






How codicology can reveal the religion mysteries surrounding a literary work



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Codicology, also known as 'the archaeology of the book', is the study of manuscripts as physical objects. It is a discipline that studies manuscripts with a predominantly historical orientation. This essay explores the sequel to the most famous literature before and after Islamic epic story and the link between Islamic signs and literature review. The greatest pre-Islamic mysteries in the history of Moslem literature and its religious effects were disused, which were solved by manuscript studies and some case studies. The research method is based on the position story and finding the Islamic signs of the research to confirm the Islamic signs in the history and its changes over time. Therefore, in this research, religious symbols in the history of literature have been studied. The authors try to reach a new knowledge regarding the foundations of this school by tracing the history of religious literature. Furthermore, the connection between culture and religious literature is made by examining the Islamic religion mysteries sample. The symbolism and explanation of codes and elements in art works have been studied and the role of myths and metaphors in semantic analysis and religious concepts has been discussed. Finally, the effect of the Islamic events in literature review and art development is discussed.

Contribution: This study provides further insights into the relationship between theology and literature through a historical literature review.

Keywords: historical literature review; Islamic mysteries; religious and traditional symbols; Islamic religion mysteries; codicology.

Introduction

In the modern age, extensive studies have been conducted on religion. Because religion has various dimensions and areas, it is possible to have a theological study in terms of these dimensions and areas. It is noteworthy that in most of these theological studies, as will be mentioned later, one dimension and area of religion has been considered while others have been neglected. Because the subject of the discussion is religion, it is necessary to define religion briefly. Firstly, the view of the Holy Qur'an about religion is considered. According to the Qur'an, religion means a mirror and a plan of life. If a religion is originated from God, it is called a true religion or the religion of God. But if a religion is not originated from God and instead created by humans, it is called a false religion.

The Qur'an says (Quran, Surah Al-Ahzab – Ayat 3): 'He is the One who sent His Messenger with guidance and the mirror of truth to prevail over all religions, even if the polytheists hated it'. The Qur'an also calls any mirror other than the mirror of truth a false mirror: 'All this is proof that God is right, and that what they call other than Him is false, and that God is exalted and exalted'. Religious scholars in the West have offered various definitions of religion. So it is complicated to sort and classify them. Each of them has paid attention to one aspect of religion and neglected the other aspects. James Martino, for example, argues that religion is the belief in an eternal God. This means that belief in divine wisdom and will is ruling in the world. In this study, the story of *Hamzah* from Islam is reviewed; it is similar to Ferdowsi's writings in *Shahnameh* to demonstrate the effect of Islam in arts.

Codicology is the study of manuscripts written on parchment (or paper) as physical objects. It is referred to as 'the archaeology of books'. It is concerned with materials and techniques for creating books. Scrutiny of the physical characteristics of a book allows us to identify its history and origin, or to compare its changes throughout history with other works. Palaeographers and codicologists may also study the history of libraries, manuscripts and book cataloguing. Therefore, codicology is 'manuscriptology' or more broadly 'the archaeology of the book'. This essay explores the sequel

to the most famous Islamic epic story. The origin of the story of *Hamzah* is one of the greatest Islamic mysteries in the history of Islamic literature, which has been solved because of manuscript studies. The research method is based on the place of story of *Hamzah* in the manuscript of *Religious Mysteries*.

This research focuses on the old section of *Hamzah* (Safa 1946), as a major part of Islam's event over the past 500 years and has been incorporated in the stories of *Religious Mysteries*. This research aims to solve the Islamic mystery surrounding the inclusion of the story of *Hamzah* in *Religious Mysteries* and its status relative to other Islamic epic stories of *Religious Mysteries*. The reasons underlying the position assigned to this story in different versions of *Religious Mysteries* are also explored.

Context of the discussion

Before the 18th century, Ankitel Dupéron's poem was considered a section of *Religious Mysteries*, and it was only considered as an independent work in 1760 Anno Domini. On his way back from India, Dupéron donated two versions of *Hamzah* to the Royal Museum of France. Molé mentions this epic in his introduction to *Religious Mysteries*, describing it as a story appended to *Religious Mysteries*. He brings this story in the annex of his published *Religious Mysteries* (Molé 1953).

