

Balāghah analysis of the correspondence between al-Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf al-Thaqafī and Qaṭarī ibn al-Fujā'ah during the Battle of Dūlāb

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Abstract

The Battle of *Dūlāb* was a conflict between the *Khawārij al-Azāriqah* group and the Umayyad Dynasty government, triggered by the *Khawārij*'s rejection of the Umayyad political and religious authority. This study aims to analyze the elements of *balāghah* contained in the correspondence between al-Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf al-Thaqafī and his adversary Qaṭarī ibn al-Fujā'ah, during this event. The research employs a qualitative method with a descriptive-analytical approach. Primary data consist of the letters exchanged between al-Ḥajjāj and Qaṭarī as found in classical sources, while secondary data are obtained from various literary works, historical documents, and relevant classical texts. The findings reveal three main results. *First*, from the perspective of *'ilm al-bayān*, the study identifies 3 instances of *tashbīh*, 2 instances of *majāz isti'ārah*, and 2 instances of *kināyah*. *Second*, from the perspective of *'ilm al-ma'ānī*, the analysis reveals 3 instances of *kalām khabarī*, 3 instances of *kalām inshā'ī*, 1 instance of *qaṣr*, 2 instances of *iṭnāb*, and 1 instance of *ījāz*. *Third*, from the perspective of *'ilm al-badī'*, the study identifies *muḥassināt lafẓiyyah* in the form of 5 instances of *saj'*, 3 instances of *jinās*, and 1 instance of *iqtibās*. In addition, *muḥassināt ma'nawīyyah* is represented 1 instance of *ṭibāq*.

Keywords

Balaghah, The Battle of Dūlāb, correspondence, al-Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf al-Thaqafī, Qaṭarī ibn al-Fujā'ah

How to cite this article in APA format:

Khairianur, R., Hadiani, I., Dinata, F., & Wardani, R. Y. (2026). Balāghah analysis of the correspondence between al-Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf al-Thaqafī and Qaṭarī ibn al-Fujā'ah during the Battle of Dūlāb. *Linguistics Initiative*, 6(1), 102–116. <https://doi.org/10.53696/27753719.61419>

Introduction

The arbitration (*taḥkīm*) following the Battle of *Ṣiffīn* (37 AH/657 CE) marked a crucial turning point in early Islamic history, giving rise to prolonged political and theological fragmentation (Ridho, 2019). The decision of Caliph ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib to accept arbitration with Mu‘āwiyah ibn Abī Sufyān generated deep disappointment among a segment of his supporters, who perceived the decision as a compromise of divine principles. This group later became known as the *Khawārij*, who withdrew from ‘Alī’s camp under the slogan “*lā ḥukma illā lillāh*” (there is no judgment except God’s judgment), rejecting the legitimacy of both ‘Alī and Mu‘āwiyah simultaneously (Al-Manqarī, 1962).

The *Khawārij* movement was not monolithic. Divergent theological interpretations and political strategies led to its fragmentation into several sects, including the *Azāriqah*, *Najdah*, *Sufriyah*, *Ibāḍiyah*, and others (Ilham, 2019). Among these factions, the *Azāriqah* emerged as the most radical and militant. Led by Nāfi‘ ibn al-Azraq, this group adopted an extreme doctrine of *takfīr*, declaring unbelief upon anyone outside their ranks, including fellow Muslims. The *Azāriqah* controlled the region of Ahwāz and parts of southern Persia, using it as a base of resistance against Umayyad authority under the governorship of al-Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf al-Thaqafī (Nasution, 2020). The conflict between the Umayyad forces and the *Azāriqah* reached its climax in the Battle of *Dūlāb*, a bloody confrontation that took place in the region between Baṣrah and Ahwāz. Al-Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf appointed his military commander, al-Muhallab ibn Abī Ṣufrah, to lead the expedition against the *Azāriqah*. On the opposing side, Qaṭarī ibn al-Fujā‘ah, who succeeded Nāfi‘ ibn al-Azraq as leader of the *Azāriqah*, commanded the rebel forces using effective guerrilla warfare strategies. The battle unfolded in several intense phases, involving not only physical combat but also psychological warfare and propaganda conducted through written correspondence (Nasution, 2020).

A noteworthy phenomenon within this conflict is the dominance of prose in political and military communication of the period. In contrast to the pre-Islamic era, when Jāhiliyyah poetry was the predominant literary form, the early Umayyad period witnessed the rapid development of Arabic prose as a medium for diplomacy, propaganda, and polemics. Epistolary exchanges became a primary instrument through which leaders conveyed ultimatums, invectives, defenses, and political persuasion (Fuadah & Sofa, 2025). Al-Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf al-Thaqafī was particularly renowned for his sharp and intimidating letters addressed to governors and adversaries alike. One notable recipient of his correspondence was Qaṭarī ibn al-Fujā‘ah, the leader of the *Khawārij* al-*Azāriqah* during the turbulent period of the Battle of *Dūlāb*. Despite being regarded as a rebel, Qaṭarī demonstrated a high level of eloquence in his replies, as evidenced in his letters responding to al-Ḥajjāj (Ḍaif, 1963).

As Arabic prose evolved in the early Islamic period especially in the epistolary tradition, the use of rhetorical styles and *balāghah* devices became increasingly prominent. Several scholars regard the early Umayyad era as a crucial phase in the emergence of *balāghah* practices, although it had not yet been systematized as an independent discipline (Suryaningsih & Hendrawanto, 2017). Rhetorical elements such as *majāz* (metaphor), *Kināyah* (metonymy), *ṭibāq* (antithesis), and *jinās* (paronomasia), among others, became defining features of Arabic prose from the first Hijri century and were intensively employed across various genres, particularly prose.

This view aligns with Zaid’s argument that the origins of *‘ilm al-balāghah* can be traced to early studies of Qur’anic *majāz*, notably through the works of Abū ‘Ubaydah (Mu’izzuddin, 2014). Meanwhile Shawqī Ḍaif, citing the opinion of al-Nābighah, asserts that *balāghah* practices had

already been recognized in the pre-Islamic period, especially within the tradition of *Jāhiliyyah* poetry (Ḍaif, 1963). During the Umayyad period, writers and orators employed these rhetorical devices not merely as linguistic ornamentation, but as persuasive tools to reinforce arguments, evoke emotional responses, and legitimize political positions. In ideological conflicts such as the confrontation between the Umayyad dynasty and the Azāriqah, mastery of *balāghah* functioned as a decisive rhetorical weapon that shaped the effectiveness of propaganda and discursive influence.

