The concept of trope at the scholars of the Principles of jurisprudence in The modern Western rhetoric - A comparative approach rhetoric -linguistic-

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***Abstract*—Classical Arab linguists demonstrated a broad and profound interest in linguistic inquiry at the phonological, morphological, syntactic, and semantic levels. This study focuses on a number of issues addressed by scholars of Islamic legal theory (uṣūl al-fiqh), highlighting their awareness of linguistic growth and semantic change. Their understanding of language as an instrument of thought formed a fundamental basis for investigating how meanings develop. In particular, uṣūl scholars examined the relationship between a linguistic expression and its meaning, including the historical processes through which expressions acquire and are used in particular senses.**

Their discussions reveal an understanding of important aspects of semantic change arising over time, through usage, and under the influence of social and intellectual circumstances. Their work also anticipated questions that remain central to modern linguistics, including the origins and conventions of language, literal and figurative meaning, interpretation, semantics, discourse analysis, semiotics, and pragmatics. This paper examines the concept of majāz (figurative or transferred usage) among uṣūl scholars and its role in the development of Islamic jurisprudence.

It also considers majāz as an independent subject in modern linguistic study, identifying points of convergence and divergence between the approaches of classical legal theorists and modern linguists.

Keywords—majāz; figurative language; modern linguistics; Islamic legal theory; semiotics; pragmatics.

I. INTRODUCTION

Language is inherently inclined toward plurality and change, both of which are necessary to meet the communicative needs arising in different circumstances. Modern linguists therefore recognise that attempting to preserve a fixed meaning untouched by semantic change imposes a static model on a linguistic system that is continually renewed. One of the most important factors affecting semantic change is the social character of language, which in turn influences the mental and intellectual life of its speakers. Language thus carries social and intellectual values. Roland Barthes, as cited by Morsly, observes that lexical meaning is always unstable because it is exposed to change and development through the social use of the sign (Morsly, 1980, p. 21).

The dynamism of linguistic elements may be considered under two broad domains: literal usage (ḥaqīqah) and figurative usage (majāz). The awareness articulated in modern linguistic research was, in important respects, already present in the work of classical scholars, especially the theorists of uṣūl al-fiqh. These scholars classified expressions according to several considerations: the relationship between expressions and meanings, linguistic assignment or convention, the kinds of usage, and the degree to which a meaning is apparent or obscure. The present study focuses on the classification of expressions according to usage, with particular attention to majāz.

The term majāz requires clarification because it has specific implications within the semantic classifications of legal theory. Through induction and analysis, uṣūl scholars recognised that an expression may be used for the meaning for which it was originally established, or for a meaning other than that original meaning. The latter is figurative usage. Whether an expression is literal or figurative, its meaning may be immediately understood; alternatively, the intended meaning may remain implicit and be inferred through another meaning, as in metonymic expression.

The scholars of legal theory consequently divided usage into literal and figurative categories. Literal meaning may be linguistic, legal-religious, or customary; figurative meaning may be linguistic or customary. This study examines majāz as treated by uṣūl scholars and as a pragmatic-linguistic concept in modern Western linguistics.

A. Motivation and Method

- To address a methodological gap created by studies that examine isolated aspects of uṣūl scholars' work—such as grammatical, lexical, or syntactic meaning—without adequately considering the relationship between literal and figurative meaning and its role in deriving legal rulings.
- To clarify similarities and differences between uṣūl al-fiqh and modern linguistics in their treatment of majāz.

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- To draw on the semantic insights of uṣūl scholars, particularly their discussions of literal and figurative meaning, for contemporary linguistic study.
- To contribute to the grounding of semantic research in uṣūl al-fiqh and to identify conceptual and terminological foundations for a more systematic field of inquiry.
- To provide a basis for further semantic research into the Arabic intellectual heritage, especially the work of legal theorists.
- To investigate the concept of majāz in both classical legal theory and modern Western scholarship, not simply by carrying tradition into the present, but by identifying concepts and analytical tools that are comparable to contemporary approaches while also recognising their differences.
- To focus on uṣūl scholars because the literature of legal theory is especially rich in semantic inquiry, particularly in its treatment of majāz.

The study combines description and analysis with a comparative method. It sets out the relevant positions, arguments, and discussions in uṣūl al-fiqh and considers them in the light of modern linguistic theories and techniques, especially pragmatics, poetics, and stylistics. The comparison shows that classical and contemporary approaches sometimes converge and sometimes diverge. The discussion proceeds by defining key terms, presenting the issue in a balanced scholarly manner, and documenting the analysis through foundational works and modern studies.

