**The Study of Narratological Structure of the Story of Prophet Abraham (AS) in the Holy Quran Using the Model of Greimas**

**Abstract**

In Greimas's narrative model, the deep structure of the narrative construction in actantial structure pattern, propositions, and narrative syntagmes is analyzed to identify the stages of production to get the meaning. Considering the special importance of knowing the mechanisms of making meaning in the narrations of the Holy Quran, the present study examines the narrative system of the story of Prophet Abraham (AS) using the descriptive-analytical method based on the structural model of Greimas. The results show that Greimas’s structural pattern matches the story of Abraham (AS) and such an adaptation with contemporary storytelling theories is one of the miraculous aspects of a book that has been revealed for centuries. It should be noted that sometimes the main character of this story plays different roles of subject, receiver, sender, and even helper. In some situations, there are relationships of contradictions and differences among subjects and one can recognize the structure of the text by understanding these contrasts. Subjects using three syntagmes of contractual, performative, and disjunctive can cover abstract concepts and inanimate objects in addition to characters.

**Keywords:** [The Holy Quran](https://lrr.modares.ac.ir/search.php?sid=14&slc_lang=en&key=The+Holy+Quran), Abraham story, [Greimas](https://lrr.modares.ac.ir/search.php?sid=14&slc_lang=en&key=Greimas), [narration](https://lrr.modares.ac.ir/search.php?sid=14&slc_lang=en&key=narration), Narratological structure.

**Introduction**

Structuralism in the classical view deals with the form and appearance of a literary genre, but in its new meaning and application, it is tied to morphology which analyzes the structure of stories and their hidden chains. The characteristics, goals, functions, and actions that structuralists perform in text analysis cover examining the relationships between the components of a story, recognizing and arranging the smallest narrative structures, achieving a limited and common pattern, and helping to emerge the meaning and important elements of the story (Propp 1958, 45).

Classical stories deserve structural analysis due to the focus on the type of actions and relationships of individuals and the existence of coherent structural elements. Thus, fiction is one of the literary formats examined in the school of structuralism. The story is "the narration of events and the series of events in chronological order" (Forster 2005, 42). According to the Russian morphologist Vladimir Propp, "narrative is a text that expresses a change of state from a balanced state to an unbalanced state and a return to a balanced state. This change of state is called an event, which is one of the main elements of the narrative (plot)" (Okhovat 1992, 18). Thereby, he considers the plot as a dynamic part of the narration and compares this mobility with a character who seems to be static. He considers thirty-one special roles and seven operational areas for the role of stories (Propp 1989, 161-162).

Greimas, a Lithuanian semiotician, living in France has provided definite and fixed models in narratology to study different types of narratives. He has made the narratology regarding the morphology of Propp's anecdote and has made changes in it (Scholes 2004, 230). Unlike Propp who allocated his seven categories to the characters of the folk tale and did not generalize it, he believes that a few patterns of character actions can be found and from these patterns, the logic of the fictional world can be created (Ahmadi 2009, 163). He divided the elements of the narrative into six categories concerning the occasions and confrontations they share: 1. Identifier/subject (mostly, the subject finds her/his goal and strives to achieve it), 2. Receiver (the person or thing that is targeted by the subject), 3. Sender (the factor that motivates the subject to do something), 4. Opponent (a force that prevents the subject from reaching the goal), 5. Helper (a force that helps the subject to reach his/her goal), 6. Value-object (a goal or something that the subject tries to reach). That is the main character seeks to achieve a specific goal. Faces resistance from the opponent; A strong power (sender) sends him/her on a mission. A receiver also has the same procedure (Makaryk 1995, 152). Greimas claimed that one can find all of these six elements or some of them in a narrative.

Greimas believes that each narrative includes different propositions. These propositions make a sequence in the story. He divided them into three general categories:

1. Descriptive proposition: It refers to the description of conditions and situations, 2- Modal proposition: that is the expression of a specific state, 3- Multiple proposition: it indicates the performance of a specific task (Scholes 1974, 147).

Greimas claims that each story contains several sequences. Each sequence is a collection of several action patterns. He re-analyses the Propp's viewpoint about sequence and suggests three basic categories for narrative sequences:

1. Contractual syntagme in which the condition of the story has the bearing of the establishing and breaking of contracts, alienation and/or reintegration, etc.

