ORIGINAL RESEARCH ARTICLE

The Concept of MA'NÃ as the Production of Language Circles: The View of ABU 'UBAYDA (d.209/824) and AL-FARRA' (d.207/826)

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Abstract

Although at the previous stage of Arab literary criticism, the term *ma'nã* was used in a manner both close to and relevant to a literal use of the language, we cannot conclude that the term had indeed been known to fulfill a specifically literal functions.The term *ma'nã* appeared first in the Arab grammarians' circle. They unanimously agreed on using the phrase X *fi ma'nã* Y or X *wa* Y *fi al- ma'nã sawa'* that is X 'means' Y. One of the earliest classical Arabic sources that mentioned the term *ma'nã* was Sibawayhi's *al-Kitab.* Sibawayhi[1] (d. 180/793), the founder of Arabic grammar used the term *ma'nã* hundreds of times juxtaposing it into other technical terms to explain the role of a given grammatical function for a phrase or a sentence. For example, among the other terms was, *'amal* 'syntactic action or role'. Sibawayhi usually used the phrase *ma'nahu wa 'amaluhu* 'its meaning and syntactic action', relating it to an active element or syntactic function. He also used the phrase *hãdha mu'malun fi al-ma'na ghayru mu'malin fi al-lafz* 'X is operating in meaning, but not in linguistic structure.[2]

The essence of this research paper is to bring to the fore, the linguistic applications of the term, *Ma'na*, as being used in the language circles suffice it to mention its importance in the era of lexicographers. The views of Abu 'Ubayda and al-Farra' therein, worth enumeration.

Keywords: Concept; Ma'na; Production; Language circles; Abu 'Ubayda; Al-Farra'.

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[1] Some works name him, *Sibawayh*

[2] 'Amr Ibn 'Uthmãn (Sibawayh), *al-Kitab,* Beirut: Dar l-Kutub al-'IImiyya Vol.1, pp.164.

Introduction

Further, Arab grammarians followed Sibawayhi in using *Ma'ãni nahwiyya* (grammatical meanings) in a likewise manner. For example, al-Zajjaj focused on the concept of *'i'rab* (declension), and its influence on nouns and verbs. He viewed declension as a generator of *ma'ãni* of *fa'iliyya* (agent-function), *Maf'uliyya* (patient-function or annexation). There was no new usage of the term *me'nã*. He continued using *ma'ani* other than what Sibawayhi has established. Abu al-Fath 'Uthmãn Ibn Jinni (d. 392/1002), the great grammarian, further elaborated on the term *ma'nã*. He continued using *ma'ãni* according to what had been established before him as equivalent for grammatical meanings. At the same time, he was among the grammarians who indicated the usage of the term *ma'nã* for semantic meanings for words. First, Ibn Jinni linked the term to grammatical declension, then indicates that meanings can be shown by words or as he phrases it, *ibãna 'an al-ma'ani bi al-alfaz*. Also, he tried to link *ma'nã* to other factors as *mahall* 'place', and *qarina* 'evidence' which orientate toward the context, the required topic, or the goal in order to locate the exact grammatical meaning, and accomplish the compatibility between the part of a sentence to make sense. However, the grammarians' creation or usage of *ma'nã* did not focus on its literary function. For example, Sibawayhi and other grammarians, when using the term *ma'nã* did not give examples of any rhetorical function or literary implications, rather they mainly confine *ma'nã* and give it all sort of links to the location of a word in a given sentence from a mere grammatical point of view.

At the end of the second century A. H., many distinguished scholars such as al-Aşma'i, Bashr b. al-Mu'tamir, and Abû Zakariyyã Yahya al-Rarrã' (d. 207/822) used *ma'nã* as a literary term. Arab critics felt the need for *ma'nã* ir *ma'nãi* as a general term that would serve as an umbrella for different disciplines because these had failed, at that early stage, to distinguish the differences between rhetoric, grammar, semantics and literary criticism. For example, al-Farrã' was the first scholar who used the term *ma'ani* in the title of his work *ma'ani al-Qur'an*. However, we still cannot attribute his work to any given linguistic discipline.

