CHAPTER FIVE

FIGURES OF FORM

5.1. Figures of Form

Our aim in this chapter is to examine how he handles the figures of form in order to have further insight into Isaiah's mind through various literary devices of form that often reinforce the meaning generated by tropes. Having examined in detail, imagery in chapter 2, the most dominant figurative mode, that is, imagery, simile, and metaphor and other figures of meaning in chapter 3 and 4, the present chapter shifts the focus to the figures of form, namely, colloquialism, rhetorical question, quotation, repetition / alliteration, rhythm, euphemism, litotes, antithesis, climax / anticlimax, symploce, anaphora, epistrophe etc. All these figures add and expand Isaiah's stylistic dimension, imparting it a literary beauty par excellence in the whole range of literature. A detailed discussion/ examination gives an insight into Isaiah's literary temperament and to a large extent speaks volumes of his psychic and perceptual self. Detailed discussion of each figure follows.

5.2. Colloquialism
Isaiah doesn't seem to share Thomas Gray's viewpoint that "The language of the age is never the language of poetry." (Leech 1969: 9) The text abounds in innumerable instances of colloquialism. A colloquial word, phrase or expression is one in everyday use in speech and writing. It is remarkable for plain, and relaxed style that Isaiah has subtly and successfully exploited in order to bring home to his reader the profound divine message.

In the following verse, presence of yes gives an apparent effect of the statement being delivered orally.

Yes, LORD, walking in the way of your laws, we wait for you; your name and renown are the desire of our hearts.

26:8

In one of the most serious messages of judgement is used a colloquial form, viz, See. Thus, it delivers not only a formal message but also persuades the readers and influences their mind.

See, the Lord has one who is powerful and
strong. Like a hailstorm and a destructive wind, like a driving rain and a flooding downpour, he will throw it forcefully to the ground.

28:2

For communicative effect the forthcoming verse begins with colloquial words to respond to the previous statement. Very well then is a sarcastic continuation of v. 10.

Very well then, with foreign lips and strange tongues God will speak to this people,

28:11

Accentuating the previous statement, the colloquial yes entails the readers' assent.

and for the land of my people, a land overgrown with thorns and briers—yes, mourn for all houses of merriment and for this city of revelry.
Similar effect is obtained with the re-affirmative, *yes*:

I, even I, have spoken: *yes*, I have called him. I will bring him, and he will succeed in his mission.

5.3. Rhetorical Question

Rhetorical questions are questions that seek no answer but in fact, constitute an emphatic statement: Isaiah seems to have not only a flair for it but also the skill to handle it in many fashions. It is remarkable that Isaiah chooses this device which is very common in every day parley. Surprisingly, the main three categories, single, paired and clustered, are to be found in the case of rhetorical questions as well. Thus, the underlying pattern of his discourse or the way of handling various figures of meaning gets across to this figure of form as well.
5.3.1. Single Rhetorical Question

God's disgust is uttered by a single rhetorical question. God abhors the Israelites' hypocritical and meaningless service to him.

"The multitude of your sacrifices—what are they to me?" says the LORD. "I have more than enough of burnt offerings, of rams and the fat of fattened animals; I have no pleasure in the blood of bulls and lambs and goats.

1:11

The rhetorical question is followed by the answer in the above example. There are some rhetorical questions without any answer as in the example below:

When you come to appear before me, who has asked this of you, this trampling of my courts?

1:12
5.3.2. Paired Rhetorical Question

Paired rhetorical questions extend and evolve the contents: in the following, the first question confirms his own efforts for His vineyard and the second states His expectation and his reason for disillusionment based on that.

What more could have been done for my vineyard than I have done for it? When I looked for good grapes, why did it yield only bad?

5:4

Paired rhetorical questions may be presenting the same semantic core for the purpose of emphasis: the first one and the second one have the same semantic core, that is, no one compares God in the following:

To whom, then, will you compare God?
What image will you compare him to?

40:18

In paired rhetorical question, a balancing technique, that is, a
supplementary statement for the questions, is employed.

This is what the LORD says: "Where is your mother’s certificate of divorce with which I sent her away? Or to which of my creditors did I sell you? Because of your sins you were sold; because of your transgressions your mother was sent away.

50:1

Here, the two rhetorical questions are followed by supplementing answers. This device seems to play the role of specifying and clarifying the message which Isaiah wants to deliver.

Another example of the same kind is:

‘Why have we fasted,’ they say, ‘and you have not seen it? Why have we humbled ourselves, and you have not noticed?’ “Yet on the day of your fasting, you do as you please and exploit all your workers.

