Hakim al-Tirmidhi in his book "*Tahsilu Nadair al-Qur'an*", and that has directly contributed to a transformation in writing on the subject.

2. The criticism of linguistics towards the works of the authors of *al-Wujuh wal-Nada'ir* tends to consider *alfaz al-wujuh* as homonymous, as it relates *al-wajh* to one of the various meanings of homonym.

3. In their works, the authors of *al-Wujuh wal-Nada'ir* meant by *al-wujuh* the intended meanings according to interpretive accounts or context, basically in accordance with linguistic sense "*al-wajh*: *al-qasd*" (the intent)

4. *Wujuh* can be metaphoric, synonymous, *Istia'arah* or *Ta'ayin*.

5. Qur'an commentaries are other sources of *al-Wujuh wal-Nada'ir*.

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