II. Majāz: Definition, Terminology, and Conditions of Validity

A. The Linguistic and Technical Meanings of Majāz

In Arabic, majāz is related to the verb jāza, meaning to cross, pass beyond, or traverse a place. When a word is used outside its original place or meaning, it has, in this sense, passed beyond its initial assignment (Ibn Manẓūr, 1988, entry j-w-z). The term is associated with crossing, transition, and transgression. Al-Nushaymī explains its morphological formation and notes that the form may function as a verbal noun, a noun of place, or a noun of time (Al-Nashimi Ajil 1997, p. 143).

Ibn Fāris identifies two principal roots of the semantic field: one related to crossing or traversing something and the other to the middle of a thing. In the first sense, to pass through a place is to traverse it, while to pass beyond it is to leave it behind or cross it (Ibn Fāris, 1993, entry j-w-z). These definitions point to several related meanings: crossing, movement, transition, transgression, passage, and penetration.

Uṣūl scholars offered several technical definitions of majāz. Abū al-Ḥusayn al-Baṣrī defines it as an expression used for something other than that for which it was assigned (Al-Baṣrī Abū al-Ḥusayn, 1982, p. 11). Other scholars add qualifications: an expression used for a meaning other than its original meaning, in a valid manner, through a relation and with an indicator or contextual clue (qarīnah) that prevents the original meaning from being intended. Taken together, these formulations describe majāz as the valid use of an expression for a non-original meaning because of a relation between the two meanings and the presence of a contextual indicator.

B. The Presumption of Literal Meaning

Figurative usage is generally treated as secondary to literal usage, since the default presumption in speech is that words are used in their literal senses. Figurative interpretation requires several conditions: the expression must originally have been assigned a meaning; it must have been used in that meaning; it must then have been transferred to a second meaning on the basis of a recognised relation; and it must have been used for that second meaning. Literal usage requires only that the expression be assigned to a meaning and used accordingly. On this account, literal meaning has the stronger initial presumption because it depends on fewer conditions (al-Nushaymī, 1997, p. 104).

If an expression could be understood either literally or figuratively, the default is therefore to interpret it literally, unless usage or contextual evidence establishes otherwise. When figurative usage becomes common, however, the relationship between the two meanings may change.) Al-Asnawī 1982, p. 170)

1. Literal and Figurative Usage First case: If an expression is used figuratively as frequently as it is used literally, it is interpreted according to its literal meaning. An example is the word nikāḥ, which may refer to either a marriage contract or sexual intercourse. It is agreed that one of these meanings is literal and the other figurative, and since the word is used equally frequently in both senses, it is interpreted according to its literal meaning. However, the two schools differ as to which meaning is literal: according to the Ḥanafīs, it denotes sexual intercourse, whereas according to the Shāfiʿīs, it denotes the marriage contract.

Second case: If an expression is used figuratively more frequently than literally, and its literal meaning has been abandoned in customary usage, the expression is unanimously interpreted figuratively.

Third case: If an expression is used figuratively more frequently than literally, but its literal meaning remains in use, a disagreement arises. Abū Ḥanīfah interprets the expression literally because figurative usage departs from the original presumption. Others, however, favour the figurative interpretation because it is more frequently used. According to the majority of scholars, the expression remains ambiguous and should not be assigned to either meaning until contextual evidence (qarīnah) establishes the intended meaning. This is the position adopted in the present study.

In this part of the study, we relied on al-Asnawī's Nihāyat al-Sūl fī Sharḥ Minhāj al-Uṣūl, given its detailed explanation and clarification of the issue. We extracted the main points concerning the status of figurative usage while avoiding an extensive discussion of the doctrinal disagreements surrounding this question.

A comparison of the three categories mentioned above reveals similarities with modern semantic studies. In his well-known work ʿIlm al-Dalālah (Semantics), Aḥmad Mukhtār ʿUmar argues that figurative transfer generally occurs without deliberate intention and often serves to fill a

lexical gap. Over time, the figurative meaning may become more widespread at the expense of the literal meaning and eventually replace it. He distinguishes three types of figurative usage (ʿUmar, 1998, pp. 241–242):

Type One: Living Metaphor

This is a figurative expression that remains within the threshold of awareness and becomes widespread in usage.

Type Two: Dead Metaphor

This is a figurative expression that loses its figurative character and acquires the status of literal meaning through familiarity.