Performative syntagme involves trials, struggles, the performance of tasks, special roles, actions, and so on.

Disjunctive syntagme includes movement, departure, arrival in the story (Rewaj 2003, 75).

The present study using a descriptive-analytical approach seeks to answer this question: Is the narrative structure model of Greimas compatible with the story of Prophet Abraham (Ibrahim) in the Holy Quran?

**Analysis of the story of Prophet Abraham based on the narrative model of Greimas**

**First position: Worship of the star, moon and sun**

*وَكَذَلِكَ نُرِي إِبْرَاهِيمَ مَلَكُوتَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَلِيَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُوقِنِينَ (75) فَلَمَّا جَنَّ عَلَيْهِ اللَّيْلُ رَأَى كَوْكَبًا قَالَ هَذَا رَبِّي فَلَمَّا أَفَلَ قَالَ لَا أُحِبُّ الْآفِلِينَ (76) فَلَمَّا رَأَى الْقَمَرَ بَازِغًا قَالَ هَذَا رَبِّي فَلَمَّا أَفَلَ قَالَ لَئِنْ لَمْ يَهْدِنِي رَبِّي لَأَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْقَوْمِ الضَّالِّينَ (77) فَلَمَّا رَأَى الشَّمْسَ بَازِغَةً قَالَ هَذَا رَبِّي هَذَا أَكْبَرُ فَلَمَّا أَفَلَتْ قَالَ يَا قَوْمِ إِنِّي بَرِيءٌ مِمَّا تُشْرِكُونَ (78) إِنِّي وَجَّهْتُ وَجْهِيَ لِلَّذِي فَطَرَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ حَنِيفًا وَمَا أَنَا مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ.­(79)*

*So also did We show Abraham the power and the laws of the heavens and the earth, that he might (with understanding) have certitude (75). When the night covered him over, He saw a star: He said: "This is my Lord." But when it set, He said: "I love not those that set” (76).When he saw the moon rising in splendour, he said: "This is my Lord." But when the moon set, He said: "unless my Lord guide me, I shall surely be among those who go astray (77)." When he saw the sun rising in splendour, he said: "This is my Lord; this is the greatest (of all)." But when the sun set, he said: "O my people! I am indeed free from your (guilt) of giving partners to Allah (78). "For me, I have set my face, firmly and truly, towards Him Who created the heavens and the earth, and never shall I give partners to Allah" (Surah Al-An’am,79).*

At the beginning of the story, Abraham asks God Almighty to show him what he deserves to worship, so his inner strength calls him to worship the star, the moon, and the sun, but each of them was declined. Thus, he did not consider them worthy of worship and realized that they all have a Creator (Al-An'am, 75-79).

**Table 1.The Abraham (AS) narrative’s actantial structure**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Subject** | It is Abraham who wants to know his true God. |
| **Receiver** | The moon, the star, and the sun. |
| **Sender** | Having a spirit of guidance is the factor that compels Abraham to believe in God for compelling reasons. |
| **Opponent** | It does not have. |
| **Helper** | It is God Almighty who has given a sound mind to Abraham. |
| **Value-object** | To find out if the stars, the moon, and the sun deserve worship. |

**Table 1-1. Narrative propositions**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Descriptive proposition** | Abraham witnessed the worship of the stars, the moon, and the sun by his people. |
| **Modal proposition** | Abraham wants to be sure if these are worthy of praise. |
| **Multiple proposition** | Abraham practically praises the stars and the moon at night and the sun during the day. |

**Table 1-2. Narrative syntagmes**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Contractual syntagme** | In this syntagme, we can see the closing of the covenant between Abraham and himself so that his faith in God is certain. |
| **Performative syntagme** | In this syntagme, we see Abraham fulfilled his covenant. He practically worships the stars, the moon, and the sun to make sure whether they deserve praise or not. |
| **Disjunctive syntagme** | Worshiping the star, the moon, the sun, and then giving up them is a kind of detachment from the negative position and moving towards the positive position. |