Based on this background, the present study investigates the historical context of the Battle of *Dūlāb* and analyzes the *balāghah* elements found in the correspondence between al-Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf and Qaṭarī ibn al-Fujā'ah. Previous studies on *balāghah* in Arabic prose include the research conducted by Husnul Hamdi entitled "*Analisis Kalām Khabarī dalam Khutbah Hasyim bin Abdi Manaf*" (2022), which identified fourteen instances of *Kalām Khabarī Ibtidā'ī* and two instances of *ṭalabī*, with no occurrences of *inkārī* (Hamdi, 2022). Another study by Akhlis Himam, entitled "*Muhassināt Lafziyyah: Studi Analisis Deskriptif Pada Maqāmāt al-Maghribiyyah*" (2022), identified various forms of *muhassināt lafziyyah*, including *jinās*, *muwāzanah*, *tarsī*, *mā lā yastahīlu al-in 'ikās*, *taṣdīr*, and *saj'* within one of al-Ḥarīrī's *maqāmāt*.

Despite these contributions, a research gap remains in the lack of comprehensive *balāghah* studies focusing specifically on the correspondence between al-Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf and Qaṭarī ibn al-Fujā'ah, particularly those encompassing the three core dimensions of *balāghah*: *'ilm al-ma'ānī*, *'ilm al-bayān*, and *'ilm al-badī'*. This study seeks to fill this gap by examining the rhetorical elements employed in their epistolary exchanges during the Battle of *Dūlāb*. The significance of this research lies in two primary aspects. *First*, from a historical perspective, these letters constitute primary documents that record the ideological conflict of the first Hijri century from the viewpoints of the key actors involved. *Second*, from a linguistic standpoint, a *balāghah* analysis of these texts offers concrete insights into Arabic rhetorical practices prior to their formal codification, thereby enriching our understanding of the evolution of Arabic prose. This study is expected to contribute to a deeper comprehension of *balāghah* practices in Umayyad political prose and to serve as a valuable reference for future studies in Arabic literature and rhetoric.

Method

This study employs a qualitative descriptive-analytical approach, focusing on the identification and analysis of *balāghah* elements in the epistolary correspondence between al-Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf al-Thaqafī and Qaṭarī ibn al-Fujā'ah. This approach is selected because it enables an in-depth and contextualized examination of linguistic phenomena through written textual data (Malahati et al., 2023). The primary data sources consist of the letters exchanged between al-Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf al-Thaqafī and Qaṭarī ibn al-Fujā'ah as documented in classical Arabic sources. Secondary data are drawn from scholarly journal articles, classical Arabic texts, historical works, and other relevant documents that support and contextualize the present study. Data analysis is conducted using the *balāghah* theoretical framework proposed by al-Hāshimī in *Jawāhir al-Balāghah* (Al-Hāshimī, 1994), as well as the framework developed by Ali al-Jārim and Mustafa Amīn in *al-Balāghah al-Wāḍiḥah*, which classifies *balāghah* into three principal branches: *'ilm al-Ma'ānī*, *'ilm al-Bayān*, and *'ilm al-Badī'* (Jārim & Amīn, 1999).

Balāghah is understood as the discipline that examines the appropriateness of expression to the communicative context (*muqtaḍā al-ḥāl*), the clarity of meaning, and the aesthetic quality of language. Within *'ilm al-Ma'ānī*, the analysis focuses on sentence structure and communicative

function such as *uslūb khabar* and *insyāʾ*, *qaṣr*, and forms of *ījāz* and *iṭnāb*. Within *ʿIlm al-Bayān*, identification is directed toward the expression of a single meaning through various figurative modes that enhance clarity, elegance, and rhetorical impact, including *tashbīh*, *majāz*, and *kināyah*. Within *ʿIlm al-Badīʿ*, the analysis examines the aesthetic embellishment of language at both the phonetic (*lafẓiyyah*) and semantic (*maʿnawiyyah*) levels, such as *jinās*, *ṭibāq*, *muqābalah*, and *sajʿ* (Jārim & Amīn, 1999). The operationalization of categories is carried out by establishing textual indicators for each branch, for example, sentence structure and situational context for *ʿIlm al-Maʿānī*, figurative semantic relations for *ʿIlm al-Bayān*, and phonetic and semantic ornamentation for *ʿIlm al-Badīʿ*.

The data are analyzed using content analysis, a systematic scientific method for examining written or printed texts in order to uncover their underlying characteristics and meanings (Waruwu, 2024). The analytical procedure comprises four stages. First, data reduction through intensive reading and marking of textual segments containing elements of *balāghah*. Second, data categorization into the three branches of *balāghah* and their subtypes based on the established indicators. Third, interpretation of each finding by relating it to its rhetorical function and historical context in accordance with the adopted theoretical framework. Fourth, conclusion drawing based on patterns of findings that address the research questions. The limitation of the descriptive-analytical approach in this study lies in the interpretive nature of *balāghah* analysis, which is highly dependent on the theoretical framework employed and the researcher's subjectivity in reading classical texts. Moreover, this study is confined to texts documented in the available written sources and therefore does not encompass possible textual variants beyond the editions consulted.

Results and Discussion

Historical Context of the Battle of *Dūlāb*

Following the political vacuum experienced by the Sufyanid branch of the Umayyad dynasty after the death of Yazīd ibn Muʿāwiyah, and the subsequent refusal of his son Muʿāwiyah ibn Yazīd (Muʿāwiyah II) to assume power, widespread instability erupted across much of the Islamic world (Rahim, 2018). This situation gave rise to numerous rebellions and armed conflicts, most notably the revolt of ʿAbdullāh ibn al-Zubayr, who succeeded in seizing control of Mecca, bringing the regions of the Ḥijāz, Baṣrah, and Kūfah under his authority. Shortly thereafter, the revolts of al-Tawwābin and al-Mukhtār al-Thaqafī also emerged in Kufah. Events unfolded rapidly amid the growing chaos (Kizi, 2024). In this volatile context, a faction of the Khawārij al-Azāriqah, based in Ahwāz, exploited the deteriorating political conditions. Under the leadership of Nāfiʿ ibn al-Azraq, they began launching raids on village after village, terrorizing women and killing men, sparing only those who accepted their call, renounced their former beliefs, and acknowledged themselves as previously misguided. Through these methods, the Azāriqah succeeded in taking control of Ahwāz and expelling its governors (Al-Ṭabarī, 1967).