Type Three: Sleeping Metaphor

This occupies an intermediate position between the two preceding types.

2. Ibn al-Qayyim's Conditions for Figurative Usage Ibn al-Qayyim establishes a set of conditions for the figurative use of an expression. If these conditions are not fulfilled, the figurative interpretation is invalid. He states:

"Whoever claims that an expression should be diverted from its apparent meaning to a figurative meaning cannot establish this except after four stages: first, demonstrating that the literal meaning cannot be intended […] second, demonstrating that the expression is suitable for the meaning assigned to it; otherwise, the claim would be an invention against the language. Third, specifying the intended meaning if the expression has several possible figurative meanings. Fourth, setting aside the evidence that would otherwise require the literal meaning. Unless these four matters are established, the claim that the expression should be diverted from its apparent meaning is invalid." (Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah, n.d., pp. 372–373)

Ibn al-Qayyim's conditions for figurative usage may be summarised as follows. First, the expression must not be intended in its literal sense. Second, it must be appropriate, according to linguistic convention and common usage, to indicate the proposed meaning. Third, the intended figurative meaning must be identified rather than left ambiguous among several possible meanings. Fourth and finally, there must be a justification for why the expression does not convey its literal meaning.

In Ibn al-Qayyim's view, these conditions guide the interpreter towards the correct meaning intended by a text, particularly the Qur'anic text. They serve as principles for understanding the intended meaning while avoiding errors of interpretation.

Elsewhere, addressing the same issue, he states:

"There must be a standard governing the qualifications that make an expression figurative and those that do not remove it from its literal meaning. Those who claim figurative usage will never find a consistently valid standard to rely on; whoever has one should present it." (Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah, n.d., p. 372)

His statement indicates that the transfer of an expression from literal to figurative meaning is subject to the conditions mentioned above. Nevertheless, these conditions are neither fixed nor sufficient in every case. It is difficult to define and regulate figurative usage precisely because it is connected to the speaker's mental processes and is not as immediately apparent as literal meaning.

Accordingly, in his view, figurative usage must be understood in relation to literal meaning and actual usage rather than treated as an unrestricted category.

3. Al-Baṭalyawsī's Conditions for Figurative Usage Al-Baṭalyawsī identifies three conditions for figurative usage (1978, p. 58):

First condition: There must be a relationship between the two meanings that justifies transferring the word from its literal meaning to its figurative meaning.

Second condition: This relationship may be based on similarity or on another type of association.

Third condition: There must be an explicit or contextually inferred indicator that distinguishes literal usage from figurative usage.

4. Al-Shawkānī's Indicators Distinguishing Literal and Figurative Meaning In his work Irshād al-Fuḥūl, al-Shawkānī discusses the signs and indicators by which literal and figurative meanings can be distinguished. He refers to these as contextual indicators (qarāʾin). They are divided into two main categories (al-Shawkānī, 2003, pp. 118–119).

First category: This category is subdivided into two branches.

First branch: Indicators external to the speaker and the utterance

These are neither meanings intended by the speaker nor attributes of the speaker, and they do not belong to the linguistic content of the utterance itself.

In the Qur'anic verse, "So whoever wills—let him believe" (Qur'an 18:29), the continuation "Indeed, We have prepared…" removes the apparent implication of unrestricted choice. The complete verse reads:

"So whoever wills—let him believe; and whoever wills —let him disbelieve. Indeed, We have prepared for the wrongdoers a Fire whose walls will surround them." (Qur'an 18:29)

Second branch: Indicators that form part of the meaning of the utterance or belong to the same linguistic category

These occur when another expression in the text indicates that the literal meaning is not intended.

Second category: Al-Shawkānī identifies four types of indicators of figurative usage: rational, customary, legal-religious, and sensory. He also distinguishes literal from figurative meaning in two ways (al-Shawkānī, 2003, p. 119).

First method: The distinction is explicitly stated in the text itself. For example, the original assigner of a term may identify an expression as literal or figurative, or define the expression and state that it is in use.

Second method: The distinction is established through rational inference. Its indications include the following:

If the meaning of an expression cannot be understood without a contextual indicator, its usage is figurative.

If denying the expression is not valid, its usage is figurative. For example, a brave person may be called “a lion.”

Figurative usage is not fully productive. This means that an expression may be used figuratively in one context without being applicable to every other context in which the same characteristic occurs. For example, the word “palm tree” may be used figuratively to describe a tall person, but not every tall thing.