Two well-known works were compiled within this transitional stage to pave the way for *ma'nã* to enter literary circles as a cornerstone in the field of literary studies; both al-Farrã' and Abu 'Ubayda Ma'mar b. Muthannã produced studies which devote much attention to the way that the Qur'anic verse achieves a complicated semantic and esthetical functions. However, as we trace the development of the term *majãz* throughout the history of Arabic rhetoric and literary criticism, we find some different and paradoxical views, which have resulted from the usage of words that implied meanings other than their original ones.

Abū 'Ubayda's *Majãz al-Qur'ãn*:

Majãz is closely related to the term *ma'nã*. The latter was used by many grammarians before Abū 'Ubayda Ma'mar b. Muthannã (who died some time between 208 and 213 A.H), and who was a well-known figure in literary and linguistic circles. However, it was he who included *majãz* into the title of his book, *majãz al-Qur'ãn*. In this title, the term obviously indicates a non-literal mode of language usage.

Despite the fact that the book is considered by modern critics as a work of Qur'ãnic commentary[3] in the general sense of the word, the pioneering achievement of Abū 'Ubayda is still widely acknowledged. More specifically, he is considered the first critic who focused deeply on the analysis of a large number on the Qur'anic verses which he compared with pre-Islamic poetry.

Majãz al-Qur'an is believed to be the first book in Arabic emphasizing non-literal usage of language. Although Abū 'Ubayda was not the first critic to use the term *majãz,* al-Şuyũti stated that Abū 'Ubayda's work was the first book in Arabic written on *majãz*. In his *Kitãb al-Imãn* (Book of Faith),

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[3] When analyzing the ways in which the modern critics disagreed with each other we perceive, for example, that while Ibrahim Muştafã considered it as a book of grammar, Tahã Husayn considered it more a book of lexicography than a book of eloquence. Amin al-Khult, however, considered it a book in *tafsir*.

Ahmad b. Taymiyya (d. 728/1328) claimed that Abū 'Ubayda was the first person to use the word *majãz.*[4] Ibn Taymiyya's statement should be taken with a grain of salt. Anyone familiar with his work and life realizes that, despite Ibn Taymiyya's high scholarly reputation, he was not an expert on literature. We also should not draw the conclusion that Abū 'Ubayda was the first critic to use the term because he himself quoted Abū 'Amr[5] as using the term *majãz.* This means that the term *majãz* as a 'literary idiom' had been established before him.

During that period, no exact definition of the term *majãz* was adapted. Kamãl Abū Deeb stated that when attempting to grasp the significance of *majãz,* one rarely finds two critics agreeing.[6] Abū Deeb attributed this fact to two phenomena; first, the vagueness of the earlier works that often included a wide variety of different and contradictory concepts; and secondly, the complicated methods of analysis adopted by various writers, none of whom however devoted their analysis to the significance of the term *majãz.*

Abū 'Ubayda used the word *Majãz,* in an ordinary linguistic sense that springs from its etymology. The word *majãz* is morphologically an *ism makãn* (noun of place) that is derived from the verb *jazã* (to cross, to pass). It is taken to mean the point at which certain word or phrase 'crossed over' from its original or more familiar meaning, to a metaphorical one, especially in the text of the *Qur'ãn.*

The earliest usage of the concept of *majãz,* as employed by critics such as Abū 'Ubayda, refers to the semantic field of a given word. Paradoxically, this type of usage indicates the original usage and etymological form or meaning of the word under consideration. He habitually used the formula *majãzuhu* to say that a certain word has such and such meaning. In other examples, he used *jajãzuhu* to indicate that a certain word has such and such explanation. Also, he used the formula *wa min majãzihi* to indicate a specific way of interpreting such as such structure, to explain the structure of a sentence from a linguistic viewpoint. Generally, the formula *majãzuhu* is used to indicate in general 'the original *form',* 'the original meaning' or 'the original structure'.