58:3
5.3.3. **Clustered Rhetorical Question**

Rhetorical questions in cluster have the basic structure of three or four or more consecutive questions.

In the following, Isaiah uses clustered rhetorical questions to emphasize the greatness of God which is manifested in the next verse:

\[
\text{Do you not know? Have you not heard?}
\text{Has it not been told you from the beginning? Have you not understood since the earth was founded?}
\]

40:21

His impetuous reprimand is in two-fold questions within a question: *Sneer* and *stick out your tongue* are in one rhetorical question, and *a brood of rebels* and *offspring of liars* also in the same:

\[
\text{Whom are you mocking? At whom do you sneer and stick out your tongue? Are you not a brood of rebels, the offspring of liars?}
\]
Three rhetorical questions hammer on one theme of fast to make readers' review their way of fasting.

Is this the kind of fast I have chosen, only a day for a man to humble himself? Is it only for bowing one's head like a reed and for lying on sackcloth and ashes? Is that what you call a fast, a day acceptable to the LORD?

To sum up, Isaiah uses mainly paired and clustered questions consisting of three; in some instances two, three or more rhetorical questions appearing in succession have different meaning whereas in some cases the same meaning is conveyed.

5.4. Quotation

Isaiah has flair for quotation which appears from beginning to
the end and lends a dramatic impact to his vision of judgement and punishment and salvation to the Israelites. The quotations, besides imparting dramatic aura, adds to the realism of the narrative and its colloquial nature helps the reader to grasp the import easily.

5.4.1. Direct Quotation

Use of direct quotation is another aspect of Isaiah's stylistic range. Isaiah shows a fascination for using quotations in a variety of ways in the text. It is remarkable to note that he not only quotes God's utterances and other people's but even of non living things such as trees, grapes etc. His fascination for direct quotes is evident from the very fact that he quotes even what he himself said which he could have easily repeated in an indirect form. Further, the quote within quote also substantiates this observation. Direct quotation is one of the dominant formal devices of Isaiah's style.

God's word is quoted. This not only creates dramatic effect but also augments authenticity of God's authorization to Isaiah.

With it he touched my mouth and said, "See, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away and your sin atoned for."

6:7

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In this example, God's direct speech and action to Isaiah is described. This disintegrates monotony which may get formed in epic poetry as a routine.

The previous quotation is then developed into a dialogue, dramatically, enclosing God's and his own words.

Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?" And I said, "Here am I. Send me!"

6:8

Throughout the text there is hardly any example where God's speech is not quoted directly. This is perhaps because of Isaiah's preoccupation with direct quotes.

For dramatic effect of narration and emphasis on the themes Isaiah quotes from even possible events which have not yet happened in reality.

In that day you will say: "I will praise you, O LORD. Although you were angry with me, your anger has turned away and you
have comforted me.

12:1

An example of a quote from the previous rulers who were in the Hades is below:

They will respond, they will say to you,
"You also have become weak, as we are; you have become like us."

14:10

*They* ridicule the Babylonian tyrants which fall from power.

Its sarcastic quote brings dramatic effect as if the Babylonian rulers are being actually humiliated in the hell.

A direct quotation from the Babylonians shows their pride. Here, he could have used a metaphor or a simile, but he uses a quotation, conveying the same meaning with more dramatic immediacy.

You have trusted in your wickedness and
have said, 'No one sees me.' Your wisdom and knowledge mislead you when you say to yourself, 'I am, and there is none besides me.'

47:10

In fact, ch.47, the whole chapter is God's direct quotation. Isaiah observes objectivity by using the LORD SAYS to achieve authencity through distancing.

Another example of another person's quote which reveals misery dramatically is:

In that day seven women will take hold of one man and say, "We will eat our own food and provide our own clothes; only let us be called by your name. Take away our disgrace!"

4:1

Those days all men are lost in battles; so seven women hold one man for marriage to take away their shame.
Such a dramatic vision is found in a double quotation. By using quotations, if we consider economy, Isaiah uses more words than necessary, but he uses them for the communicative force and he seems to be well aware of this fact:

Look, here comes a man in a chariot with a team of horses. And he gives back the answer: 'Babylon has fallen, has fallen! All the images of its gods lie shattered on the ground!'

21:9

In a double quotation, the example as below appears as if Isaiah heard, or as if he had seen:

I took you from the ends of the earth, from its farthest corners I called you. I said, 'You are my servant'; I have chosen you and have not rejected you.

41:9

There is much charm in a quote within a quote: it seems that
Isaiah shows greater deftness in this in the second part. A casual researcher might infer from this that the second Isaiah is authored by a different person rather than interpreting it as a development in handling the quotation.