Figurative usage may also be identified when a word is attributed to something to which it cannot properly be attributed, even though the word was not originally assigned that meaning. An example is describing rain as “generous.”

A conventionally literal expression may be used in a sense other than the one established by customary usage.

The use of a word for one of its referents may depend on its association with another. An example is the Qur’anic verse: “They schemed, and Allah schemed; and Allah is the best of schemers” (Qur’an 3:54). The expression “Allah schemed” is not ordinarily used independently of the preceding reference to their scheming.

Figurative usage may occur only in a restricted form and may not be used absolutely. An example is the expression “the wing of humility” in the Qur’anic verse: “And lower to them the wing of humility out of mercy” (Qur’an 17:24).

Al-Shawkānī’s account of the indicators of figurative usage is noteworthy because it approaches the study of majāz in semiotics. Semiotics attaches considerable importance to the indicator and its semantic function, considering it a sign that points towards a particular meaning. However, semioticians do not restrict the indicator to the linguistic domain, as al-Shawkānī does (Ibn Khūyā, 2009, p. 48).

It should be noted that the conditions and indicators discussed above are recognised by scholars who affirm the existence of majāz in Arabic and in the Qur’an. Those who reject the existence of majāz do not accept these conditions and indicators within their theoretical framework.

The Justifications for Figurative Usage and Its Types Figurative usage is not adopted if it offers no additional benefit over literal usage. Its benefit lies in “establishing the intended purpose in the listener’s mind through imaginative representation and vivid depiction, so that the listener almost sees it with their own eyes. Consider the fact that the literal meaning of our statement ‘Zayd is a lion’ is ‘Zayd is brave.’ Yet there is a difference between the two expressions in terms of imagery, imagination, and the establishment of the intended purpose in the listener’s mind. When we say ‘Zayd is brave,’ the listener imagines only a courageous and bold man. However, when we say ‘Zayd is a lion,’ the image and appearance of a lion come to mind, together with its ferocity, strength, and ability to seize its prey…” (Ḍiyāʾ al-Dīn Ibn al-Athīr, 1983, p. 78).

Ibn al-Athīr also states on the same subject:

“Figurative usage, in much of speech, is more eloquent than literal usage and has a more powerful effect on hearts and ears. The Arabs frequently employ expressions that go beyond literal meanings […] and regard figurative usage as one of the glories of their speech, for it is evidence of eloquence and the very foundation of rhetoric. Through it, their language distinguishes itself from all other languages.” (Ḍiyāʾ al-Dīn Ibn al-Athīr, 1983, p. 87).

*Relation (ʿalāqah): The connection linking the second meaning to the first.

*Contextual indicator (qarīnah): Evidence that diverts the mind from the conventional, originally assigned meaning towards the figurative meaning. It may be linguistic or situational.

From Ibn al-Athīr’s statement, we may infer that literal usage is the default mode of expression. Consequently, there must be a reason that motivates the speaker to depart from it. This motivation may be linguistic, involving the elegance of the figurative expression, its pleasing sound, its suitability for oral delivery, its explanatory power, or other such considerations. It may also be semantic or psychological, relating to the speaker’s own intentions, such as expressing veneration, encouraging the listener, or achieving a similar purpose. Figurative usage may also be employed to soften an expression or to stimulate the listener’s interest and draw them into listening.

In sum, the departure from literal to figurative usage is intended to enhance expression and imbue it with greater force, eloquence, and clarity. In such cases, the listener recognizes that the figurative expression is more appropriate, more aesthetically pleasing in its effect on the mind, and more powerful in its influence.

Figurative usage is divided into two categories according to whether the semantic relationship occurs at the level of the word or at the level of attribution: linguistic figurative usage (al-majāz al-lughawī) and rational figurative usage (al-majāz al-ʿaqlī). Linguistic figurative usage involves transferring words from their original lexical meanings to other meanings connected to them by a relationship of similarity or another association. In rational figurative usage, the words retain their literal meanings, but the figurative element lies in the attribution of an action or quality.

ʿAbd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī was the first in the history of Arabic rhetoric to divide figurative usage into these two categories: linguistic and rational figurative usage. He states:

“Know that figurative usage is of two kinds: figurative usage arising from language and figurative usage arising from meaning and reason. When we describe an individual word as figurative, as when we say that ‘hand’ is figurative for ‘beneficence’ and ‘lion’ is figurative for ‘a human being’ […], we are making a judgment based on language. This means that the speaker has taken the word beyond the original meaning for which it was established […]. However, when we describe an entire sentence as figurative, the figurative usage arises from reason rather than from language.” (ʿAbd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī, 1983, p. 353).