**Second position: Invitation of the father to leave idolatry**

## *وَاذْكُرْ فِي الْكِتَابِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ إِنَّهُ كَانَ صِدِّيقًا نَبِيًّا (41) إِذْ قَالَ لِأَبِيهِ يَا أَبَتِ لِمَ تَعْبُدُ مَا لَا يَسْمَعُ وَلَا يُبْصِرُ وَلَا يُغْنِي عَنْكَ شَيْئًا (42) يَا أَبَتِ إِنِّي قَدْ جَاءَنِي مِنَ الْعِلْمِ مَا لَمْ يَأْتِكَ فَاتَّبِعْنِي أَهْدِكَ صِرَاطًا سَوِيًّا (43) يَا أَبَتِ لَا تَعْبُدِ الشَّيْطَانَ إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ كَانَ لِلرَّحْمَنِ عَصِيًّا (44) يَا أَبَتِ إِنِّي أَخَافُ أَنْ يَمَسَّكَ عَذَابٌ مِنَ الرَّحْمَنِ فَتَكُونَ لِلشَّيْطَانِ وَلِيًّا (45) قَالَ أَرَاغِبٌ أَنْتَ عَنْ آلِهَتِي يَا إِبْرَاهِيمُ لَئِنْ لَمْ تَنْتَهِ لَأَرْجُمَنَّكَ وَاهْجُرْنِي مَلِيًّا (46) قَالَ سَلَامٌ عَلَيْكَ سَأَسْتَغْفِرُ لَكَ رَبِّي إِنَّهُ كَانَ بِي حَفِيًّا .( 47)*

*And mention in the Book [the story of] Abraham. Indeed, he was a man of truth and a prophet (41). Behold, he said to his father: “O my father! Why worship that which heareth not and seeth not, and can profit thee nothing?” (42). “O my father! To me hath come knowledge which hath not reached thee: so follow me: I will guide thee to a way that is even and straight” (43). “O my father! Serve not Satan: for Satan is a rebel against (Allah) Most Gracious” (44). “O my father! I fear lest a Penalty afflict thee from (Allah) Most Gracious, so that thou become to Satan a friend” (45). (The father) replied: "Dost thou hate my gods, O Abraham? If thou forbear not, I will indeed stone thee: Now get away from me for a good long while!"(46). Abraham said: "Peace be on thee: I will pray to my Lord for thy forgiveness: for He is to me Most Gracious (Surah Maryam (Mary):47).*

In this part of the story, Abraham after believing in God and being sent as a Prophet insists a lot on his father Azar (that's mean his uncle) becoming a monotheist. Therefore, Abraham respectfully gives him many reasons for his going astray. But, his uncle treats him harshly and does not accept his invitation (Maryam, 41-47). “He wants to remind Azar that a man cannot be without any policy in his life. A person must either follow the line of God, which is the straight line, or the line of Satan, which is the line of rebellion. The man should not make blindly decision about this” (Makarem Shirazi 1998, Vol 13, 77).

**Table 2. The Abraham (AS) narrative’s actantial structure**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Subject** | It is Prophet Abraham who is commissioned to forbid his uncle Azar from worshiping idols and to call him on the worship of God. |
| **Receiver** | It can be both Azar who was invited to the religion of truth and Prophet Abraham; Because it was his duty to invite Azar to monotheism. |
| **Sender** | A strong desire of Abraham to guide his uncle. |
| **Opponent** | Satan and Azar's intense desire to follow the customs and traditions of his ancestors. |
| **Helper** | It is God Almighty who gave Abraham such a sound mind to show politely the futility of his father's action with reason and logic. |
| **Value-object** | Abraham's invitation to Azar to worship God and to avoid idolatry. |

**Table 2-2. Narrative propositions**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Descriptive proposition** | Abraham is a monotheist, but his uncle is an idolater. Due to this, he insists on guiding him to righteousness for good reasons, but he meets bad treatment from his uncle. |
| **Modal proposition** | Abraham seeks a solution to invite his uncle to monotheism and forbid him from worshiping idols. |
| **Multiple proposition** | Abraham came to his uncle and kindly forbade him to worship idols and invited him to monotheism, but he was insulted and threatened by his uncle. |