As their power expanded, the Azāriqah planned to advance toward Baṣrah, which at that time was preoccupied with internal conflict between the Azd and Tamīm tribes following the assassination of Masʿūd ibn ʿAmr, the governor of Baṣrah. When the people of Baṣrah learned that the Khawārij were approaching while the central authority remained inattentive to their plight, they gathered to consult al-Aḥnaf ibn Qays, seeking his counsel and voicing their concerns. They declared, "There is no distance between us and the enemy except two nights." Al-Aḥnaf replied, "What they will do in your city, should they prevail, will be no different from what they have done in your countryside. Therefore, exert yourselves fully in fighting your enemy." At

that moment, the Basrans set aside their internal disputes and united against the common threat. A force of ten thousand troops was assembled, and Muslim ibn 'Ubayṣ ibn Kurayz was appointed as their commander (Al-Ṭabarī, 1967)

When the two armies encountered one another, the Basran forces managed to repel the Khawārij and drive them away from Baṣrah until both sides reached a location in the region of Ahwāz known as Dūlāb. At that time, the Khawārij were led by Nāfi' ibn al-Azraq. Both sides prepared for battle. Muslim ibn 'Ubayṣ positioned al-Ḥajjāj ibn Bāb al-Ḥimyarī on the right flank and Ḥārithah ibn Badr al-Ghaddānī on the left, while Nāfi' ibn al-Azraq placed 'Ubaydah ibn Hilāl al-Yashkurī on the right and al-Zubayr ibn al-Māḥūz al-Tamīmī on the left. A ferocious battle ensued, the likes of which had rarely been witnessed. During this engagement, Muslim ibn 'Ubayṣ, the leader of Baṣrah, and Nāfi' ibn al-Azraq, the leader of the Khawārij, were both killed (Kizi, 2024). The people of Baṣrah then appointed al-Ḥajjāj ibn Bāb al-Ḥimyarī as their commander, while the Azāriqah appointed 'Abdullāh ibn al-Māḥūz. Fighting resumed with even greater intensity, resulting in the deaths of both commanders. Subsequently, the Basrans appointed Rabī'ah al-Ajdham al-Tamīmī, while the Khawārij appointed 'Ubaydullāh ibn al-Māḥūz. The battle continued until nightfall, after which both sides withdrew, exhausted. At that moment, fresh Khawārij reinforcements arrived and launched an attack from the direction of *Banū 'Abd al-Qays*, causing the Basran forces to collapse. Rabī'ah al-Ajdham was killed, and the banner was taken up by Ḥārithah ibn Badr, who briefly fought to protect the remaining troops before retreating toward Ahwāz (Al-Ṭabarī, 1967)

News of these events reached the people of Baṣrah and instilled widespread fear. Caliph 'Abdullāh ibn al-Zubayr, who was in Mecca at the time, appointed al-Ḥārith ibn 'Abdullāh ibn Abī Rabī'ah as governor of Baṣrah and dismissed 'Abdullāh ibn al-Ḥārith. The Khawārij again advanced toward Baṣrah. During this period, al-Muhallab ibn Abī Ṣufrah arrived in Baṣrah bearing his appointment as governor of Khurāsān. Al-Aḥnaf ibn Qays declared to al-Ḥārith and the people of Baṣrah, "No one is capable of confronting the Khawārij except al-Muhallab ibn Abī Ṣufrah." Consequently, the leading figures of Baṣrah requested al-Muhallab to assume command of the campaign. He initially refused, citing his mandate in Khurāsān (Al-Ṭabarī, 1967). In response, they drafted a letter in the name of Ibn al-Zubayr instructing al-Muhallab to fight the Khawārij. Upon reading the letter, al-Muhallab agreed on the condition that he be granted authority over the territories he conquered, financial support from the public treasury, and freedom in selecting his troops. The people of Baṣrah accepted these conditions, after which al-Muhallab organized the army and assigned tribal leadership roles (Kizi, 2024).

At this stage, the leadership of the Khawārij forces fell to Qaṭarī ibn al-Fujā'ah. Al-Muhallab succeeded in defeating Qaṭarī and forcing him, along with his Azāriqah followers, to retreat as far as Isfahan. In the regions of Isfahan, Ahwāz, and Kirmān, Qaṭarī established control and levied taxes, attracting numerous supporters and significantly expanding his power, eventually aspiring to seize Baṣrah itself (Al-Ḥamawī, 1955). Al-Muhallab sought to curb Qaṭarī's expansion by secretly sending letters to the inhabitants of Iṣṭakhr and neighboring villages. Upon discovering this covert correspondence, Qaṭarī attacked Iṣṭakhr and destroyed it along with its inhabitants. He intended to inflict the same fate upon the city of Fasā, but the city was ransomed by Āzād Mard ibn al-Hirbadh for one hundred thousand dirhams, thereby sparing it from destruction (Al-Ṭabarī, 1967)

The conflict between Qaṭarī and the Umayyads continued unabated. Repeated military expeditions were dispatched against him, while Qaṭarī persisted with remarkable resilience and courage. Eventually, however, he suffered a decisive defeat. Internal disputes then arose within the Azāriqah, leading to fragmentation and a reversal against Qaṭarī, which severely weakened

his position. Ultimately, Qaṭarī was killed in a battle against Umayyad forces led by Sufyān ibn al-Abrad al-Kalbī, with additional support from troops commanded by Ja‘far ibn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Mikhnāf. The individual who directly killed Qaṭarī was Saurah ibn Abjar (Kizi, 2024).

Epistolary Exchange between al-Ḥajjāj and Qaṭarī

When the military campaign was continued under the command of al-Muhallab ibn Abī Ṣufrah, Iraq had come under the authority of ‘Abd al-Malik ibn Marwān. Military contingents were dispatched one after another to confront the Khawārij by the governors of Iraq, most notably al-Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf. At that time, the leader of the Khawārij was Qaṭarī ibn al-Fujā‘ah. Al-Ḥajjāj addressed a letter to him containing threats and warnings, which reads as follows (Ḍaif, 1963):

سَلَامٌ عَلَيْكَ. أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَإِنَّكَ مَرَقْتَ مِنَ الدِّينِ مُرُوقَ السَّهْمِ مِنَ الرَّمِيَّةِ، وَقَدْ عَلِمْتُ حَيْثُ تَجَرَّمْتَ، ذَلِكَ إِنَّكَ عَاصٍ لِلَّهِ وَلَوْلَاةُ أَمْرِهِ، غَيْرَ أَنَّكَ أَعْرَابِيٌّ جَلْفٌ أُمِّيٌّ، تَسْتَطْعِمُ الْكِسْرَةَ وَتَسْتَشْفِي بِالتَّمْرَةِ، وَالْأُمُورُ عَلَيْكَ حَسْرَةٌ، خَرَجْتَ لِتَنَالَ شِبْعَةَ فَلَجَقَ بِكَ طَعَامُ صَلَوَا بِمِثْلِ مَا صَلَّيْتَ بِهِ مِنَ الْعَيْشِ، فَهُمْ يَهْزُونَ الرَّمَاخَ، وَيَسْتَنْشِقُونَ الرِّيَّاحَ، عَلَى خَوْفٍ وَجَهْدٍ مِنْ أُمُورِهِمْ. وَمَا أَصْبَحُوا يَنْتَظِرُونَ أَعْظَمَ مِمَّا جَهِلُوا مَعْرِفَتَهُ، ثُمَّ أَهْلَكَهُمُ اللَّهُ بِتَرْحَتَيْنِ. وَالسَّلَامُ.