Part One: Linguistic Figurative Usage Linguistic figurative usage is defined as “a word employed in a meaning other than that for which it was originally established, on the basis of a relationship and in the presence of a contextual indicator that prevents the literal meaning from being intended. The relationship between the literal

and figurative meanings may be one of similarity or another kind of association, while the contextual indicator may be verbal or situational" (ʿAlī al-Jārim and Muṣṭafā Amīn, n.d., p. 71).

More simply, it is the use of a word in a meaning other than its literal meaning, based on a relationship and accompanied by a contextual indicator. The purpose of this relationship is to enable the mind to move from the initial meaning to the figurative one through the association between them.

From the foregoing definition, we may conclude that linguistic figurative usage is divided, according to the type of relationship involved, into two branches (ʿAlī al-Jārim and Muṣṭafā Amīn, n.d., p. 71).

The first branch: When the relationship between the literal and figurative meanings is one of similarity, the mind moves through this similarity from the figurative expression to the intended meaning. The figurative meaning is understood by attributing a particular quality to the subject. For example, the word lion may be used to refer to a brave person because both share the quality of bravery. This type is called metaphor (istiʿārah), with its various subdivisions.

The second branch: When the relationship is based on something other than similarity, the expression is called a metonymic trope (majāz mursal). The sole distinction between metaphor and the metonymic trope lies in the nature of the relationship: metaphor is based on similarity, whereas the metonymic trope is based on another kind of association.

As for the contextual indicator (qarīnah), it may be verbal or situational.

The First Branch: Metaphor (Al-Istiʿārah) Al-Āmidī defines metaphor as follows:

"A word is borrowed for something other than that for which it is originally intended only when it can convey a meaning appropriate and suitable to the thing for which it is borrowed, since speech, in both its literal and figurative forms, is fundamentally based on conveying benefit." (Al-Āmidī, 1959, p. 164).

ʿAlī al-Jārim and Muṣṭafā Amīn provide a precise scholarly definition of metaphor in their valuable work Al-Balāghah al-Wāḍiḥah (Clear Rhetoric):

"Metaphor is a form of linguistic figurative usage in which one of the two terms of a simile is omitted. Its relationship is always based on similarity, and it is divided into two types: explicit metaphor, in which the expression denoting the tenor is replaced by an explicit mention of the vehicle; and implicit metaphor, in which the vehicle is omitted and is indicated by something associated with it." (ʿAlī al-Jārim and Muṣṭafā Amīn, n.d., p. 77).

As previously stated, metaphor is a simile in which one of its two principal terms has been omitted. Accordingly, it is divided into two types according to whether the vehicle is explicitly mentioned or omitted (Al-Baṭalyawsī, 1978, p. 103).

Type One: Explicit Metaphor (Al-Istiʿārah al-Taṣrīḥiyyah)

This is a metaphor in which the vehicle is explicitly mentioned while the tenor is omitted.

An example is the expression: "The lions rose and embraced him." Here, the vehicle—"lions"—is explicitly mentioned, while the tenor, namely the brave men, is omitted. The expression "embraced him" serves as a verbal contextual indicator.

Type Two: Implicit Metaphor (Al-Istiʿārah al-Makniyyah)

This is a metaphor in which the vehicle is omitted and is represented by something associated with it. An example is the statement attributed to al-Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf:

Indeed, I see heads that have ripened,

And the time has come to harvest them, and I am the one who will do so.

In this expression, heads are likened to fruits. The underlying comparison would be: "Indeed, I see heads like ripe fruits." Since the vehicle—fruits—is concealed rather than explicitly mentioned, the metaphor is classified as an implicit metaphor.

Metaphor, whether explicit or implicit, is also divided into two branches according to the type of word in which it occurs (Al-Baṭalyawsī, 1978, p. 103).

The First Branch: Original Metaphor (Al-Istiʿārah al-Aṣliyyah)

This is a metaphor in which the word employed is a non-derived noun. An example is al-Mutanabbī's description of the pen:

Its tongue spews darkness into the daylight,

And understands from those who speak what cannot be heard.

The pen is likened to a human being. The vehicle, namely the human being, is omitted and represented by one of its characteristic attributes: the "tongue." The expression is therefore an implicit metaphor. Since the metaphor occurs in a non-derived noun, it is classified as an original metaphor.