He quotes even his own words as below:

From the ends of the earth we hear singing:
"Glory to the Righteous One." But I said, "I waste away, I waste away! Woe to me! The treacherous betray! With treachery the treacherous betray!"

24:16

He makes even the pot talk for dramatic effect of narration. He compares God's sovereignty with the potter's right to make pot.

You turn things upside down, as if the potter were thought to be like the clay! Shall what is formed say to him who formed it, "He did not make me"? Can the pot say of the potter, "He knows nothing"?

29:16
5.4.2. Syntax of Quotes

In the interest of an overall dramatic effect, the syntax of quotes varies the reporting speech syntactically, lexically, and semantically.

One of the most recurrent structures is *verb* + *subject* after quotation.

"I will turn her into a place for owls and into swampland; I will sweep her with the broom of destruction," declares the LORD Almighty.

14:23

This seems to have an effect of finality. Since it is proclaimed by God, no one is to suspect or to challenge the authority of the contents.

I will hand the Egyptians over to the power of a cruel master, and a fierce king will rule over them," declares the Lord, the LORD Almighty.
In the same syntactical axis, Isaiah uses more expanded reporting speech to break the ennui, for example, from declares the LORD Almighty to declares the LORD, the LORD Almighty, from there to declares the LORD, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel.

Do not be afraid, O worm Jacob, O little Israel, for I myself will help you," declares the LORD, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel.

41:14

With the same intention, to stress the contents of a quotation, reporting speech is repeated with a little restyling, for example, says the LORD is changed to says Jacob's King.

"Present your case," says the LORD. "Set forth your arguments," says Jacob’s King.

41:21
A different syntactic arrangement is one in which the *reporting speech* appears first followed by reported speech. This stresses and establishes, Isaiah's authority as a prophet:

This is what the LORD says to me: "I will remain quiet and will look on from my dwelling place, like shimmering heat in the sunshine, like a cloud of dew in the heat of harvest."

18:4

*Verb + subject* reporting speech placed between the quoted words regardless of their completion of the sentence. This seems to aim at drawing the readers' attention to the mode of his delivering or writing his message.

"In that day," declares the LORD Almighty, "the peg driven into the firm place will give way; it will be sheared off and will fall, and the load hanging on it will be cut down."

The LORD has spoken.

22:25
New ways of reporting speech are found in a few cases.

An oracle concerning Moab: Ar in Moab is ruined, destroyed in a night! Kir in Moab is ruined, destroyed in a night!

15:1

Here, oracle is the speaker and connotes that the following verse or verses may be within quotation. Henceforth, it takes the role of the reporting speech, helping readers to prepare a serious stance.

A voice of one calling: "In the desert prepare the way for the LORD; make straight in the wilderness a highway for our God.

40:3

Similar effect is achieved by this reporting speech, A voice of one calling in the example above.

The following examples show that the reporting speech is missing, therefore reader/listener has to ascertain who the
"Give us counsel, render a decision. Make your shadow like night—at high noon. Hide the fugitives, do not betray the refugees. Let the Moabite fugitives stay with you; be their shelter from the destroyer." The oppressor will come to an end, and destruction will cease; the aggressor will vanish from the land.

16:3,4

Isaiah talks about Moabites' women. Thus, it should be their speech.

Another example of the missing reporting speech is:

Or else let them come to me for refuge; let them make peace with me, yes, let them make peace with me."

27:5

Referring to 27:3, we ascertain that it should be God's speech.
Like this, elsewhere too, the reporting speech is in the present tense. It gives the impression that the whole text is composed at a single stretch of time contradicting the critics' statement that the text has been composed over a time of half a century. It is thus very effective in imparting unity and immediacy to the text.

5.4.3. Present Tense

A close study of the text reveals an unusual craftsman (Isaiah) at work — a craftsman who has developed a unique conversational and unrhythmic form to convey the complex message of God's judgement and salvation. The dramatic quality of the text is further enhanced by the use of simple present tense which seems to restore the historical fact into something living and immediate happening before the eyes. It is remarkable to note that Isaiah has a flair for using simple present tense instead of the past. Because of this, his statements acquire an immediacy of appeal as if he were watching the events while with the text. Thus, historical present tense lends a seeming effect of things happening now and here rather than then and there. Direct quotations, besides adding authenticity and dramatic aura, augment the overall effect of the present tense and impart liveliness and vivacity to the narration.

The present tense, thus, is a very important aspect of the
dramatic effect of the text. Simple present tense or present continuous tense also imparts some kind of force to the intended message. He uses the historical present as well. The example below, when read out creates the appearance of terror before its readers on account of the present tense narration.