"Peace be upon you. To proceed: You have indeed departed from the religion as an arrow passes clean through its target. I am well aware of the crimes you have committed, for you are disobedient to God and to those entrusted with His authority. You are nothing but a coarse and illiterate Bedouin, begging for crumbs of bread and seeking healing through a single date. All affairs have become a source of misery for you. You set out seeking a momentary satiety, only for destruction to overtake you in proportion to the meager sustenance you pursued. They brandish their spears and inhale the winds, burdened by fear and exhaustion in their affairs. They await nothing greater than what they fail to comprehend, until God destroys them with a double ruin. Peace be upon you."

Qaṭarī responded with a letter of similarly threatening tone (Ḍaif, 1963):

سَلَامٌ عَلَى الْهُدَاةِ مِنَ الْوَلَاةِ الَّذِينَ يَتَرَعُونَ حَرِيمَ اللَّهِ وَيُزْهِبُونَ نَيْقِسَهُ، فَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ عَلَى مَا أَظْهَرَ مِنْ دِينِهِ، وَأَطْنَانِي بِهِ أَهْلُ السَّقَالِ وَهَدَى بِهِ مِنَ الضَّلَالِ، وَنَصَرَ بِهِ عِنْدَ اسْتِخْفَافِكَ بِحَقِّهِ. كَتَبْتُ إِلَيْكَ تَذَكُّرًا لِيَّ أَعْرَابِيٍّ جَلْفٍ أُمِّيٍّ اسْتَطْعِمَ الْكَبِيرَةَ، وَاسْتَشْفَى بِالتَّمْرَةِ، وَالتَّعْمُرِي يَا ابْنَ أُمِّ الْحَجَّاجِ إِنَّكَ الْمُتَّبِعُ فِي جِبَلَتِكَ مُطَلِّحِيْمٌ فِي طَرِيقَتِكَ، وَإِي فِي وَثِيقَتِكَ، لَا تَعْرِفُ اللَّهَ وَلَا تَتَجَرَّعُ مِنْ حَطِيبَتِكَ، يَنْسَتُ وَاسْتِنَاسَتْ مِنْ رَبِّكَ، فَالشَّيْطَانُ قَرِينُكَ، لَا تُجَازِبُهُ وَثَاقُكَ، وَلَا تُنَازِعُهُ خِنَاقُكَ. فَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي لَوْ شَاءَ أَبْرَزَ فِي صَفْحَتِكَ، وَأَوْضَحَ لِي صَلَافَتَكَ، فَوَالَّذِي نَفْسُ قَطْرِي بِيَدِهِ لَعَرَفْتُ أَنَّ مَقَارِعَةَ الْأَبْطَالِ لَيْسَ كَتَصْدِيرِ الْمَقَالِ، مَعَ آتِي أَرْجُو أَنْ يَتَخَضَّصَ اللَّهُ حُجَّتَكَ، وَأَنْ يَمُنَّحَنِي مَهْجَتَكَ

"Peace be upon the rightly guided leaders who safeguard the sanctity of God and instill fear of His punishment. Praise be to God for what He has manifested of His religion, through which He exposes the humiliation of the vile, guides those who have gone astray, and grants victory to His cause when you belittle His right. You wrote to me describing me as a coarse and illiterate Bedouin who begs for crumbs and seeks healing through dates. By my life, O son of the mother of al-Ḥajjāj, it is you who are lost in your very nature, obscured in your path, and frail in your convictions. You neither know God nor fear your sin. You have despaired and caused yourself to despair of your Lord; thus Satan has become your companion—you neither restrain him nor resist his grip. Praise be to God, who, were He to will, would expose your face to me and make clear your baldness. By Him in whose hand lies the soul of Qaṭarī, you shall come to know that confronting heroes is not the same as merely arranging words. Indeed, I hope that God will nullify your argument and grant me your life."

Balāghah Elements in the Epistolary Correspondence between al-Ḥajjāj and Qaṭarī

The Aspects of 'Ilm al-Bayān in the Letters of al-Ḥajjāj and Qaṭarī

Etymologically, 'Ilm al-Bayān denotes clarification, elucidation, and explication. Terminologically, it is understood as a set of principles that function to explain the ways in which meaning is conveyed through various rhetorical styles (Al-Hāshimī, 1994). Based on this definition, the scope of 'Ilm al-Bayān focuses on different forms of figurative expression used as methods of meaning articulation, including *tashbīh*, *majāz*, and *Kināyah*. In the two letters analyzed, the use of *bayān* devices was identified in the form of 3 instances of *tashbīh*, 2 instances of *majāz isti'ārah*, and 2 instances of *Kināyah*.

Table 1. Aspects of 'Ilm al-Bayān

No	Sentence	Translation	Aspect of Bayān	Description
1	السَّهْمُ مَرْقُوتٌ مِنَ الدِّينِ مِنْ مَرَقَتْ الرَّمِيَّةِ مِنْ	You have departed from the religion as an arrow passes through its target	Tashbīh	Tashbīh Balīgh
2	لَيْسَ الْأَبْطَالُ مُقَارَعَةَ الْمَقَالِ كَتَصْدِيرِ	Confronting heroes is not like delivering a speech	Tashbīh	Tashbīh Mujmal
3	مَا يَمِثُّ صُلُوءَ طَعَامٍ بِكَ فَلَحَقَ الْعَيْشُ مِنْ بِهِ صَلَّيْتُ	Thus, what befell you in terms of sustenance corresponds to how you conducted your life	Tashbīh	Tashbīh Mujmal
4	صَلَعَتْكَ لِي وَأَوْضَحَ	Your baldness has become clear to me	Isti'ārah	Isti'ārah Aṣliyyah
5	قَرِيبُكَ فَالشَّيْطَانُ	Indeed, Satan is your companion	Isti'ārah	Isti'ārah Aṣliyyah
6	الرِّيَّاحُ وَيَسْتَنْشِئُونَ	They stir up the winds	Isti'ārah	Isti'ārah Taba'iyyah
7	أُمِّي جَلْفٌ أَعْرَابِي	A crude, ignorant Bedouin	Kināyah	Kināyah 'an Ṣifāh
8	اللَّهُ حَرِيمٌ يَرِ عَوْنُ	They safeguard the sanctity of God	Kināyah	Kināyah 'an Ṣifāh