The Second Branch: Derivative Metaphor (Al-Istiʿārah al-Tabʿiyyah)

This is a metaphor in which the word employed is a derived form or a verb. An example appears in the Qur'anic verse:

"And when the anger subsided from Moses, he took up the tablets."

(Qur'an, al-Aʿrāf 7:154)

Here, the subsiding of anger is likened to silence, with calmness serving as the common feature. The expression denoting the vehicle, namely silence, is then borrowed for the tenor, the subsiding of anger. From the verbal form associated with silence, the verb sakata ("became silent") is used to convey the meaning "subsided" or "came to an end." It is called a derivative metaphor because its occurrence in a derived word follows its occurrence in the corresponding verbal noun or source form.

Metaphor is also divided, according to whether an expression associated with the tenor or the vehicle is mentioned, into three types (ʿAlī al-Jārim and Muṣṭafā Amīn, n.d., pp. 89–91).

Type One: Embellished Metaphor (Al-Istiʿārah al-Murashshaḥah)

This is a metaphor accompanied by an expression associated with the vehicle. An example is the Qur'anic verse:

"Those are the ones who have purchased error in exchange for guidance, so their trade has brought them no profit." (Qur'an, al-Baqarah 2:16)

The expression "their trade has brought them no profit" is associated with the vehicle, which is the image of a commercial transaction.

Type Two: Stripped Metaphor (Al-Istiʿārah al-Mujarradah)

This is a metaphor accompanied by an expression associated with the tenor.

Type Three: Unqualified Metaphor (Al-Istiʿārah al-Muṭlaqah)

This is a metaphor that contains no expression associated with either the tenor or the vehicle, or one in which elements associated with both are present.

In conclusion, metaphor is a form of linguistic expansion that produces an effect on the minds of listeners and opens up possibilities for creativity. It allows accomplished writers and speakers to demonstrate their rhetorical skill, conveying a wealth of meaning through a limited number of words. It also gives concrete form to abstract concepts and breathes life into inanimate objects.

The Second Branch: The Metonymic Trope (Al-Majāz al-Mursal) The metonymic trope is defined as "a word employed in a meaning other than that for which it was originally established, on the basis of a relationship other than similarity, and in the presence of an explicit or implicit contextual indicator that prevents the literal meaning from being intended. It is called mursal because it is unrestricted and is not confined to one specific type of relationship" (ʿAlī al-Jārim and Muṣṭafā Amīn, n.d., p. 110).

The metonymic trope encompasses numerous semantic relationships employed in different forms of expression. These relationships can be fully understood only through a thorough study of linguistics and rhetoric. Each type serves a particular communicative and rhetorical purpose.

In the present discussion, we shall restrict ourselves to the relationships commonly addressed in rhetorical works. Imām ʿAbd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī provides examples of the relationships underlying the metonymic trope while distinguishing between figurative usage based on simile and other forms of linguistic figurative usage. As Yūsuf Abū al-ʿAdūs explains:

"Al-Jurjānī was not seeking to enumerate or exhaustively catalogue these relationships. Rather, he was establishing a methodology through which their defining features could be clarified and their types distinguished, thereby refining the study of these categories and their relationships to the interpretation of textual rulings and the appreciation of their subtle rhetorical effects." (Abū al-ʿAdūs, 1990, p. 32).

Among these relationships are causality, locative association, unrestrictedness, and restriction. Al-Jurjānī also discusses other relationships that cannot all be examined here without departing from the scope of the present study. These include part–whole relationships, contiguity, and instrumentality, among others.

These are among the principal relationships identified by al-Jurjānī in his analysis of Qur'anic verses. His aim was to demonstrate their rhetorical eloquence, the elevated quality of their expression, the beauty of their composition, their subtle meanings, and the remarkable structure of their discourse.

Other relationships are also discussed by al-Zamakhsharī in his work Al-Kashshāf, including reference to what something was in the past (iʿtibār mā kāna), reference to the whole (al-kulliyyah), and reference to what something will become (iʿtibār mā yakūn).

Part Two: Rational Figurative Usage (Al-Majāz al-ʿAqlī) Al-Sakkākī defines rational figurative usage as:

"An expression through which a judgment contrary to the judgment held by the speaker is conveyed, by means of a particular interpretation, without this being achieved through the conventional assignment of a word to a meaning; as in the statement, 'Spring caused the plants to grow.'" (Abū Yaʿqūb Yūsuf al-Sakkākī, 1983, p. 393).