**Table 2-3. Narrative Syntagmes**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Contractual syntagme** | In this syntagme, the Prophet Abraham commits to invite Azar to monotheism through a rational and polite conversation. |
| **Performative syntagme** | In this syntagme, the logical and polite conversation of Abraham with his uncle shows that he has fulfilled his covenant. |
| **Disjunctive syntagme** | In this syntagme, we see a kind of positive movement. Abraham tries to save his uncle from polytheism to God and invite him to monotheism, but this movement remains in a negative state due to his uncle's opposition. |

**Third Position: Abraham’s invitation to monotheism**

In this position, Abraham is commissioned to call his people to monotheism; so when he asked them, what are these idols that you worship? They answered: our fathers worshiped them.

*قَالُوا وَجَدْنَا آبَاءَنَا لَهَا عَابِدِينَ (53). قَالَ لَقَدْ كُنْتُمْ أَنْتُمْ وَآبَاؤُكُمْ فِي ضَلَالٍ مُبِينٍ ( .­(54قَالُوا أَجِئْتَنَا بِالْحَقِّ أَمْ أَنْتَ مِنَ اللَّاعِبِينَ (55).*

*They said, “We found our fathers worshipping them” (53). He said, "Indeed ye have been in manifest error - ye and your father" (54). They said, "Have you brought us the Truth, or are you one of those who jest?"(Surah Al-Anbiya, 55).*

**Table 3. The Abraham (AS) narrative’s actantial structure**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Subject** | After receiving the divine mission, Prophet Abraham goes to his people to guide them. |
| **Receiver** | On the one hand, some idolatrous people are invited to worship God, and on the other hand, there is Abraham who is commissioned to guide his people to the right path. |
| **Sender** | It is God Almighty who obliges Abraham to guide the people. |
| **Opponent** | It refers to the people of Abraham who with blind obedience to their ancestors' traditions rise against the guidance of him. |
| **Helper** | Besides the God Almighty, there are strong arguments and proofs that Abraham has in his speeches with the people due to his common sense. |
| **Value-object** | Completing the argument against the people of Abraham by sending a Prophet to guide them and forbid them from idolatry. |

**Table 3-1. Narrative Propositions**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Descriptive proposition** | The people of Abraham following the misconceptions of their ancestors turned to idolatry and he has commissioned to lead them to monotheism. |
| **Modal proposition** | God Almighty by sending Prophet Abraham intends to guide his people. |
| **Multiple proposition** | The subject invites his people to the religion of truth with argument, but they do not accept his invitation and claim that Abraham makes fun of them. |

**Table 3-2. Narrative Syntagmes**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Contractual syntagme** | Abraham made a covenant with God to call his people to monotheism. |
| **Performative syntagme** | In this syntagme, the Prophet Abraham, himself, logically avoids worshipping idols and prevents his people from doing that and even from polytheism to God. |
| **Disjunctive syntagme** | At this point of the story, the people of Abraham reject his invitation and made fun of him. This caused the direction of movement to remain in the negative. |

**Fourth position: Destruction of idols by Abraham**

Abraham, after failing to lead his people for obvious reasons, swears to destroy all the idols, so he destroys all of them except the bigger idol with an ax and puts the ax on its shoulder.

*وَتَاللَّهِ لَأَكِيدَنَّ أَصْنَامَكُمْ بَعْدَ أَنْ تُوَلُّوا مُدْبِرِينَ (57) فَجَعَلَهُمْ جُذَاذًا إِلَّا كَبِيرًا لَهُمْ لَعَلَّهُمْ إِلَيْهِ يَرْجِعُونَ (58).*

*“And by Allah, I have a plan for your idols - after ye go away and turn your backs" (57). So he broke them to pieces, (all) but the biggest of them, that they might turn (and address themselves) to it (Surah Al-Anbiya, 58).*

When people came back and faced this scene, they were terrified who brought this calamity on the idols?! At this time, they said that Abraham was the only one who spoke against the idols (Al-Anbiya, 58-60).