1. Tashbīh (Simile)

Tashbīh is a rhetorical device that equates one entity (*mushabbah*) with another (*mushabbah bih*) based on a shared attribute (*wajh al-shabah*), whether this similarity is stated explicitly or implicitly. In general, a *tashbīh* consists of four elements: *mushabbah*, *mushabbah bih*, the particle of comparison (*adāt al-tashbīh*), and *wajh al-shabah*. However, in practice, not all of these elements are necessarily mentioned, as certain forms of *tashbīh* deliberately omit specific components to enhance rhetorical force and aesthetic impact ('Atiq, 2005). In the two letters analyzed, three expressions of *tashbīh* were identified.

As shown in Table No. 1, the expression represents a *tashbīh balīgh*, a form of simile in which only the *mushabbah* and *mushabbah bih* are mentioned, while both the particle of comparison (*adāt al-tashbīh*) and *wajh al-shabah* are omitted. The phrase *مَرَقَتْ مِنَ الدِّينِ* (departing from the religion) functions as the *mushabbah*, which is likened to *السَّهْمُ مَرْقُوتٌ مِنَ الرَّمِيَّةِ* (an arrow piercing through its target) as the *mushabbah bih*. This simile conveys the notions of speed, sharpness, and total severance from religion. In Table No. 2, the expression is categorized as a *tashbīh mujmal*, as it employs the particle of comparison *ك* without explicitly stating the *wajh al-shabah*. The phrase *مُقَارَعَةُ الْأَبْطَالِ* (engaging in combat with heroes) serves as the *mushabbah* and is compared to *كَتَصْدِيرِ الْمَقَالِ* (delivering or initiating a speech) as the *mushabbah bih*. The sentence contains the negative

particle *laysa* (is not), which emphasizes the contrast between the life-threatening reality of warfare and empty rhetoric that yields no real benefit. Similarly, Table No. 3 presents another example of *tashbīh mujmal*, marked by the use of the comparative expression *يُمَثِّلُ* without specifying the *wajh al-shabah*. The phrase *طَعَامٌ صَلُّوا* (subsequent sustenance) functions as the *mushabbah*, while *مَا صَلَّيْتَ بِهِ مِنَ الْعَيْشِ* (one's prior deeds in life) serves as the *mushabbah bih*, indicating the principle of proportional recompense.

2. *Majāz (Isti'ārah)*

Majāz refers to the use of a word outside its original (*ḥaqīqī*) meaning due to a specific relationship (*'alāqah*), accompanied by a contextual indicator (*qarīnah*) that prevents a literal interpretation. In general, *majāz* is divided into *majāz 'aqlī* and *majāz lughawī*. *Majāz 'aqlī* involves attributing an action to someone other than its actual agent, whereas *majāz lughawī* involves employing a word in a meaning other than its original sense. *Majāz lughawī* is further classified into *majāz mursal* and *isti'ārah*. *Majāz mursal* is based on relationships other than resemblance such as cause-effect, part-whole, or place-inhabitant, while *isti'ārah* is grounded in resemblance, with one element of *tashbīh* omitted, thereby intensifying the figurative meaning (Suryaningsih & Hendrawanto, 2017). In the two letters examined, all instances of *majāz* occur exclusively in the form of *isti'ārah*, with no examples of *majāz mursal* or *majāz 'aqlī* identified. A total of three instances of *isti'ārah* were found.

As shown in Table No. 4, the expression constitutes an *isti'ārah aṣliyyah*, as the borrowed term (*lafz musta'ār*) is a noun (*ism jāmid*), namely *صَلْعَتُكَ* (your baldness). The word *ṣal'ah* (baldness) is not used in its literal sense but metaphorically signifies emptiness or intellectual vacuity. Due to the perceived resemblance between physical baldness and the absence of substance or merit, al-Ḥajjāj is depicted as possessing “an empty head,” thus reinforcing the metaphorical insult. In Table No. 5, the word *qarīn* is not employed in its literal meaning as a “companion,” but rather to describe the domination of Satan over an individual. The relationship here is based on similarity in closeness and influence. This expression is classified as an *isti'ārah aṣliyyah*, as the borrowed term is a noun.

3. *Kināyah* (Allusion)

Kināyah is a rhetorical device in which the intended meaning is conveyed implicitly rather than directly, relying on an associated or customary meaning rather than the literal sense, although the literal interpretation remains theoretically possible (Al-Hāshimī, 1994). As illustrated in Table No. 6, the expression constitutes a *Kināyah 'an ṣifah*, as it does not explicitly mention the qualities of trustworthiness and adherence to Islamic law but implies them through the act of “guarding the boundaries set by God.” While the literal meaning protecting God's sacred domain remains valid, the intended meaning refers to responsible and conscientious leadership. Similarly, the expression in Table No. 7 is classified as a *Kināyah 'an ṣifah*, as the sequence of implied attributes points to harshness, ignorance, and intellectual immaturity without stating these qualities explicitly.

The Aspects of 'Ilm al-Ma'ānī in the Letters of al-Ḥajjāj and Qaṭarī

As one of the core branches of *balāghah*, *'ilm al-ma'ānī* focuses on the structuring of sentences so that the speaker's intended message can be accurately understood by the listener. This discipline does not merely assess grammatical correctness but also emphasizes the appropriateness of linguistic expression in relation to the communicative context (*muqtaḍā al-ḥāl*). Accordingly, the eloquence and effectiveness of an utterance are determined by the

harmony between its linguistic form and the situational context in which it is used. For this reason, the selection of sentence structures must correspond to the condition of the interlocutor and the specific communicative situation, ensuring that the speaker's intent is conveyed effectively ('Atiq, 2002).