Alternatively, rational figurative usage may be defined as the attribution of an action to someone or something other than its actual agent, on the basis of a relationship and in the presence of a contextual indicator that prevents the attribution from being understood literally.

It is called rational figurative usage because, unlike linguistic figurative usage, the figurative element does not lie in the word itself but in the attribution. As Al-Baṭalyawsī explains, "the figurative usage does not occur in the word, as it does in linguistic figurative usage, but rather in the attribution, and it is discerned through reason" (Al-Baṭalyawsī, 1978, p. 79).

Rational figurative usage is a means of linguistic expansion and a form of expressive creativity. Speakers employ it when they seek elegance in conveying meaning, wish to give free rein to the imagination, or aim to express the inner impulses of the self and the subtleties of feeling. In such cases, the elements of the expression move beyond their literal functions towards other modes of expression, governed by rules that regulate this shift and ensure the validity of figurative attribution. In this way, the speaker can construct an elegant expression and convey the intended meaning effectively (Mathnā Mad Allāh al-ʿAsāsifah, 2014, p. 844).

The Development of Scholarly Writing on Figurative Usage The following is an academic English translation of the passage, preserving its original structure, scholarly terminology, chronological organization, and references.

The Development of Scholarly Literature on Figurative Usage The question of figurative usage occupied a significant place in the work of early linguists in general and

scholars of Islamic legal theory (uṣūl al-fiqh) in particular. It was subsequently examined and analyzed by literary scholars, rhetoricians, jurists, Qur'anic exegetes, and theologians. Its study was not confined to linguistics alone; rather, it became the subject of extensive discussion among thinkers and scholars. Each of these groups approached figurative usage from a different perspective, whether by addressing it within sections devoted to rhetoric, literary criticism, or the inimitability of the Qur'an, or by discussing it in independent works specifically devoted to the subject.

Before examining the rejection or affirmation of figurative usage among scholars of uṣūl al-fiqh, it is useful to provide a brief overview of the contributions made by rhetoricians, scholars of legal theory, hadith scholars, and others, as well as by some modern researchers who have contributed to the study of figurative usage through classification and scholarly writing.

Scholars, both classical and modern, have produced independent works on figurative usage and discussed the concept extensively, with some affirming its existence and others denying it. The authors who wrote on figurative usage and whose works we have identified are listed below in chronological order:

Author	Year of Death (AH)	Book Title
Abū ʻUbaydah Maʻmar ibn al-Muthannā	210 AH	*Majāz al-Qur'ān*
Al-Jāḥiẓ	255 AH	*Al-Ḥayawān; Al-Bayān wa al-Tabyīn*
Abū Muḥammad ʻAbd Allāh ibn Qutaybah	276 AH	*Ta'wīl Mushkil al-Qur'ān*
Abū al-ʻAbbās Thaʻlab	291 AH	*Qawā'id al-Shi'r*
Abū al-Ḥakīm ibn Saʻīd	355 AH	*Kitāb fī Nafī al-Majāz*
Ibn Jinnī	392 AH	*Al-Khaṣā'iṣ*
Al-Sharīf al-Raḍī	406 AH	*Al-Majāzāt al-Nabawiyyah; Talkhīṣ al-Bayān fī Majāzāt al-Qur'ān*
ʻAbd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī	471 AH	*Asrār al-Balāghah*
ʻIzz al-Dīn ibn ʻAbd al-Salām (Sultan of the Scholars)	660 AH	*Majāz al-Qur'ān*
ʻAbd al-Ḥakīm ibn Yaḥyā al-Marrākushī	671 AH	*Ghuflat al-Mujtāz fī Taḥqīq al-Ḥaqīqah wa al-Majāz*
Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah	751 AH	*Al-Ṣawā'iq al-Mursalah*
Muḥammad al-Amīn al-Shinqīṭī	1393 AH	*Man' Jawāz al-Majāz fī al-Munazzal li-l-Ta'abbud wa al-I'jāz*

Manʿ Jawāz al-Majāz fī al-Munazzal li-l-Taʿabbud wa-l-Iʿjāz (On Denying the Permissibility of Figurative Usage in the Revelation Intended for Worship and Inimitability)

As for modern studies and publications in this field, the following are cited by way of example, rather than as an exhaustive list:

Through these pages, we have been able to trace the development of scholarly writing on figurative usage. We do not claim to have compiled every work ever written on the subject; rather, we have endeavoured to do so by focusing on works specifically devoted to figurative usage, instead of including every work that discusses it incidentally within broader treatments of rhetorical, critical, or purely linguistic questions.