While studying manuscripts in the National Library of Paris, Edgar Blochet reviewed this work, attributing it to Atāi-e-Rāzī, one of the contemporary poets of the Ghaznavids in the 12th century AH (Year of the Hijrah) (Blochet 1954:22). Safā was the first to review this work. Safā and other Islamic and Western scholars have reiterated Blochet's view that this text belongs to Atāi-e-Rāzī (Khaleghi-Motlagh 1998; Riahi 2008; Safa 1946, 1968). This view was contradicted by Blois who presented a catalogue of *Hamzah* versions preserved in the European libraries in the fifth volume of the famous Royal Asiatic Society work, *A Bio-Bibliographical Survey on Islamic Literature, Poetry of the pre-Mongol Period*. He is against the attribution of this text to a poet named Atāi, claiming that the poet is unknown (Blois 2004:470). Nahvi (2009) offered different reasons demonstrating the impossibility of attributing the text to a poet living in the 5th–12th century.

Nahvi (2009) released a new edition of *Hamzah*. He explained that this poem comprises two sections, the old (short) and the new (long), written successively by two distinct poets. In the colophon of the oldest version of this text, the Cambridge version, dating back to the 15th century AD/829 AH (Kings manuscript no.56), he ascribes this poem to an anonymous poet named Shams ul-Din Ahmad Mir Ibn Mohammad Kusaj, presuming that this poet would have been lived in the 14th century. Nahvi attributed the new section of *Hamzah* to a poet under the pseudonym of 'Atāii, who elaborated on the old section and probably lived in the 16th century (Shokri-Foumeshi 2021).

In addition, Van den Berg attributes the writing of *Hamzah* to the 11th century, but he asserts that the author is unknown.

He divides the existing *Hamzah* into two sections: annexed and separated. The separated section consists of long and short versions, with the latter containing the text of *Hamzah* annexed to the *Religious Mysteries*. Thus, the original version of *Hamzah* story was annexed after the story of 'Islamic Story' and then moved after the story of 'Bijan and Manizhe'. Although he does not explicitly state this conclusion because of his conservative spirit, the true position of *Hamzah* story is still unclear in the Islamic epic cycle.

Blois (1998) uses the term 'the Islamic epic cycle' for epic poems inspired by *Religious Mysteries* or appearing as its complement, describing these texts as the 'secondary epics' or the 'later epics'. Van den Burg (2006) classifies *Hamzah* as one of these works. Van den Burg (2006) opines that the Islamic epic cycle contains epic poems, with *Religious Mysteries* playing a pivotal role. Therefore, the exact status of *Hamzah* story among the stories of *Religious Mysteries* and other Islamic epics remains a perplexing Islamic mystery. This study seeks to answer the following questions:

1. Why is the *Hamzah* story placed in two different positions in different versions of *Religious Mysteries*, and which one indicates the original position? (Compared to the stories of *Religious Mysteries*, as a reference text for 'the epic history of Islam'.)
2. Is old *Hamzah* a secondary epic attached to *Religious Mysteries* or an independent work finding its way to different versions of *Religious Mysteries*?
3. What is the original position of *Hamzah* story in the epic of Islam in the oral tradition?

This study aims to (1) review the bulk of studies on this text, which is one of the most important Islamic epics after *Religious Mysteries* by studying the maximum existing versions of *Hamzah*, and (2) determine the true status of this story among the stories of *Religious Mysteries* in the Islamic epic cycle and its source before its inclusion in the versions of *Religious Mysteries*.

Results and discussion

In this study, many ambiguities and contradictions were faced while reviewing what previous researchers have stated about *Hamzah*. A notable factor is that most of these studies obtained their information without access to all versions or even properly studying the existing versions. This study therefore seeks to overcome this drawback by investigating the available versions of *Hamzah* to find a solution to the Islamic mystery surrounding the status of this story among Islamic epics.