The function of *majãz* in Abū 'Ubayda's *Majãz al-Qur'ãn* is therefore not figurative. Rather, it is equivalent to 'explanation' and 'interpretation'. This made critics believe that Abū 'Ubayda did not use the word *Majãz* to refer to the transfer of one meaning to another, as is the case with figurative speech. Kamãl Abū Deeb in the source cited above, for example, showed that Abū 'Ubayda failed to take account of some important aspects of *majãz* as a rhetorical concept. According to Abū Deeb, firstly, Abū 'Ubayda ignored the parallel relationships (e.g., the braveness of a lion, when saying 'Zayd is a lion,' in which the parallel is drawn of the relationship of braveness in both structures when used as a metaphor). Moreover, Abū 'Ubayda did not pay attention to other contiguous relationships with any other type of *majãz* based on parallels other than that of similarity.[7] Most probably, the idea of *majãz* as a process involving a transfer of meaning that generate a figurative linguistic structure was a process developed by subsequent critics. Was Abū 'Ubayda discussing *majãz* as a figurative linguistic device or as something else? While this remains an open question, it is hardly a new stage in the development of literary criticism.

The great Arab philologist employed *majãz* to avoid the traditionalists' attack against him, on the one hand, and to defend the Qur'ãnic style against philosophers on the other. Such methodology all wed him room for interpretation and analysis without giving his opponents a chance to attack him or to question his analysis. He was concerned with *turuq al-qawl* (the ways of expressions) to deflect any critical attacks from the *Ahl al-Hadith* (the collectors of prophetic traditions) who opposed the new methodology and insisted that commentators rely essentially and primarily on the ma *ma'thũr* commentary (supported by prophetic traditions), and not be confirmed only to linguistic features and

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[4] Ahmad b. 'Abd al-Halim Ibn Taymiyya *Kitãb al-Imãn* p.35.
[5] Abū 'Ubayda only mentioned the name Abū 'Amr. Mostly, he meant Abū 'Amr b. al-'Ala'.
[6] Abu Deeb, Kamal. 'Studies in the *Majãz* and Metaphorical Language of *the Qur'ãn:* Abū 'Ubayda and al-Sharif al-Radi, In *Literary Structures of Religious Meaning in the Qur'an,* ed. 'Issa Boullata (Surrey: Curzon Press, 2000), p.311.
[7] Abū Deeb, Kamal, *Studies in the Majãz and Metaphorical Language of the Qur'ãn,* p.315.

comparisons with classical poetry. However, this opposition was not unanimous since such renowned scholars as Ibn Qutayba and Ibn Jarir al-Tabari (d. 310/923) quoted Abū 'Ubayda.

Among his contemporaries, lexicographers in particular criticized him for his daring analysis of the *Qur'ãn* through language, namely his refusal to rely on *al-tafsir bi al-ma'thũr*. Unlike Abū 'Ubayda, al-Aşma'i for example refrained from interpreting the *Qur'ãn* through lexicography and the ancient Arab language and poetry, the methodology adopted by Abū 'Ubayda.[8]

This opposition was dictated by the fear that interpreting the *Qur'ãn* through lexicography and ancient poetry may lead to its distortion. Opposing scholars were converned that interpreting the scripture through the Arabic language only (i.e., not depending on the *salaf's* interpretation) would result in a faulty methodology named *tafsir al-Qur'ãn bi al-ra'y* (interpreting the *Qur'ãn* by intellectual or logical methodology). Al-Şawi al-Juwayni quoted Yaqũt al-Hamawi (d.626/1229) as saying that, "Al-Qãsim b. Sallãm (d.224/838) started writing a book on the *meanings* and interpretation of the *Qur'ãn*. In the middle of his work, he was sent a letter from Ahmad b. Hanbal (d. 241/855) saying, 'I was informed that you are writing a book on the meanings of the *Qur'ãn* relying on Abū 'Ubayda and al-Farrã's (methodology) as the basis of your references. I want you to stop immediately."[154]