An oracle·concerning the Desert by the Sea:
Like whirlwinds sweeping through the southland, an invader comes from the desert, from a land of terror.

To conclude, his narration is dramatic narration and it is achieved by the use of present tense besides direct quotation.

5.5. Repetition /Tautology / Pleonasm

Repetition is an essential unifying element in nearly all poetry and much prose. It may consist of sound, particular syllables, and words, phrase, etc. Explicitly, repetition of the same lexis appears in the form of anaphora, epistrophe and symplece, and as repetition of ideas in tautology and pleonasm etc.
5.5.1. **Anaphora**

Anaphora, also called epanaphora, refers to the repetition of the same word at the beginning of successive clauses or sentences; it is deployed to highlight descriptive and emotional effect.

Isaiah describes how those who hope in God will renew their strength, using anaphora effectively as below:

but those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.

40:31

The words, *They will*, are repeated three times to intensify the experience.

Who told of this from the beginning, so we could know, or beforehand, so we could say, 'He was right'? No one told of this, no one foretold it, no one heard any words from
The words, *he who* and *I have* are repeated to drive home the idea of a God Creator and His sovereignty to his listeners.

But now, this is what the LORD says—*he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel:* "Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have summoned you by name; you are mine.

5.5.2. **Epistrophe**

Epistrophe is the opposite of anaphora; it consists of a repetition of the last words in successive lines, clauses or sentences.

The last words of the first line *is ruined* are repeated in the second line, and *destroyed in a night* are also repeated.

An oracle concerning Moab: Ar in Moab is
ruined, destroyed in a night! Kir in Moab is ruined, destroyed in a night!

5.5.3. **Symploce**

Symploce, a combination of anaphora and epistrophe, involves repetition of one set of words at the beginning of a series of sentences or verse lines and of another set at the end.

Isaiah wants to emphasize the expression *no one* which is used as an object of the first clause. This is repeated in the second and third clauses.

I look but there is no one—no one among them to give counsel, no one to give answer when I ask them.

41:28

5.5.4. **Tautology**

Tautology, whose original meaning in Greek is *the same saying* is a term for redundant words or ideas. Its proposition or semantic core is same. For instance, *I can see* and *I can observe*. In these two sentences the same proposition is repeated.
The infant will play near the hole of the cobra, and the young child put his hand into the viper's nest.

11:8

An example below shows apparent tautology. The verbs stagger, reel, are befuddled, stumble share the same semantic core. This presents a strong reinforced feeling of the wanton life.

And these also stagger from wine and reel from beer: Priests and prophets stagger from beer and are befuddled with wine; they reel from beer, they stagger when seeing visions, they stumble when rendering decisions.

28:7

Another remarkable example of tautology consisting of nouns and verbs together is given below:

The grass withers and the flowers fall,
because the breath of the LORD blows on them. Surely the people are grass.

40:7

The nouns, grass and flowers have the same semantic core, that is, short life spanned one. It combines with verbs which share the semantic core withers and fall. This brings stronger impact on the readers.

"Whom have you so dreaded and feared that you have been false to me, and have neither remembered me nor pondered this in your hearts? Is it not because I have long been silent that you do not fear me?

57:11

The words, dreaded and feared, remembered and pondered have the same semantic core. They are used repeatedly to stress the fact that people are false.

5.5.5. Pleonasm

Pleonasm means superfluity in Greek. (Leech 1969: 137) It is
redundancy of words; using more words for expression, e.g. a daughter of Zion for Jerusalem or I can see with my own eyes. Isaiah also uses pleonasm to reinforce the contents to make his readers experience their reality.

An example is:

"Sing, O barren woman, you who never bore a child; burst into song, shout for joy, you who were never in labor; because more are the children of the desolate woman than of her who has a husband," says the LORD.

54:1

Barren woman is, needless to say, the one who never bore a child. Despite this knowledge, Isaiah gives this supplementary explanation.

5.6. Alliteration / Rhythm / Tone

5.6.1. Alliteration

Alliteration is the repetition of consonants, specially at the beginning of the word. It is a very old device in verse(older
than rhyme and is common in verse generally). However, Isaiah does not have many examples of alliteration in the New International Version which is understandable -- as a property of the lexis, it is language specific and may or may not show in translation. A few examples of alliteration are as follows:

"The multitude of your sacrifices—what are they to me?" says the LORD. "I have more than enough of burnt offerings, of rams and the fat of fattened animals; I have no pleasure in the blood of bulls and lambs and goats.