*قَالُوا مَنْ فَعَلَ هَذَا بِآلِهَتِنَا إِنَّهُ لَمِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ (59) قَالُوا سَمِعْنَا فَتًى يَذْكُرُهُمْ يُقَالُ لَهُ إِبْرَاهِيمُ (60).*

*They said, "Who has done this to our gods? He must indeed be some man of impiety!" (59). They said, “We heard a youth talk of them: He is called Abraham” (60).*

**Table 4. The Abraham (AS) narrative’s actantial structure**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Subject** | It refers to Abraham who avoided his people from worshiping idols.  When he faces strong opposition, he broke all the idols to show that they are not capable of defending themselves. |
| **Receiver** | There are idols on one side and people on the other side to think about what they worship. |
| **Sender** | It is Abraham’s inner desire to lead his people rationally and courageously. |
| **Opponent** | There is not any force to prevent idols from breaking. |
| **Helper** | Abraham's firm belief in God Almighty, the inefficiency of the idols, and his rich intelligence in putting the ax on the idol's shoulder helped him to show people the wrong path of worship. |
| **Value-object** | Abraham broke the idols to show their inability to defend themselves and thus lead his people. |

**Table 4-1. Narrative Propositions**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Descriptive proposition** | God Almighty sends Abraham to guide his people. They do not accept his invitation. Thus, Abraham destroys the idols to show their inefficiency. |
| **Modal proposition** | Abraham intends to break the idols. |
| **Multiple proposition** | Abraham breaks all the idols and places the ax on the shoulder of the greatest idol. |

**Table 4-2. Narrative Syntagmes**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Contractual syntagme** | Prophet Abraham makes a covenant with God to break all the idols. |
| **Performative syntagme** | Abraham breaks all the idols except the big idol and puts the ax on its shoulder. |
| **Disjunctive syntagme** | The direction of movement in this syntagme is positive; because Prophet Abraham intends to show the public opinion about the inefficiency of the idols by breaking them. |

**Fifth Position: The trial of Abraham for breaking the idols**

*قَالُوا أَأَنْتَ فَعَلْتَ هَذَا بِآلِهَتِنَا يَا إِبْرَاهِيمُ (62) قَالَ بَلْ فَعَلَهُ كَبِيرُهُمْ هَذَا فَاسْأَلُوهُمْ إِنْ كَانُوا يَنْطِقُونَ (63) فَرَجَعُوا إِلَى أَنْفُسِهِمْ فَقَالُوا إِنَّكُمْ أَنْتُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ (64) ثُمَّ نُكِسُوا عَلَى رُءُوسِهِمْ لَقَدْ عَلِمْتَ مَا هَؤُلَاءِ يَنْطِقُونَ (65) قَالَ أَفَتَعْبُدُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ مَا لَا يَنْفَعُكُمْ شَيْئًا وَلَا يَضُرُّكُمْ (66) أُفٍّ لَكُمْ وَلِمَا تَعْبُدُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ (67) قَالُوا حَرِّقُوهُ وَانْصُرُوا آلِهَتَكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ فَاعِلِينَ (68).*

*They said, "Art thou the one that did this with our gods, O Abraham?" (62). He said: "Nay, this was done by - this is their biggest one! Ask them, if they can speak intelligently!" (63). so, they turned to themselves and said, "Surely ye are the ones in the wrong!" (64). Then were they confounded with shame: (they said), "Thou knowest full well that these (idols) do not speak!" (65). (Abraham) said, "Do ye then worship, besides Allah, things that can neither be of any good to you nor do you harm? (66). “Fie upon you, and upon the things that ye worship besides Allah! Have ye no sense?".. (67). they said, "Burn him and protect your gods, if ye do (anything at all)!” (Surah Al-Anbiya, 68).*

Prophet Abraham defends himself against the accusation of breaking idols and says that the ax is on the shoulder of the greatest idol, why don’t you ask him?! If they speak, ask them, and this is when the people realize their mistake and the Prophet questions them, but the king and the other tribal elders, who see their position in danger incite the people to defend the religion of their ancestors. So they order to throw Abraham into the great fire (Al-Anbiya, 62-68).