According to 'Alī Muṣṭafā and Amīn in *al-Balāghah al-Wāḍiḥah*, 'ilm al-ma'ānī encompasses several key topics, including *Kalām Khabarī* (declarative speech), *kalām inshā'ī* (non-declarative or performative speech), *qaṣr* (restriction), *iṭnāb* (amplification), *al-faṣl wa al-waṣl* (disjunction and conjunction), *ījāz* (brevity), and *musāwāh* (balanced expression) (Jārim & Amīn, 1999). Based on the analysis of the letters, the study identifies 3 instances of *Kalām Khabarī*, 3 instances of *kalām inshā'ī*, 1 instance of *qaṣr*, 2 instances of *iṭnāb*, and 1 instance of *ījāz*.

Table 2. Aspects of 'Ilm al-Ma'ānī

No	Sentence	Translation	Aspect of Ma'ānī	Description
1	الرِّمَاحُ يَهْرُونَ فَهُمْ الرِّيَّاحُ وَيَسْتَنْشِبُونَ	They brandish spears and stir up the winds	Kalām Khabarī	Khabar ibtidā'ī
2	الَّذِينَ مِنْ مَرَفَتِ فَإِنَّكَ مِنَ السَّهْمِ مَرُوقِ الرَّمِيَّةِ	Indeed, you have departed from the religion as an arrow passes through its target	Kalām Khabarī	Khabarī Ṭalabī
3	وَلَوْلَا اللَّهُ عَاصَ إِنَّكَ ذَلِكَ أَمْرُهُ	That is because you are disobedient to God and to those vested with authority by Him	Kalām Khabarī	Khabarī Ṭalabī
4	يَذْهَبُ أَنْ أَرْجُو أَنِّي مَعَ حُجَّتِكَ اللَّهُ	Although I hope that God will invalidate your argument	Kalām Inshā'ī	Tarajjī (Expression of Hope)
5	أَمِ ابْنِ يَا وَلَعَمْرِي الْحَجَّاجِ	By my life, O son of al-Ḥajjāj's mother!	Kalām Inshā'ī	Qasam (Oath)
6	بِيَدِهِ قَطْرِي نَفْسُ فَوَالَّذِي	By Him in whose hand is the soul of Qaṭarī!	Kalām Inshā'ī	Qasam (Oath)
7	لَا، قَرِينُكَ فَالشَّيْطَانُ وَلَا، وَثَاقُكَ تُجَادِبُهُ خِنَاقُكَ تُنَازِعُهُ	Satan is your companion; you do not resist his bonds nor struggle against his grip	Qaṣr	Qaṣr Ta'yīn
8	الرِّمَاحُ يَهْرُونَ فَهُمْ الرِّيَّاحُ وَيَسْتَنْشِبُونَ مِنْ وَجْهِ خَوْفٍ عَلَى أُمُورِهِمْ	They brandish spears and stir up the winds, driven by fear and hardship in their affairs	Iṭnāb	Constraining Circumstances
9	جِبِلَّتِكَ فِي لَمْتِيهِ إِنَّكَ طَرِيقَتِكَ فِي مُطْلَحِمْ وَتَيْقَتِكَ فِي وَاهٍ	Indeed, you are confused in your nature, deviated in your conduct, and weak in your resolve	Iṭnāb	Elaboration of Misguidance
10	حَسْرَةً عَلَيْكَ وَالْأُمُورُ	All matters will end in regret for you.	ījāz	Concise expression implying that rebellion, warfare, and chosen life paths ultimately lead only to profound regret.

1. Kalām Khabarī (Declarative Speech)

Kalām Khabarī refers to declarative statements that are subject to evaluation as either true or false. In the analyzed letters, several forms of *Kalām Khabarī* were identified, including both *Ibtidā'ī* and *ṭalabī* types (Jārim & Amīn, 1999). As shown in Table No. 1, the expression فَهُمْ يَهْرُونَ

وَيَسْتَنْشِئُونَ الرِّيحَ, constitutes *Kalām Khabarī Ibtidā'ī*, as it is conveyed without any explicit emphatic marker (tawkid). Meanwhile, the expression in Table No. 2, فَإِنَّكَ مَرَقْتَ مِنَ الدِّينِ مُرُوقَ السَّهْمِ, is categorized as *Kalām Khabarī ṭalabī* due to the presence of the emphatic particle *inna*, which serves to reinforce the statement for an interlocutor who requires confirmation. Similarly, the expression in Table No. 3, ذَلِكَ إِنَّكَ عَاصٍ لِلَّهِ وَلَوْلَا أَمْرُهُ, also falls under *Kalām Khabarī ṭalabī*, as the use of *inna* strengthens the intended meaning and removes potential doubt.

2. *Kalām Inshā'ī* (Non-declarative / Performative Speech)

Kalām inshā'ī refers to utterances that are not intended to convey factual information but rather to express a particular communicative intent or demand (Jārim & Amīn, 1999). As shown in Table No. 4, the expression مَعَ أَنِّي أَرْجُو أَنْ يَخْصَنَ اللَّهُ حُجَّتَكَ is classified as *kalām inshā'ī* because it conveys the meaning of hope and supplication. In Tables No. 5 and No. 6, the expressions وَلَعُمْرِي يَا ابْنَ أُمِّ وَلَعُمْرِي يَا ابْنَ أُمِّ and فَأَوَّلَ الَّذِي نَفْسُ قَطْرِي بِيَدِهِ are likewise categorized as *kalām inshā'ī*, as both contain oaths (*qasam*) marked by the particle *wāw al-qasam*, which functions to reinforce the speaker's intention and assert rhetorical authority.

3. *Qaṣr* (Restriction)

Qaṣr refers to the restriction or confinement of meaning to a specific entity or attribute (Jārim & Amīn, 1999). As presented in Table No. 7, the expression فَالشَّيْطَانُ قَرِينُكَ، لَا تُجَادِبُهُ وَثَاقَكَ، وَلَا تُتَارِعُهُ خَنَاقَكَ exemplifies *qaṣr ta'yīn*, a form of restriction intended to affirm a judgment in situations where the interlocutor harbors doubt. This construction emphasizes the exclusive dominance of Satan over the addressee.

4. *Iṭnāb* (Amplification)

Iṭnāb denotes the expansion of expression through elaboration for the purpose of emphasis or clarification (Jārim & Amīn, 1999). In Table No. 8, the sentence فَهُمْ يَهْرُونَ الرِّيحَ، وَيَسْتَنْشِئُونَ الرِّيحَ، عَلَى أُمُورِهِمْ is classified as *iṭnāb* because it employs lexical elaboration to depict the precarious condition of Qaṭarī and his followers, who are portrayed as being under pressure and hardship through an extended descriptive structure. Similarly, Table No. 9 presents the expression إِنَّكَ لَمَتَّبِعٌ فِي جِلْبَانِكَ، مُطْلَخٌ فِي طَرِيقَتِكَ، وَادٍ فِي وَثِيقَتِكَ, which amplifies the discourse by lengthening the expression in order to intensify the portrayal of deviation, moral corruption, and reprehensible character.