There were other reasons for attacking Abū 'Ubayda's methodology. Al-Şãwi al-Juwayni attributed the hostility towards Abū 'Ubayda to the probability that some critics may have been jealous of him. Also, the attacks against Abū 'Ubayda were provoked by his alleged affiliation with various 'sects': he for instance was described as a *sh'ũbi* (anti-Arab), a Kharijite, and sometimes a Mu'tazilite. Ironically, he was also accused of being a Jew or of retaining same 'Jewish tendencies'.

Among Abū 'Ubayda's opponents was al-Aşma'i. in reality, Abū 'Ubayda was surrounded by many accusations that invoked different doubts and questions about his motivations, and made people skeptical of his intentions and his methodology. Such points might explain the reason that made Abū 'Ubayda choose the word *majãz* to defend his methodology and to emphasize that his work aimed to show various legitimate ways of interpreting the *Qur'ãn.* Al-Sirafi narrated the following story:

> A man related that he came to al-Aşma'i with the book of Abū 'Ubayda, *Majãz al-Qur'ãn.* Al-Aşma'i asked him to hand him the book. The man gave it to him and left. The man returned later after al-Aşma'i was critical of the author. He gave an example of where Abū 'Ubayda had, in the beginning of the book, interpreted the verse *alif lãm mim dhalika al-kitãb la rayba fih* (Q.2:1-2) that the word *rayb* stands for 'doubt'. Al-Aşma'i asks, 'how did Abū 'Ubayda know that *rayb* stands for doubt?' The man replied 'You, yourself previously explained in commenting on the poetry of *Shu'ara'* Hudhayl (the poetry of Hudhayl tribe) that the same word stands for 'doubt'. The man showed al-Asma'i the line of poetry. Al-Aşma'i the line of poetry. Al-Aşma'i fell silent and did not say anything.[9]

Another type of attack is that Abū 'Ubayda was described by ibn Jarir al-Tabari as follows: "Abu 'Ubayda lacked knowledge of interpretation requisite of commentators and he was weak in quoting *salaf's* (pious ancestors of Islam) sayings and perspectives."[10]

Also, focusing on *faruq al-qawl* allowed him to defend the Qur'anic style through *majãz* morphological sense, to show other ways of rendering the Qur'anic meanings and structures. Abū 'Ubayda was aware that the Qur'anic style was attacked by some philosophers and Zoroastrians and he

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[8] Al-Hasan b. 'Abd Allah al-Siraãfi, *Akhbãr al-Nahwiyyin al-Başriyyin,* p. 58.

[9] Al-Siraf, *Akhbãr al-Nahwiyyin al-Başriyyin,* p.58.

[10] Muştafa al-Şãwi al-Juwayni, *Madãris al-Tafsir al-Qur'ãn* p. 81.

aimed to employ his language skills and scholarly expertise to defend the Qur'anic style through analyzing various *turuq al-qawl*. He referred any misunderstanding of the meanings of the *Qur'an* to the ignorance and unfamiliarity with the Qur'anic style and ancient Arabs' ways of expressions. Abũ 'Ubayda used the term *majãz* to avoid an unwelcome tendency to interpret the *Qur'an* as an ordinary literary text. Therefore, he avoided referring to his work as *tafsir* and stressed that his work is a way to understand the linguistic possibilities vested in the *Qur'an.*

Ironically, it is a complicated task to see the connection between the different usages of the word *majãz* in Abũ 'Ubayda's work. For example, in some examples, he used the term *majãz* to indicate that the explanation of a given verse is such and such. In commenting on the verse, *hãdha başa'ir li al-nãs* (the *Qur'ãn* is clear insights to men). Even Abũ 'Ubayda, sometimes used the word *majãz* in a far-fetched way, for instance, for him *majãz* could mean *wazn şarfi* (morphological measure).