**Table 5. The Abraham (AS) narrative’s actantial structure**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Subject** | It is the king of the time, Nimrod, who incites the people to kill Abraham on the pretext of supporting their ancestral religion. |
| **Receiver** | It is Abraham who is condemned. |
| **Sender** | It was a grudge that Nimrod and his idolatrous people had against Abraham. |
| **Opponent** | It is Abraham who defends himself with convincing reasons and tries to guide the people. |
| **Helper** | It is the people of Abraham who rebel against Abraham in support of the king and their idolatry. |
| **Value-object** | Trial of Abraham to cover up the idols' inability and also to maintain the religion of idolatry. |

**Table 5-1. Narrative Propositions**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Descriptive proposition** | Nimrod and the other pagans come together to try Abraham. |
| **Modal proposition** | The king and many other pagans despite realizing the truth of Abraham’s words and their mistake in worshiping the idols tried to judge Abraham. |
| **Multiple proposition** | Nimrod and other pagans condemned Abraham to be burned. |

**Table 5-2. Narrative Syntagmes**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Contractual syntagme** | The idolatrous people vowed to severely punish anyone who broke the idols. |
| **Performative syntagme** | The court ordered the burning of Prophet Abraham. |
| **Disjunctive syntagme** | Although the direction of this scene of the story goes in the favor of Nimrod, it has a negative direction. |

**Sixth Position: Abraham on fire**

Prophet Abraham was threatened to be burnt by the fire. Nimrod ordered to prepare a great fire and cast Abraham into it. But the fire became cool and harmless for him by God’s will and their plot was nullified (Surah Al- Anbiya, 69-70).

قُلْنَا يَا نَارُ كُونِي بَرْدًا وَسَلَامًا عَلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ (69) وَأَرَادُوا بِهِ كَيْدًا فَجَعَلْنَاهُمُ الْأَخْسَرِينَ (70).

*We said, "O Fire! Be thou cool, and (a means of) safety for Abraham!" (69). Then they sought a stratagem against him: but We made them the ones that lost most! (Surah Al- Anbiya, 70).*

**Table 6. The Abraham (AS) narrative’s actantial structure**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Subject** | Nimrod and the idolatrous people. |
| **Receiver** | It is Abraham who is condemned to death. |
| **Sender** | Supporting paganism. |
| **Opponent** | The will of God Almighty to save his faithful servants. |
| **Helper** | There are two types of helpers in this situation. The first refers to the people who gather a lot of firewood and light a big fire to throw Abraham into it following Nimrod. The second refers to God Almighty that He orders the fire to cool down and harmless to Abraham and neutralizes their plot. |
| **Value-object** | Abraham became a lesson so that no one would insult the idols and worship God. |

**Table 6-1. Narrative Propositions**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Descriptive proposition** | Nimrod orders the people to light a big fire to Abraham’s trial. |
| **Modal proposition** | Nimrod and his idolatrous people seek to burn Abraham in the fire. |
| **Multiple proposition** | Abraham is thrown into the fire. |

**Table 6-2. Narrative Syntagmes**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Contractual syntagme** | Nimrod decides to burn Abraham in the fire. |
| **Performative syntagme** | Abraham is thrown into the fire and Nimrod carried out his decision. |
| **Disjunctive syntagme** | In this proposition, the direction of movement went from negative to positive. Due to the cooling of the fire on Abraham, the plan of Nimrod was defeated. Therefore, many pagans became theist by watching this scene. |

**Seventh Position: Abraham at the Altar**

After fulfilling his mission in the land of Babylon, Abraham migrated from there. Since he did not have a child, he asks God to give him a righteous child, and God gives him the good news of a righteous child:

## *«فَبَشَّرْنَاهُ بِغُلَامٍ حَلِيمٍ» (Surah Saffat, 101)*

*So We gave him the good news of a boy ready to suffer and forbear (Surah Saffat, 101).*

After a while, his prayer was answered and he had a son named Ishmael. Ishmael is just a teenager whom Abraham dreams of sacrificing. The Imam discusses the matter with his son and Ishmael also says that this is a divine will and they must submit to the will of God:

*فَلَمَّا بَلَغَ مَعَهُ السَّعْيَ قَالَ يَا بُنَيَّ إِنِّي أَرَى فِي الْمَنَامِ أَنِّي أَذْبَحُكَ فَانْظُرْ مَاذَا تَرَى قَالَ يَا أَبَتِ افْعَلْ مَا تُؤْمَرُ سَتَجِدُنِي إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ مِنَ الصَّابِرِينَ Surah Saffat, 102)).*

*Then, when [the son] reached [the age of] [serious] work with him, he said: O my son! I see in vision that I offer thee in sacrifice: Now see what thy view is!” [The son] said: “O my father! Do as thou art commanded: thou will find me, if Allah so wills one practicing Patience and constancy!” (Surah Saffat, 102).*

When he takes him to the altar, the devil repeatedly tempts him that he is your only child. Lest you do so, yet Abraham did not succumb to the temptations of Satan. But as soon as he tried to slaughter him, he was told that you had accomplished your mission. We wanted to test you, and you succeeded in this test:

*فَلَمَّا أَسْلَمَا وَتَلَّهُ لِلْجَبِينِ 103)) وَنَادَيْنَاهُ أَنْ يَا إِبْرَاهِيمُ 104)) قَدْ صَدَّقْتَ الرُّؤْيَا إِنَّا كَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي الْمُحْسِنِينَ 105)) إِنَّ هَذَا لَهُوَ الْبَلَاءُ الْمُبِينُ 106)) وَفَدَيْنَاهُ بِذِبْحٍ عَظِيمٍ (Surah Saffat, 107).*

*So when they had both submitted their wills [to Allah], and he had laid him prostrate on his forehead [for sacrifice] (103). We called out to him “O Abraham (104). Thou hast already fulfilled the vision!” – Thus indeed do We reward those who do right (105).  For this was obviously a trial (106). And We ransomed him with a momentous sacrifice (Surah Saffat, 107).*

**Table 7. The Abraham (AS) narrative’s actantial structure**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Subject** | It is Abraham. |
| **Receiver** | On the one hand, it is Abraham who obeys the divine commands, and on the other hand, it is Ishmael who accepts to be sacrificed in the way of God. |
| **Sender** | The faith of Abraham and his son in God and submission to His will. |
| **Opponent** | It is Satan who tries to stop Abraham from fulfilling his divine mission by tempting him. |
| **Helper** | It is God Almighty who saves Abraham's son by realizing Abraham's sincerity in obeying God's commands. |
| **Value-object** | Obedience to divine commands. |

**Table 7-1. Narrative Propositions**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Descriptive proposition** | Abraham dreams that he is sacrificing his son Ishmael. He discusses the matter with him and he tells his father that he must obey God's commands. |
| **Modal proposition** | Abraham intends to sacrifice his son Ishmael for God’s sake. |
| **Multiple proposition** | Abraham takes his son to the altar to sacrifice him. |

**Table 7-2. Narrative Syntagmes**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Contractual syntagme** | Abraham made a covenant to always obey God's commands. |
| **Performative syntagme** | Abraham puts the child on the ground to fulfill his promise to obey God's commands by sacrificing him. |
| **Disjunctive syntagme** | In this scene, the direction of movement went from positive to positive. Because both Abraham will be proud in the divine test and Ishmael will be saved by the will of God. |

**Eighth position: Building the house of God**

Prophet Abraham (AS) has gone through difficult stages in propagating the divine religion since he was sent as a prophet. From the disobedience of his father and people to being condemned to be thrown into the fire, as well as the great divine test in sacrificing his son Ishmael, who in all these stages, with the help of God Almighty, came out proud. Now the last divine command; That is, he was told to build the house of God for the worship of the people. This issue is mentioned in verses of Surahs Al-Baqara and Hajj:

*وَإِذْ بَوَّأْنَا لِإِبْرَاهِيمَ مَكَانَ الْبَيْتِ أَنْ لَا تُشْرِكْ بِي شَيْئًا وَطَهِّرْ بَيْتِيَ لِلطَّائِفِينَ وَالْقَائِمِينَ وَالرُّكَّعِ السُّجُودِ (26) وَأَذِّنْ فِي النَّاسِ بِالْحَجِّ يَأْتُوكَ رِجَالًا وَعَلَى كُلِّ ضَامِرٍ يَأْتِينَ مِنْ كُلِّ فَجٍّ عَمِيقٍ.­(Surah Hajj, 27)­*