5. *Ījāz* (Brevity)

Ījāz refers to the conveyance of extensive meaning through concise expression (Al-Hāshimī, 1994). As shown in Table No. 10, the expression وَالْأُمُورُ عَلَيْكَ حَسْرَةٌ exemplifies *ījāz*, as it employs a brief formulation while encapsulating a comprehensive depiction of the adverse consequences of the addressee's choices and actions, ultimately culminating in profound regret.

The Aspects of 'ilm al-Badī' in the Letters of al-Ḥajjāj and Qaṭarī

Al-Hāshimī explains that '*ilm al-badī*' is a rhetorical discipline concerned with examining various forms and merits of stylistic expression that function to enhance the beauty and aesthetic value of discourse. In general, '*ilm al-badī*' focuses on linguistic elegance, both at the level of wording (*lafẓ*) and meaning (*ma'nā*). This discipline serves as an ornamental element in discourse through

diverse linguistic devices that enrich the aesthetic and rhetorical quality of a text (Al-Hāshimī, 1994).

According to al-Buḥairī, *‘ilm al-badī’* is broadly divided into two main categories: *al-muḥassināt al-lafziyyah* (phonetic or lexical embellishments) and *al-muḥassināt al-ma‘nawiyyah* (semantic embellishments). *Al-muḥassināt al-lafziyyah* refer to forms of rhetorical beauty related to wording and sound patterns, whereas *al-muḥassināt al-ma‘nawiyyah* emphasize aspects of meaning and semantic relations (Al-Buṣairī, 2006).

Jawāhir al-Balāghah further classifies *al-muḥassināt al-lafziyyah* into three primary forms: *saj’* (rhymed prose), *jinās* (paronomasia), and *iqtibās* (quotation or allusion to Qur’ānic or prophetic expressions). Based on the data obtained from the two letters analyzed in this study, all forms of *al-muḥassināt al-lafziyyah* were identified, with *saj’* occurring in 5 instances, *jinās* in 3 instances, and *iqtibās* in 1 instance. In addition, 1 instance of *al-muḥassināt al-ma‘nawiyyah*, namely *ṭibāq* (antithesis), was also found.

Table 3. Aspects of *‘ilm al-badī’*

No	Sentence	Translation	Aspect of <i>badī’</i>	Description
1	وَسْتَثْنِي الْكُسْرَةَ تَسْتَطْعِمُ عَلَيْكَ وَالْأُمُورَ بِالتَّمْرِ حَسْرَةً	You seek nourishment from a crust of bread and healing from a date, yet all matters end in regret for you	Al-Lafziyyah	Saja’
2	وَهَدَى السُّفَالِ أَهْلَ بِهِ وَأَذَلَّ الضَّلَالِ مِنْ بِهِ	By it He humiliated the base people and guided others from misguidance	Al-Lafziyyah	Saja’
3	وَأَسْتَنْفِي الْكُسْرَةَ أَسْتَطْعِمُ بِالتَّمْرِ	I seek nourishment from a crust of bread and healing from a date	Al-Lafziyyah	Saja’
4	مُطْلَخِمٌ جِبَلَتِكَ فِي لَمْتِهِ إِنَّكَ وَتَيْفَتِكَ فِي وَاهٍ طَرِيقَتِكَ فِي جَنَاقَتِكَ تُنَازِعُهُ وَلَا ...	Indeed, you are confused in your nature, deviated in your path, weak in your resolve... and you do not struggle against his grip	Al-Lafziyyah	Saja’
5	أَبْرَزَ شَاءَ لَوْ الَّذِي لِلَّهِ فَالْحَمْدُ لِي وَأَوْضَحَ صَفْحَتِكَ لِي صَلْعَتِكَ أَنْ أَرْجُو أَنِّي مَعَ وَأَنْ حُجَّتِكَ اللَّهُ يَدْخُضُ مُهْجَتِكَ يَمْنَحَنِي	Praise be to God who, had He willed, would have exposed your true face and made your baldness clear to me, while I still hope that God will invalidate your argument and grant me your lifeblood	Al-Lafziyyah	Saja’
6	الرِّمَاحَ يَهْرُونَ فَهُمْ الرِّيَاحَ وَيَسْتَنْشِئُونَ	They brandish spears and stir up the winds	Al-Lafziyyah	Jinās Ghayr Tām
7	اللَّهُ يَدْخُضُ أَنْ أَرْجُو أَنِّي مَعَ يَمْنَحَنِي وَأَنْ حُجَّتَكَ مُهْجَتَكَ	Although I hope that God will invalidate your argument and grant me your lifeblood	Al-Lafziyyah	Jinās Ghayr Tām
8	أَبْرَزَ شَاءَ لَوْ الَّذِي لِلَّهِ فَالْحَمْدُ لِي وَأَوْضَحَ صَفْحَتِكَ لِي صَلْعَتِكَ	Praise be to God who, had He willed, would have exposed your true face and clarified your baldness to me	Al-Lafziyyah	Jinās Ghayr Tām
9	مُرُوقَ الدِّينِ مِنْ مَرَقَتْ فَإِنَّكَ الرَّمِيَّةَ مِنَ السَّهْمِ	Indeed, you have departed from the religion as an arrow passes through its target	Al-Lafziyyah	Iqtibās
10	الضَّلَالِ مِنْ بِهِ هَدَى	He guided by it from misguidance.	Al-Ma‘nawiyyah	Ṭibāq Ijāb

1. *Saj* (Rhymed Prose)

Saj is one of the aesthetic features of Arabic prose, characterized by phonetic harmony at the ends of clauses or sentences. In al-Ḥajjāj's letter to Qaṭarī, *saj* appears five times. This sound harmony is realized through identical final letters, similar phonological patterns, and the repetition of pronominal suffixes, all of which create rhythm and enhance the rhetorical force of the discourse (Al-Hāshimī, 1994)

As shown in Table No. 1, the sentence is classified as *saj* due to the identical final sounds in the words *الْكُسْرَة* and *الْتَمْرَة*, both of which end with the letters *rā'* and *tā' marbūṭah*, thereby producing rhythmic harmony. In Table No. 2, *saj* is evident in the similarity of final sounds in the words *السُّفَال* and *الضَّلَال*, which both conclude with *alif* and *lām*. Table No. 3 also presents an instance of *saj*, marked by the recurring final sounds in *الْكُسْرَة* and *الْتَمْرَة*. Table No. 4 demonstrates *saj* through the repetition of the second-person pronominal suffix *kāf al-mukhāṭab* (كَ) at the end of each phrase. Similarly, the *saj* in Table No. 5 is manifested through the repeated final sound of the pronominal suffix *kāf* (كَ) in the words *مُهْجَتَكَ*, *حُجَّتَكَ*, *صَلَّاتَكَ*, *صَفْحَتَكَ*, creating a cohesive and harmonious cadence at the end of the sentence.