We can conclude that the term *majãz* was born out of different disciplines, lexicography, *tafsir,* rhetoric, and grammar. One should point out that up to this period, the disciplines of rhetoric and eloquence had not pertained to literary criticism.

Al-Farrã's (d.207/826) *Ma'ãni Al-Qur'ãn*:

Unlike *tafsir* works, this book has its own distinctive methodology. Al-Farra' incorporated many topics in the work on grammar, lexicography and *Qur'ãnic* commentary. It was one among many books on *tafsir* in which the author did not interpret the *Qur'ãnic* verse by verse. Rather, he chose specific verses which represented of areas that were problematic to the reader. In tackling an individual verse, he commented by giving various grammatical and lexicographical views of his teachers, which also mentioning those of their opponents.

In that era, the term *ma'ãni al-Qur'ãn* was the first book to deal with this subject. 'Abd al-Qãdir Husayn stated that, "Tha'lab (d.291/904) said that no one had preceded al-Farra'in compiling such work, and I too believe no one would come up with such work …' Also, Wãşil b. 'Ata' (d.131/748), Abũ Ja'far al-Ru'ãsi (d.187/803), Yũnus b. Habib (d.182/798), and al-Kisã'i (d.189/805) all compiled writings on different 'meanings' in the *Qur'ãn.*[11] None of these works mentioned has survived and therefore we cannot conclude or not they bore the same title. I am inclined to believe so chiefly because books are usually remembered by their titles.

The two extent books have little in common. Abũ 'Ubadya compiled his work in 188 A.H., while al-Farra' compiled his book in 204 A.H. Al-Farra' was among the first critics who employed *ma'ãni* in reference to rhetoric. He was a grammarian and his approach was dominated by grammatical theory and its method. It is for this reason that we find him focusing on the rhetorical devices that are based on the use of grammatical features.

We need also to consider the fact that al-Farra' was primarily concerned with Qur'ãnic recitation. He tried to find different ways to resolve his interpretation of specific verses by making the meaning of a specific recitation valid from a grammatical point of view. This approach was supported by examples from ancient Arab poetry.

In tackling the subject of *ma'ãni* we find that al-Farra' did not make a substantial contribution to what previous grammarians had created. In his explanation of *hadhf* (omission) for example, he did not add anything to that which Abũ 'Ubayda had already established. In regard to the practice of 'omission of verbs and nouns.' For example, Abũ 'Ubayda had stated: "Ancient Arabs compressed their speech to lighten it, due to the fact that the listener was familiar with the text and thus knew the complete meaning of what was omitted.[12]" Al-Farra' repeated the same idea throughout his work. Generally, al-Farra' is given no credit for his contribution, rather he is considered to have followed the dominant pattern of the school of grammarians and their methodology, whether they were his predecessors or contemporaries.

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[11] Husayn, 'Abd al-Qãdir, *Athar al-Nuh*ãt *fi al-Bahth al-Balaghi,* p.134.

[12] Yahyã b. Ziyãd al-Farra', *Ma'ãni al-Qur'ãn* vol.1 p.226.

The phrases *hadhf* (omission), *taqdim* (preposing), and *Ta'khir* (postponing) were as a rule not discussed from a grammatical viewpoint. Al-Farra' claimed that the main function of omission is *ta'qid* (strengthening or emphasizing) a given meaning. For example, when discussing the verse (Q. 7:131), he explained that *innamã ta'iruhum* stands for *alã innamã ta'irahum* that the word *alã* was added for assertion".[13] It is worth mentioning here that al-Farra's approach to *ziyãda* (adding an extra word) in the *Qur'ãn* was one reason for Ahmad b. hanbal's harsh criticism against him. Al-Farra' admitted that *ziyãda* could occur in the *Qur'ãn* for the purpose of rhythm and rhythm and rhyming letters, an opinion that provoked much criticism. Al-Farrã claimed that the *jannatãn* is mentioned in the following Qur'ãnic verse for such a purpose.