1:11

whistles for those at the ends of the earth.
Here they come, swiftly and speedily!

5:26

Here, God's judgement through other neighbour countries on Israel is verbalized and rushed by alliteration of swiftly and speedily. The sounds s, e and i stimulate the readers' feeling of the blitz of judgement of God.
The effect of alliteration is noticed in describing a sudden situation:

Oh, the raging of many nations— they rage
like the raging sea! Oh, the uproar of the
peoples— they roar like the roaring of great
waters!

17:12

The repetition of consonant / of raging sea and the roaring
of great water sounds to produce the rapid movement of waves.

but if you resist and rebel, you will be
devoured by the sword.” For the mouth of
the LORD has spoken.

1:20

In the example above, alliteration appears in succession, resist
and rebel.

5.6.2. Rhythm

Rhythm is flowing in Greek. In verse or prose, it is the
movement or sense of movement communicated by the
arrangement of stressed and unstressed syllables and by the
duration of the syllables. In verse the rhythm depends on the
metrical pattern. In verse the rhythm is regular; in prose it may
or may not be regular. (Cuddon 1991: 798) However, Isaiah is
written in free verse, which shows that the author seems to
believe in realism of his discourse, and accordingly its rhythm is
varied. In fact, the variety of rhythm is remarkable and the
sound reinforces and intensifies the ultimate message with
unusual force and immediacy. His rhythm seems to be adjusted
to the changing themes.

From v.14-18 is one rhythm, which is God's aggressive tone.

"For a long time I have kept silent, I have
been quiet and held myself back. But now,
like a woman in childbirth, I cry out, I gasp
and pant. I will lay waste the mountains
and hills and dry up all their vegetation; I
will turn rivers into islands and dry up the
pools. I will lead the blind by ways they
have not known; along unfamiliar paths I
will guide them; I will turn the darkness
into light before them and make the rough
places smooth. These are the things I will
do; I will not forsake them. But those who
trust in idols, who say to images, 'You are our gods,' will be turned back in utter shame. "Hear, you deaf; look, you blind, and see!"

42:14-18

5.6.3. Tone

On account of the rhythm, a certain tone is generated, that explicates the message. The tone at the beginning of the verse below is slow; slowly it hurries towards the end and its tonal difference saves the narration from monotony.

You have forgotten God your Savior; you have not remembered the Rock, your fortress. Therefore, though you set out the finest plants and plant imported vines, though on the day you set them out, you make them grow, and on the morning when you plant them, you bring them to bud, yet the harvest will be as nothing in the day of disease and incurable pain.

17:10-11
In most of the cases Isaiah uses commanding tone even if statements are persuasive, impatient, polite and sarcastic etc. Tone, as a matter of fact, is the mark of Isaiah's full understanding of the situation. In the example below, O Jacob, O Israel produce a persuasive tone, but God's utterance in the direct quotation is commanding. Thus, a variety of tones are juxtaposed in the same verse.

But now, this is what the LORD says--he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: "Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have summoned you by name; you are mine.

43:1

Direct quotation at places breaks monotony and adds to the tone. For example:

I will say to the north, 'Give them up!' and to the south, 'Do not hold them back.' Bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the ends of the earth--

43:6
The verse quoted above shows Isaiah’s command over the use of typical conversational tone.

5.7. Euphemism

Euphemism refers to the substitution of a mild and pleasant expression for harsh and blunt ones such as to pass away for to die. It is a part of tact and proper communication. Isaiah being highly learned quite often uses euphemism to show his mild and meditative temperament. Only at a few places, he uses harsh and pungent remarks such as:

Therefore the grave enlarges its appetite and opens its mouth without limit; into it will descend their nobles and masses with all their brawlers and revelers.

5:14

The grave enlarges its appetite and opens its mouth without limits mean euphemistically that they all will perish.
Similarly, another example below shows the use of euphemism; *fall into a pit* is a concrete but mild expression of curse. But he does not speak out the curse overtly.

*Whoever flees at the sound of terror will fall into a pit; whoever climbs out of the pit will be caught in a snare. The floodgates of the heavens are opened, the foundations of the earth shake.*

24:18

Isaiah seems to have affection for people, so he does not say, *you are going to die.* Instead, he uses euphemistic expression, *shroud* and *sheet* which connote *death* as in the example below:

*On this mountain he will destroy the shroud that enfolds all peoples, the sheet that covers all nations;*

25:7

This euphemism is not limited to negative locutions alone but
is used in positive ones as well.

The moon will shine like the sun, and the sunlight will be seven times brighter, like the light of seven full days, when the LORD binds up the bruises of his people and heals the wounds he inflicted.