2. *Jinās* (Paronomasia)

Jinās is a rhetorical device in *ilm al-badī* that employs two or more words with similar or identical phonetic forms but different meanings. *Jinās* is divided into two principal types: *jinās tāmm* (perfect paronomasia), in which the words are identical in type, number, vowelization, and letter sequence; and *jinās ghayr tāmm* (imperfect paronomasia), in which one of these elements differs.

In the letters of al-Ḥajjāj and Qaṭarī, three instances of *jinās* were identified, all of which fall under the category of *jinās nāqish* (imperfect paronomasia). First, as shown in Table No. 6, the words *الزَّمَاح* and *الزَّيَّاح* differ by a single letter *mīm* and *yā'* while the remaining phonetic elements are identical, thus constituting *jinās nāqish*. Second, Table No. 7 presents the words *مُهْجَتَكَ* and *حُجَّتَكَ*, which differ in the letters *mīm* and *hā'*, while the other letters remain the same, thereby qualifying as *jinās nāqish*. Third, Table No. 8 illustrates *jinās* in the expression *صَلَّاتَكَ* and *صَفْحَتَكَ*, which differ in two letters, namely *hā'* and *ayn*. Since these letters share proximate points of articulation (*makhārij mutaḳāribah*), the expression is also categorized as *jinās nāqish*.

3. *Iqtibās* (Allusive Quotation)

Etymologically, *iqtibās* means "borrowing" or "quoting." In Arabic literary rhetoric, *iqtibās* refers to the incorporation of a portion of Qur'ānic or prophetic wording into prose or poetry without explicitly citing the source (Sarifah, 2019). This device aims to enhance the beauty, authority, and emotional impact of a text by drawing upon expressions whose linguistic and semantic qualities are already familiar to the audience (Al-Hāshimī, 1994).

In the two letters analyzed, only one instance of *iqtibās* was identified, occurring in al-Ḥajjāj's letter and deriving from a Prophetic ḥadīth. The expression *فَلْيَنْكَرْكَ مَرَقْتُ مِنَ الدِّينِ مُرُوقَ السَّهْمِ مِنَ الرَّمِيَّةِ* is an allusion to the saying of the Prophet Muḥammad SAW: «إن بعدي من أمتي أو سيكون بعدي من أمتي قوم يقرؤون القرآن لا يجاوز حلقهم، يخرجون من الدين كما يخرج السهم من الرمية، ثم لا يعودون فيه، هم شر الخلق والخليقة». "After me, there will be among my community a people who recite the Qur'an, yet it does not go beyond their throats. They will depart from the religion just as an arrow passes through its target, and they will never return to it. They are the worst of creation and of all creatures".

4. *Ṭibāq* (Antithesis)

With regard to *al-muḥassināt al-ma'nawiyyah*, one instance of *ṭibāq* was identified. *Ṭibāq* is a rhetorical device in *'ilm al-badī'* that juxtaposes two words with opposing meanings within a single expression (Aqilla, 2024). In al-Ḥajjāj's letter, a single example of *ṭibāq* appears in Table No. 10 in the expression هَدَى بِهِ مِنَ الضَّلَالِ. This instance is classified as *ṭibāq lǧābī*, as it brings together two contrasting meanings *al-hudā* (guidance) and *al-ḍalāl* (misguidance) without the use of a negative particle.

Conclusion

This study successfully analyzes the elements of *balāghah* contained in the epistolary correspondence between al-Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf al-Thaqafī and Qaṭarī ibn al-Fujā'ah during the Battle of Dūlāb by employing a qualitative descriptive-analytical approach. Through an examination of these letters based on the three principal branches of *balāghah* including *'ilm al-bayān*, *'ilm al-ma'ānī*, and *'ilm al-badī'*, the study demonstrates that rhetorical devices played a highly significant role in shaping political discourse and ideological confrontation in the early Umayyad period. The findings indicate that, from the perspective of *'ilm al-bayān*, the correspondence displays intensive use of figurative language, such as *tashbīh*, *isti'ārah*, and *kināyah*, which function to reinforce meaning, construct polemical imagery, and convey ideological judgments implicitly. From the viewpoint of *'ilm al-ma'ānī*, the study reveals that the arrangement of declarative and non-declarative sentences, as well as rhetorical strategies such as *kalām khabarī*, *kalām inshā'ī*, *qaṣr*, *iṭnāb*, and *ījāz*. Meanwhile, the analysis of *'ilm al-badī'* shows that phonetic and semantic embellishments such as *saj'*, *jinās*, *iqtibās*, and *ṭibāq* which are systematically employed to enhance rhetorical force and textual memorability, particularly in confrontational political prose.

Overall, this research contributes to the field of Arabic rhetoric by presenting concrete textual evidence of *balāghah* practices prior to their formal codification as an independent discipline. From a historical perspective, these letters function as valuable primary sources that document the dynamics of early Islamic political discourse. From a linguistic perspective, this study enriches our understanding of the development of Arabic prose and rhetorical strategies in the first Hijri century. Nevertheless, this study has certain limitations. The analysis is restricted to a relatively limited corpus of letters attributed to al-Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf and Qaṭarī ibn al-Fujā'ah as preserved in classical sources, which may not fully represent the range of epistolary rhetoric employed during the Umayyad period.

Therefore, future research is recommended to expand the corpus by incorporating other political correspondences from the Umayyad and early Abbasid periods, thereby enabling comparative *balāghah* analysis within a broader historical framework. Future studies may also integrate interdisciplinary perspectives such as discourse analysis, pragmatics, or political linguistics to further examine how rhetorical strategies operate within power relations and ideological negotiation. Such approaches are expected to deepen scholarly understanding of *balāghah* as both a linguistic and socio-political phenomenon in classical Arabic literature.

Acknowledgments

The researchers would like to express their deepest gratitude to the Arabic Language and Literature Study Program at UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, along with all lecturers and members of the academic community, for their support, guidance, and academic facilities

throughout the research process. This support, in the form of scholarly supervision, access to academic resources, and a conducive academic environment, played a significant role in enabling the successful completion of this study.

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