> *Wa liman khãfa maqãma rabbihi jannatãn*
> *But for such as fear the time when they will stand before their Lord, there will be two Gardens (Q.55:46)*

The notion of extra meaning is also evident in al-Farra's analyzes of *ma'ãni al-istifhãm* (rhetorical questions). He explained that particles can be used in a variety of non-conventional ways. The best-known example is his analysis of the particle *hal*. He stated that *hal* can be used to invoke other meanings than those that are obvious and direct. Regarding *istifhãm,* al-Farra' concluded that the particles of inquiry are widely used in various styles: *taqrir* (confirmation), *inkãr* (negation), *tawbikh* (reproach), and *Tahdid* (warning).

At the same time, he provided a distinctive analysis of *isti'ara* (metaphor). One reason in being unexceptional with regard to other topics (i.e., other than *isti'ara)* lies in the fact that al-Farra' followed his predecessors in analyzing the rhetorical tropes that rely on grammatical styles. He had nothing important to add to this discussion. His predecessors, Abũ 'Ubayda and Sibawayhi, in particular, did not deal with the subject of *isti'ara* in the same ways as did al-Farra'. He emphasized *isti'ara* more than any of his predecessors. Abũ 'Ubayda had mentioned it briefly and his analysis boils down to saying *'majãzuhu so and so'*, followed by an explanation of the word. For example, when he commented on the verse *wa arsalnã al-samã'a 'alayhim midrãrã.*

> "… See they not have many of those before them We did destroy?
> - Generations We had established on the earth, in strength such as
> We have not given to you – for whom we poured out rain from
> the skies in abundance, and gave (fertile) streams flowing beneath
> their (feet): Yet for their sins We destroyed them, and raised in
> their wake fresh generations (to succeed them)." (Q.6:6)

He said that, *"Majãz* (i.e., explanation) of *arsalnã* is *anzalnã wa amtarmã* (we brought rain down)."[14] Unlike Abũ 'Ubayda, al-Farra' provided a deeper analysis of Qur'ãnic verses. He was the first to pay attention to the point of *qarina (indication).* Take for example his analysis of the verse *wa lammã sakata 'an Mũsa al-ghadab'* ...

> *"When the anger of Moses was appeased, he took up the Tablets; in the writing thereon was Guidance and Mercy for such as fear their Lord."* (Q7:154)

Al-Farra' pointed out that *al-sukũn* (quietness) here was replaced by *al-sukũt* (silence) and he explained, in his discussion of the verse, "anger itself does not remain silent, but it is the angry person who remains silent."[15] He held that the meaning of this phrase is 'to calm down or cool down."[16] His point is that the Arabic language may assign the attributes of human beings to something non-human whether to animals or to objects (i.e., to things inanimate)."[17] In general, we cannot credit al-Farra' with a full analysis of *isti'ara,* in and of itself, yet, his analysis, as compared with that of his predecessors, is

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[13] Al-Farra', *Ma'ãni al-Qur'ãn,* vol.1 p.226.

[14] Al-Farra': *Ma'ãni al-Qur'ãn,* vol.1 p.186.

[15] Al-Farra': *Ma'ãni al-Qur'ãn,* vol.2 p.91.

[16] Al-Farra': *Ma'ãni al-Qur'ãn,* vol.2 p.93.

[17] Al-Farra': *Ma'ãni al-Qur'ãn,* vol.2 p.90.

novel. Unfortunately, al-Farra' did not give us a thorough analysis of *isti'ara.* For example, in his analysis of the verse *wa innahumã la bi-imãmin mubin,* he writes, "the road was called *imam* (guide) because it leads and is followed."[18] Generally, he was the first to explain *isti'ãra* by determining its main principles and by revealing some of its secrets, but still he did not provide us with a precise terminology, nor was he inclined to give us definitions of different types of *isti'ara.*