The Islamic mystery surrounding the position of *Hamzah* in the cycle of Islamic epics

In *Hamzah Kusaj*, the main story is divided into two sections:

1. The story of *Hamzah*, inspired by the story of Islamic stories with a happy ending. It was written to compensate for the deep regret induced by the tragic fate of *Religious Mysteries*.

2. The story of the *Musician Susan*. After joining *Hamzah* to Islam, a happy-ending version of Islamic story was created. Unlike the initial impression, this happy ending is not very powerful. The climax of the story of *Hamdzah* is its tragic ending which reflects human frailty and the cruelty of fate. Although the frustration of the audience paves the way for the narration of stories such as *Hamzah*, the audience's satisfaction with the saving of *Hamzah* at the end of the story is less impressive than the tragic ending of other events. After *Hamzah* gains popularity, the original creators of *Hamzah* naturally decide to continue the story, spawning many other stories in the oral culture. Similarly, the story of Susan, a Turāni musician, is one of the stories accessible in the resources. It is adapted from a popular theme in the epic stories, describing the story of a hero caught in the trap of a fairy. This story concludes with the deployment of Islamic and Turānian troops following the defeat and the fleeing of Afrasiāb. At the end of the story, Rustam is ready to set out on his new missions. The two protagonists (Rustam and Afrasiab) are placed alongside each other and join forces to narrate next stories (Kusaj 2009).

Artists of the Islamic era depicted what they could visualise, but used their thoughts and ideas in the realm of words and mysticism. Because at that time, they used Islamic elements in their works as secrets and signs, and this action was obvious and intuitive in all the elements that man was dealing with, of course, for those who understood it or were familiar with these secrets.

In the age of Islam, when poets and writers had more freedom of action, and the central government granted relative freedom to certain artists and religions or sects, they publicly applied their ideas to their work, also to the common people. Moslems respected or sought to spread their ideas among the people, making the most of artists, especially poets and writers. On the other hand, the central government in the field of art used its works, actions and behaviour as a weapon to synchronise the people. Therefore, it should be taken into account that art has been one of the most important fields for governments to invade in order to show legitimacy and justify their actions. Because art is one of the most important areas for getting closer to people. The field of arts, especially the arts of literature and poetry, whether intentionally or unknowingly, is directly or indirectly related to the thoughts, behaviours and beliefs of all sections of society, it is in the heart and context of people's lives and is easy to understand to align public opinion. It is more attractive and its effect is deeper (Kusaj 2009; Warren 2022).

Hamza was the son of Abdul Muttalib and the uncle of the Prophet of Islam. He was one of the bravest Arab men and one of the greatest heroes and officers of Islam who helped Islam alongside his nephew, the Holy Prophet of God, and defended the religion of the Prophet and his mission in the most difficult circumstances. The leaders of the Quraysh and the elders of that tribe were afraid of his greatness and courage.

It was he who, with all his might, protected the Prophet from the idolaters in the critical moments in Mecca, and broke his head to avenge Abu Jahl, who had insulted and dared the Prophet. But no one had the power to resist him. In the Battle of Badr, Hamza defeated the greatest hero of the Quraysh, Shiba, wounded a group and sent some to the land.

After Muhammad (PBUH) was sent as a prophet, Hamza also testified to the oneness of God and the mission of the Prophet and believed in his nephew's religion. After Hamza accepted Islam, the Quraysh people gradually converted to Islam, because they saw that the bravest person believed in the Prophet, and the Prophet accepted them.

The spatial and temporal ambiguities are some of the characteristics of epic stories; nonetheless, such a profound contradiction in a work of *Religious Mysteries*, which compromises the rationality of stories in the book, cannot be overlooked. As a result, the *Hamzah* story in the overall structure of the *Religious Mysteries* has confounded the critic copyist of this work. As a result, the *Hamzah* story in the overall structure of the religious stories has gained strength and stability in the opinion of the critic copyist. For the similar story in Iranian mysteries the Fredowski regarding these brave and strength signs (along with style and linguistic factors and the obvious imitations of the poet), presented the Rustam story in Ferdowsi (Macan 1829). However, some centuries before Macan, some copiers of *Religious Mysteries*, also recognising these contradictions, decided to tackle this problem by including the *Hamzah* story between the stories of 'Rustam and Sohrāb' and 'Siavash' (status 2).