30:26

Here, the LORD binds up the bruises...... implies that God consoles all irrespective of their status in society. Interestingly and unexceptionably, whenever Isaiah uses euphemistic expression, he employs visible and concrete lexis for abstract concepts.

So he poured out on them his burning anger, the violence of war. It enveloped them in flames, yet they did not understand: it consumed them, but they did not take it to heart.

42:25
Poured out on them his burning anger is supplemented by the following words violence of war, which indicates God's judgement.

Those who walk uprightly enter into peace; they find rest as they lie in death.

57:2

His euphemistic expression reveals his education, politeness and patience.

Behind your doors and your doorposts you have put your pagan symbols. Forsaking me, you uncovered your bed, you climbed into it and opened it wide; you made a pact with those whose beds you love, and you looked on their nakedness.

57:8

Of their idol worshipping, Isaiah says that their shame is revealed. In this speech, he controls his anger and communicates with circumlocution:
"Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke?"

58:6

Besides the purpose of emphasis, the euphemistic way of expression has to do with the object or communication. He says, "not too short to save" for enough power to save and, "nor his ear too dull to hear" for enough audibility to hear. This euphemism makes readers feel that God's real power is best explained this way.

5.8. Litotes

Litotes, a characteristic device of old English poetry, often takes the form of a negative phrase or statement used to express the opposite: whether praising eg. she is no fool or damning eg. she is no oil painting.

All the tables are covered with vomit and there is not a spot without filth.
Isaiah highlights the first clause, *all the tables are covered with vomit* by exploiting litotes for the second clause *there is not a spot without filth* and thus he reasserts the amount of vomits.

Another example is:

"Assyria will fall by a sword that is not of man; a sword, not of mortals, will devour them. They will flee before the sword and their young men will be put to forced labor.

Isaiah could have mentioned simply *God's for not of man* and *not of mortals*. However, he exploits litotes to emphasize the tenor.

Surely the arm of the LORD is not too short to save, nor his ear too dull to hear.
Through the litotes in the above example, Isaiah emphasizes the physical power of God. Litotes, thus, is another literary device used frequently in the text for variety and emphasis.

5.9. Antithesis

Antithesis effectively contrasts ideas by contrasting LEXICAL ITEMS in a formal structure of PARALLELISM. An extended example involving explicit ANTONYMY occurs at the opening of Dickens's *A Tale of Two Cities*: "it was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness."(Wales 1990: 29)

Such examples are numerous in *The Book of Isaiah*.

5.9.1. Single Antithesis

Isaiah's bubbling ideas are presented with pleonasm in many sentences or phrases or lexis, and he concludes his prophesy with an antithetical clause or a sentence. As a stylistic feature, single antithesis is used less than paired or clustered antithesis. Examples are as below:
He dug it up and cleared it of stones and planted it with the choicest vines. He built a watchtower in it and cut out a winepress as well. Then he looked for a crop of good grapes, but it yielded only bad fruit.

5:2

Isaiah uses extended antithesis: to support the first idea he looked for a crop of good grapes, he portrays all the activities of a farmer. As against this strenuous description, he brings a simple antithetical statement.

This type of conclusive antithesis is found in the last part of the book along with balance:

The ransomed of the LORD will return. They will enter Zion with singing; everlasting joy will crown their heads. Gladness and joy will overtake them, and sorrow and sighing will flee away.

51:11

Joy of the returning people is described in many sentences whereas antithetical statement of sorrow is limited within a
sentence conclusively. It seems that Isaiah exploits more positive statement and fewer negative ones to accentuate the particular tenor.

More lexical antithesis is found in antonymic contrasts:

Woe to those who rise early in the morning to run after their drinks, who stay up late at night till they are inflamed with wine.

5:11

Here, rise with stay up, and early with late, and morning with night are contrasted in antithetical use. With two clauses but within a verse, such multiple antithesis of lexis is often employed.

5.9.2. Paired Antithesis

Isaiah's prophetic message begins with an impressive antithesis in pair:

Hear, O heavens! Listen, O earth! For the LORD has spoken: "I reared children and brought them up, but they have rebelled
Here, nouns and verbs are in antithetical use respectively, viz, *heavens* and *earth*, and *reared...brought up* and *rebelled*.

Remarkably, Isaiah matches different parts of speech for antithetical stress. This shows how Isaiah is an adroit writer.

In that day the deaf will hear the words of the scroll, and out of gloom and darkness the eyes of the blind will see.

29:18

Here, subjective cases *the deaf* and *the eyes of the blind* are contrasted with the verbs, *hear* and *see* for antithetical effect.