Al-Farra' treated different types of rhetorical features and tropes under the umbrella of *ma'ãni.* In addition to the meanings that were highlighted by Abũ 'Ubayda, al-Farra' devoted parts of his analysis to *kinãya* (metonymy). However, the concept of *kinãya* to which al-Farra' referred in his analysis was equivalent to *damir* (dissimulation). In many examples, al-Farra' used *kinãya* in a different way from that of later rhetoricians. This refers to *al-lafz al-ladhiyuradu bihi lazimu ma'nãahu ma'a jawãzi iradati al-ma'na ma'ahu* (words whose meaning are intentional, with the possibility of other intended meanings). But, we should be cautious in crediting the author with a full understanding of the concept of *kinãya,* merely because of his occasional references to it.

Conclusion

Ma'ãni nahwiyya became essential and inspiring factors for some future rhetorical theories. *Mahall,* for instance, represented an important factor that stood behind the creation of a multitude of rhetorical elements and figurative tools (as will be shown later on). Unlike their role in grammarians thinking, both *taqdim and ta'khir* (preposing and postponing) became vital operating features in Arabic rhetoric and literary criticism. We cannot judge whether the early grammarians were familiar with such literary meanings or not, but there is no evidence, at hand, to show us their strong awareness or concern about such rhetorical or literary functions of meanings. But, no doubt that *ma'ãni nahwiyya* have helped to establish a relationship between Arabic grammar and *'Ilm al-Ma'ani.*[19] The grammatical meanings, later on, came to represent the cornerstone for the most important theory in Arabic rhetoric, al-Jurjani's doctrine of *nazm.*

During this period, *ma'ãni* were deemed to be equivalent to figurative meaning. A substantial achievement during this period was to assign to *ma'nã* a new indirect role in the production of language. Arab critics were preoccupied with what they called the 'second meaning' (i.e., the non-direct or non-literal meaning); *ma'nã* started to work metaphorically by creating various associations. They called these implied significations *the second meaning.* The starting point of literary analysis was to seek implied correspondences, which pointed to a 'second meaning.'

The most significant contribution of these two scholars was the idea that *ma'ãni* can include different types of rhetoric or figures of speech. Without going into details regarding all figures of speech discussed by al-Farra', we find that he was the first critic who included the classification of rhetoric into his analysis. Historically speaking however, al-Sakkãki *(626/1229)* was the first critic who classified the whole field of Arabic eloquence, or Arabic rhetorical figures of speech, into three fields: *bayãn, badiᶜ,* and *ma'ãni.* Nevertheless, an examination of al-Farra's analysis shows elements of these three parts that came to be recognized by subsequent literary critics. Al-Farra' provided us with a comprehensive work that addressed different rhetorical topics. He was unique and distinctive in his recognition and analysis of these topics.

The main problem attributed to their analysis is the absence of specific naming of terminology. For example, for all the value of al-Farra's work, his failure to evolve a definitive terminology is obvious. Al-Farra' paid attention to many rhetorical figures of speech. With his brilliant literary perception, he discovered different artistic features of the Qur'ãnic style and pre-Islamic poetry. The two works were of major importance in influencing future schools of rhetorical thought. 'And al-Qãdir Husayn stated that, "Ibn al-Anbãri (d.304/917), the commentator on *al-Mufaddaliyyãt,* relied heavily on al-Farra's work in addition to that of Tha'lab in his *Ãmãli.* The latter credited al-Farra' when he said 'I memorized works of

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[18] Al-Farra': *Ma'ãni al-Qur'an,* vol.2 p.92.

[19] It is worth noting that *'ilm al-Ma'ani* is a branch of Arabic rhetoric, while it is deferent from *'ilm al-ma'na* or *al-dilala* (semantics).

al-Farra' letter when I was 25 years old."[20]   In general, others give him little or no credit, while he can justly be considered the founder of *ma'āni* as a rhetorical field.

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[20] Husayn, 'Abd al-Qãdir*, Athar al-Nuhãt fi al-Bahth al-Balãghi,* p.170.