However, there are reasons that this position is bereft of originality. In the oldest independent version (Cambridge/829) and the oldest versions of *Religious Mysteries*, also containing *Hamzah* story (St. Petersburg/849 and Manchester versions manuscript 9 which date back to the 15th century AH/15th century AD: between 840 AH and 880 AH) and a vast majority of the existing versions, *Hamzah* story follows the story of Rustam in Iran. There are various versions of *Religious Mysteries* that express the *Hamdzah* story and various wars which he has participated in. Nevertheless, there are slight differences between the recordings of certain versions in this category and the positions of the differences recorded in the Cambridge version. They resemble St. Petersburg version 849. This shows that all of these versions are genealogically based on a special version, thereby corresponding to one of the transcripts of St. Petersburg's version. This story quotes the *Hamzah* story in status 1 by itself. It indicates that the displacement of the story from status 1 to 2 is a recent event and lacks originality.

***Hamzah*: A secondary epic or an independent work?**

In the original version of *Hamzah*, which is similar to the story of Bijan and Manije, the poet has linked Afrāsyāb's defeat to Rostam in Shahnameh after the liberation of Bijan and Manije

from Turān, with Rostam meeting up with *Hamzah* working in a field in Shangān. For this reason, in a large part of *Religious Mysteries*, the first section of *Hamzah* has been removed, which contains the story of the birth of *Hamzah*. Its positioning immediately after the story of Bijan and Manizhe makes it difficult to establish a temporal link between these two stories. Accordingly, in this version, the conclusion of Bijan and Manizhe story is linked to the arrival of Afrāsīyāb to Shangān. Kusaj did not mean to expand his version of *Hamzah* but rather tried to attach his work to *Religious Mysteries*. It is perhaps the reason for this anonymity and the fact that his work is only seen as an episode of *Religious Mysteries* rather than an independent text. There were rumours that some stories were attributed to Kusaj, so he picked this ending to obviate contradictions in the audience's mind. Meanwhile, he added another verse following the story of *Religious Mysteries* to stabilise the identity of his story with other stories of *Religious Mysteries*. There is only a two-decade gap between the oldest independent version of this text and the oldest existing version of *Religious Mysteries*, which also contains this story; thus, the hypothesis about the poet's motivation does not seem far-fetched.

The position of the *Hamzah* story among oral epics

The final questions are related to the position of the oral and primary version of the *Hamzah* story before its composition by other Islamic historical wars and its transfer to KayKhosrow era following the story of Rostam and Afrasiab in Shahnameh and the reason behind the poet making this change in his story (Sistāni 1965). The structure of this story can be identified in the following sections:

1. The story of Sohrāb meeting with a lovely girl, their love, marriage and life, the birth of *Hamzah*, his becoming a great farmer, and his accession to the court of Turān and his training, making him one of Turān's heroes in the battle against Iran.
2. The war between Iran and Turān, the defeat of Muslims, the despair of Kavus against Rostam, the invitation of Rostam to the battleground and the great battle between *Hamzah* and the prophet's enemies. Rostam's hand breaks in the first battle, and he is captured in the second battle by Faramarz and enslaved with the assistance of his mother and a witch (Sosan). There is also a wrestling match in the third battle, which is won by Rostam, but when he intends to knock him out, his mother reveals his true identity with Sohrāb's arrow.
3. Sociologists and anthropologists rightly argue that religion is never an abstract set of ideas, values or experiences that has grown apart from the pervasive cultural sphere and format, and that many religious beliefs and rituals are only in this format. In fact, some proponents of these disciplines believe, explicitly or implicitly, that the definition and nature of religion comes from the analysis of religious structures.