The land mourns and wastes away, Lebanon is ashamed and withers; Sharon is like the Arabah, and Bashan and Carmel drop their leaves.

33:9
In the same way, Isaiah varies parts of speech for antithetical effect. Another example below shows that verbs and adjectives are semantically contrasted: *spend* and *satisfy* are in antithetical use with *the hungry* and *the oppressed* respectively.

and if you spend yourselves on behalf of the hungry and satisfy the needs of the oppressed, then your light will rise in the darkness, and your night will become like the noonday.

58:10

5.9.3. **Antithesis in Cluster**

In some places, he selects a series of images which are antithetical and in cluster. They are from the same sources in many cases achieving as we have already noted a condensation of his ideas. The noticeable and exquisite examples are given below:

The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling together; and
a little child will lead them.

The cow will feed with the bear, their young will lie down together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox. The infant will play near the hole of the cobra, and the young child put his hand into the viper's nest.

11:6-8

In the examples above, Isaiah uses the antithesis of 7 nouns of ferocious animals with 8 nouns of domestic animals and child. With careful observation it is found that they are not roughly contrasted but fastidiously done: There is to eat and to be eaten relation between each pair.

His usage of antithesis covers in a vast range not only animals but men too:

it will be the same for priest, as for people, for master as for servant, for mistress as for maid, for seller as for buyer, for borrower as for lender, for debtor as for creditor.

24:2
Antithesis with two contrasted images drives home the theme to the readers remarkably.

When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze.

43:2

The theme looks obviously God’s protection. It is portrayed with two pairs of antithesis of waters and fire. These two present the tenor of any hardships.

Other two pairs of antithesis are:

and if you spend yourselves on behalf of the hungry and satisfy the needs of the oppressed, then your light will rise in the darkness, and your night will become like the noonday.

58:10
These antithetical pairs show a contrast of visibility; *light* and *night*, and *darkness* and *noonday*. This brings about the effect of a contrast of visual sense.

One step ahead in the verse, three pairs of antithesis foreground the theme of the verse, viz, suffering and satisfaction.

"My servants will eat, but you will go hungry; my servants will drink, but you will go thirsty; my servants will rejoice, but you will be put to shame.

65:13

In the example above, *eat* and *go hungry*, *drink* and *go thirsty*, and *rejoice* and *put to shame* make the theme illustrious.

5.10. Climax/Anticlimax

Climax is a Greek word which means *ladder*. It is a dramatic word which includes persuasion. It presents the argument in an ascending order of importance reserving the climactic point for
the last.

A farmer's activity is developed climactically in the example below:

He dug it up and cleared it of stones and planted it with the choicest vines. He built a watchtower in it and cut out a winepress as well. Then he looked for a crop of good grapes, but it yielded only bad fruit.

5:2

Here, dug, clear, plant, built and cut out show serial progress in farming.

In the example below climax, rhetorical question and symbolism, three of them work simultaneously, which shows Isaiah's ease in handling various figures together. Here, God guides man systematically in all the activities which show climactical progress as the example above; plow, break up, harrow, level, sow, scatter and plant.

When a farmer plows for planting, does he
plow continually? Does he keep on breaking up and harrowing the soil? When he has leveled the surface, does he not sow caraway and scatter cummin? Does he not plant wheat in its place, barley in its plot, and spelt in its field?

28:24–25

Two different semantic fields are developed in a climax which is found not only in a series of verbs but in the phrases as well in the example below:

The moon will shine like the sun, and the sunlight will be seven times brighter, like the light of seven full days, when the LORD binds up the bruises of his people and heals the wounds he inflicted.

30:26

Here, the first group is like the sun, like the light of seven full days, and another group is binds up and heals.
A man too poor to present such an offering selects wood that will not rot. He looks for a skilled craftsman to set up an idol that will not topple.

40:20

In the example below the climax comes at the end of a chain of the humbling of the increasingly mightier kings, that is, kings will be your foster fathers, their queens your nursing mothers and they will lick the dust at your feet, etc.

Kings will be your foster fathers, and their queens your nursing mothers. They will bow down before you with their faces to the ground; they will lick the dust at your feet. Then you will know that I am the LORD: those who hope in me will not be disappointed."

49:23-24

Farming, Isaiah always seems to describe climactically without exception.
not return to it without watering the earth
and making it bud and flourish, so that it
yields seed for the sower and bread for the
eater,

55:10

Here, *bud, flourish, yields seed* and *bread* are portrayed in
climax.