*Behold! We gave the site, to Abraham, of the (Sacred) House, (saying): "Associate not anything (in worship) with Me; and sanctify My House for those who compass it round, or stand up, or bow, or prostrate themselves (therein in prayer) (26). "And proclaim the Pilgrimage among men: they will come to thee on foot and (mounted) on every kind of camel, lean on account of journeys through deep and distant mountain highways” (Surah Hajj, 27).*

*وَإِذْ يَرْفَعُ إِبْرَاهِيمُ الْقَوَاعِدَ مِنَ الْبَيْتِ وَإِسْمَاعِيلُ رَبَّنَا تَقَبَّلْ مِنَّا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ (127) رَبَّنَا وَاجْعَلْنَا مُسْلِمَيْنِ لَكَ وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِنَا أُمَّةً مُسْلِمَةً لَكَ وَأَرِنَا مَنَاسِكَنَا وَتُبْ عَلَيْنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ (128) رَبَّنَا وَابْعَثْ فِيهِمْ رَسُولًا مِنْهُمْ يَتْلُو عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِكَ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ (*Surah Al-Baqara, 129*).*

*And remember when Abraham raised the foundation of the House with Ishmael, both praying, “Our Lord! Accept ˹this˺ from us. You are indeed the All-Hearing, All-Knowing (127). Our Lord! Make us both ˹fully˺ submit to You1 and from our descendants a nation that will submit to you. Show us our rituals, and turn to us in grace. You are truly the Accepter of Repentance, Most Merciful (128). Our Lord! Raise from among them a messenger who will recite to them Your revelations, teach them the Book and wisdom, and purify them. Indeed, You ˹alone˺ are the Almighty, All-Wise.” (*Surah Al-Baqara, 129).

**Table 8. The Abraham (AS) narrative’s actantial structure**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Subject** | It is Abraham. |
| **Receiver** | It was Abraham who was commissioned to build the house of God. |
| **Sender** | The submission of Abraham to the command of God Almighty. |
| **Opponent** | The story does not have any opponent. |
| **Helper** | God Almighty and Ishmael. |
| **Value-object** | Building a house of God for worshipers. |

**Table 8-1. Narrative Propositions**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Descriptive proposition** | Abraham is commissioned by God Almighty to build the house of God for worshipers, and Ishmael helps him in this important matter. |
| **Modal proposition** | Abraham intends to build the house of God. |
| **Multiple proposition** | Abraham and his son (Ishmael) build the house of God. |

**Table 8-2. Narrative Syntagmes**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Contractual syntagme** | Abraham made a covenant to always obey God's commands. |
| **Performative syntagme** | Abraham, with the help of his son, built the house of God and asked Him to grant them success so that they would always submit to His command and raise a great Prophet from their descendants. |
| **Disjunctive syntagme** | In this scene, the movement is from positive to positive; Because both Ibrahim succeeds in building the house of God and his prayers are answered, and from his descendants, a great prophet (Prophet Mohammad (PBUH)) is appointed to guide the people. |

**Conclusion**

The narratological study of the story of Prophet Abraham in the Holy Quran based on the pattern of the narrative structure of Grimas showed that:

In some situations of the story, the number of subjects is less than six and this does not contradict the above theory. Subjects fall into one of the actantial categories according to the analysis of the action element and its description. In some situations, the subject, the receiver, the sender, and even the helper match the main character of the story so that one person has all of these roles.

In some cases, each of the subjects has a confrontational relationship with the other. There are relationships of contradiction, contrast, and difference among them. Understanding the structure of the text occurs in the shadow of recognizing these confrontations. Sometimes the main character has a relationship of desire and passion with the other characters and in some other cases, the main character is in the struggle with them.

Subjects besides the characters can also include abstract concepts and inanimate objects through the contractual, performative, and disjunctive sequences.

The results show that the story of Prophet Abraham in the Holy Quran matches the structural pattern of Greimas. The adapting of its stories to contemporary theories of fiction, even though centuries have passed since the revelation of this divine book, is one of the miraculous aspects of the Qur’an.

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