Psychology also seeks to provide a definition of religion, and psychological interpretations of religion are more akin to those that emphasise empirical insight, rather than those

that emphasise the intellectual and social aspects of religion. Analyses are unpleasant, because the feeling of being religious is something beyond the social and psychological elements (Stover 2022). Also, in these definitions, only one area and dimension of religion has been considered. To point out the shortcomings of such definitions, it is necessary to examine the various dimensions of religion. From the Islamic point of view, the religion of truth, which is the religion of instinct, has paid attention to all the dimensions and needs of human existence. Therefore, it is necessary to consider the different dimensions and aspects of religion.

Some of the aspects of religion include the dimension of the realm of the unseen world, the realm of the tangible world, the teaching and belief, ritual, moral, the social and government, economic, the legal and crime, emotion and so on. However, some contemporary religious scholars in the west have considered integrated dimensions for religion. Pike (2022) stated that the religious experience of humankind introduces six dimensions to religion:

1. Ritual aspect: Religion is manifested mainly in the form of special rituals, worship acts and ceremonies. All religions have rituals and ceremonies. These rituals have an esoteric meaning and express one's beliefs.
2. Mythical or mythological aspect: The word 'myth' originally means a story. Therefore, being mythical does not mean that their content is false. When we use myth and being mythical about religious phenomena, it is neutral to their truth and falsity. Normally, every religion contains events, both those that relate directly to God and those that do not, and these events are told in the form of stories.
3. The doctrinal aspect: Every religion has an ideological system that contains doctrines related to the nature, attributes and actions of God and his relation to the world and humans, as well as to human destiny. Recognising this aspect of the mythology of religion is not easy.
4. Moral aspect: Normally, every religion has a set of moral principles. If the moral principles of all the religions are taken into account, it will be evident that many of these principles are common. The moral principles of religion and the ruling Shari'a control the social behaviours of that society; of course, individuals do not always live up to these principles in their lives. Therefore, a distinction must be made between the moral principles contained in religion and the behaviours of its followers. For example, in the moral teachings of Christianity, the principle of love is the same; however, many Christians and their governments do not act on such principles. Of course, in secular societies, ruling behaviour differs from their religious behaviour.
5. The social aspect: Religion is not just a set of beliefs. It also has social values. This social aspect of religion is determined in part by religious and ideological ideals.
6. The empirical aspect of religion: It is very difficult to explain other dimensions of religion without considering this dimension (this aspect is like the soul of other dimensions

of religion, because the religious person personally deals with the religious experience). The Christian prays and believes that God answers him; hence, this personal religion necessarily implies what we have called the empirical aspect, which is the personal dimension as an experience from the other world. Even the prophets themselves have reached prophecy in personal experience; therefore, based on the importance of this dimension for religion, Marxism and humanism cannot be considered as religion – because in them there is no possibility of experiencing the invisible world. There is no relationship with their personal God or hope for the experience of salvation.

Conclusion

Islamic literature has always been centred on religious beliefs and provincial ideas, which is because of the unity in Islamic thought. In the Islamic era, especially during the Shiite rule, Shiite teachings and beliefs appeared prominently in the literary works, and especially in the history of literature and poetry. Inscriptions and relics used on dishes as well as architecture have themes of Shiite signs.

For scholars, the belief in healing and blessings in the name of the Imams, which adorned the vessels and led Muslims to innovate in the art of metalwork to make the holy names beautiful. The infiltration of Shiite ideas was in the current life of people, created a balance in the Shiite sense and strengthened the sense of nationalism that united the Islamic people and caused their greater support for the government. In this article, the story of Hamdza, one of the strongest men during the early period of Islam was reviewed and its effect on other stories and arts was investigated. The use of mystery by artists, especially poets, in metalworking and architecture, was used to preserve them from danger. The use of sacred numbers in Islamic art is evident in all aspects of Muslim life and history. It should be noted that, as mentioned earlier, rational results, continuous transport and self-cultivation lead to a single matter; but sometimes some people take the uncertainty of rational and empirical matters as their basis and interpret the appearances of the Qur'an and narrations based on them, which is not the right way. In the past, when the experimental sciences had achieved remarkable success, some people were so impressed that they took the laws and theories of these sciences as their basis and interpreted the verses in the light of what is not the right way.

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Authors' contributions

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