Paralleled with climax, anticlimax works in a similar pattern.
Anticlimax is called *bathos* and depends on sudden lowering or
deflation from heightened tone for ironic effect. Isaiah uses it to
give vent to his bitter feelings against godless nations.

Anticlimax accentuates God’s punishment in
the example below:

....................................................

the flower becomes a ripening grape, he will
cut off the shoots with pruning knives, and
cut down and take away the spreading
branches.

18:5
Cut off, cut down and take away show anticlimactical degeneration.

This kind of climax or anticlimax reveals the writer's mind, its ordering of ideas, and it adds to the vividness of the text. Besides it shows Isaiah's faculty for keen observation and systematic description.

5.11. Flashback

Flashback is a formal feature pertaining to the arrangement of a plot. The term is probably derived from cinema and now is used to describe any scene or episode in a play, novel, story, or poem which is inserted to show events that had happened at an earlier time. Its presence in the text imparts a dramatic tension to the text.

Isaiah begins first his prophecy; he implores; "Hear, O Heavens! Listen, O earth!" and strives to convince the Israelites of the imminent judgement and punishment of God. His concern for the ultimate plight of his people seems so profound like a doting husband and his wife or doting father and his son that he completely forgets to divulge the background of his message which appears in a flashback in chapter 6. Through flashback he explains God's favor to him; God's act of chastising his tongue; God's act of establishing a covenant with him; and finally
God's command to carry out his appointed mission. The flashback impedes the linear progression of the plot but augments the variety of the message in a very objective manner.

The examples of flashback are found in chapter 6 and chapter 49 respectively. In the case of chapter 6, Isaiah begins his prophesy at the beginning of chapter 1, and in chapter 6, he explains how he had been called by God. This is not lineal progress obviously.

Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?" And I said, "Here am I. Send me!"

6:8

This flashback has a dramatic quality. The use of flashback is an important component of Isaiah's style, such shifted order of narration serves many purposes -- simultaneously, sense of immediate presence, activating memories, etc. Another example is:

Listen to me, you islands; hear this, you distant nations: Before I was born the
LORD called me; from my birth he has made mention of my name.

Take as an example the word *rose*, which in its literal meaning is a kind of flower. In Burns's line, *O my love's like a red, red rose*, the word *rose* is the object of comparison in a simile; and in the lines by Winthrop Mackworth Praed

She was our queen, our rose, our star;

And then she danced - O Heaven, her dancing!

the word *rose* is a metaphor. In the long medieval dream vision *The Romance of the Rose* we read about a half-opened rose to which the dreamer's access is aided by a character called *Fair Welcome*, but impeded or forbidden by other characters called *Reason, Shame, and Jealousy*: we readily recognize that the whole narrative is an allegory about an elaborate courtship, in which most of the agents are personified abstractions and the rose itself represents the lady's love. Then we read William Blake's poem *The Sick Rose*:

O Rose, thou art sick.
The invisible worm
That flies in the night
In the howling storm:
Has found out thy bed
Of crimson Joy:
And his dark secret love
Does thy life destroy.

This rose is not the vehicle for a simile or metaphor, because it lacks the paired subject — my love, or the girl referred to as she, in the examples just cited — which is characteristic of these figures. And it is not an allegorical rose since, unlike the flower in The Romance of the Rose, it is not part of an obvious double order of correlated references, one literal and the second allegorical, in which the allegorical reference of the rose is precisely fixed by its function within the literal narrative. Blake’s rose is a rose — yet it is also something more than a rose: words such as bed, joy, love, which do not comport literally with an actual flower, together with the sinister tone and the intensity of the feeling, press the reader to infer that the described object had a further range of unspecified reference which makes it a symbol. But Blake’s rose is a personal symbol and not — like the symbolic rose in the closing cantos of Dante’s Paradise and other Christian poems — an element in a set of traditional and widely known religious symbols, in which concrete objects of this passing world are regarded as signifying the truths of a
higher and eternal realm. Only from the implicit suggestions in Blake’s poem itself – the sexual connotations of bed and love, especially in conjunction with joy and worm – supplemented by our knowledge of related elements in Blake’s other poems, as well as by our normal associations with the objects described in this poem, do we gradually infer that Blake’s lament for a crimson rose which has been entered and sickened unto death by a dark and secret worm symbolizes the destruction wrought by furtiveness, deceit, and hypocrisy in what ought to be a frank and joyous relationship of physical love. Various critics of the poem, however, have proposed differing interpretations of its symbolic significance. It is an attribute of many private symbols and one reason why they are an irreplaceable literary device, that they suggest a direction, or a broad area of reference rather than, like an item in an allegorical narrative, a single and specific reference. (Abrams 1989: 168–170)