This brief survey of the literature on figurative usage has enabled us to conclude that the phenomenon has attracted the attention of researchers both in the past and in the present, and that it continues to be a subject of investigation and debate. We have also observed that scholars and authors in this field are divided into two groups: one affirms the existence of figurative usage in language and in the Qur'an, while the other denies it. Each group advances arguments in support of its position.

The issue is, in fact, that both groups are often influenced by underlying theological commitments, particularly in relation to a highly sensitive subject in Islamic theology: the divine names and attributes. In surveying the literature on figurative usage, our aim has not been to endorse one group over the other. Instead, we have limited ourselves to identifying the authors, listing the titles of their works, and arranging them chronologically, in accordance with the methodology adopted in this study.

Accordingly, we may say that the question of figurative usage has occupied the minds of Muslim scholars throughout the centuries. Nevertheless, the vast majority affirmed its existence in both language and the Qur'an, whereas those who rejected it adopted a more rigid position, even if their intention was to defend Islam.

The position we consider correct is to reject figurative interpretation and figurative usage when dealing with the attributes of God Almighty, while accepting them in other contexts. Both the absolute rejection of figurative usage in

Arabic and the Qur'an, and the application of figurative usage and interpretive re-reading to God's attributes, are incorrect. Applying figurative usage and interpretive re-reading to the divine attributes, according to this position, leads to the negation of those attributes and their denial. Conversely, rejecting figurative usage altogether in the Qur'an and the Arabic language amounts to disregarding linguistic reality and observable fact. The soundest position, therefore, is the middle one: figurative usage exists in the Qur'an, in Arabic, and indeed in all human languages, but it should not be applied to God's attributes.

If we compare the positions adopted by scholars of uṣūl al-fiqh on the permissibility or prohibition of figurative usage, we find considerable similarities between their approaches and those of linguists and philosophers, from Aristotle to the present day. "In the most recent period, however, there has been a growing tendency among pragmatists to question this distinction, either wholly or partially. One example is Searle, who challenged traditional views and emphasized the need to distinguish between what he calls speaker meaning and word or sentence meaning. Searle demonstrated that the fundamental flaw in traditional theories of figurative usage lies in their failure to understand this distinction and in their attempt to locate figurative meaning within the sentence itself or within a set of associations connected to it." (Muḥammad Muḥammad ʿAlī Yūnus, ʿIlm al-Takhāṭub al-Islāmī [The Study of Islamic Communication], 2006, pp. 147–148).

It is apparent that these modern approaches, despite their innovative contributions, remain closer to the prevailing tradition in the Islamic intellectual heritage than to Ibn Taymiyyah's more radical approach, which calls for a distinction between literal and figurative usage.

Accordingly, figurative usage constitutes a fertile field of inquiry for semantics. It reveals the flexibility of the linguistic system and its openness to semantic change. At the same time, it demonstrates the adaptability of language to forms of expression dictated by particular communicative situations. Within the linguistic system itself, new communicative structures emerge that preserve the transmission of the intended message.

In this regard, scholars of uṣūl al-fiqh sought to systematize the transformations occurring within the linguistic system and to establish scholarly principles governing semantic derivation. These principles may also be applied to the development of scientific terminology and the creation of new concepts. As ʿAbd al-Jalīl Manqūr explains:

"Scholars of Islamic legal theory therefore attempted to frame the transformations taking place within the linguistic system and to establish scientific principles concerning semantic generation. These principles can be applied to the formulation of scientific terminology and the creation of new concepts." (ʿAbd al-Jalīl Manqūr, 2010, p. 289).

C. Figurative Usage in Modern Western Rhetorical Studies

1. The Classification of Rhetorical Figures in Modern Western Scholarship Western rhetoric has developed several systems for classifying rhetorical figures, and these do not differ fundamentally from the classifications found in Arabic rhetoric. As one study observes:

"A number of linguistic studies have emerged that seek to classify rhetorical figures according to specific methodological criteria. Some classify them according to phonetic criteria, others according to the morpheme, others according to the nature of the word, and still others according to semantics." (Ducrot and Todorov, 1972, p. 349).

From the foregoing, it appears that the concept of the rhetorical figure has evolved within human intellectual culture through several stages. It has been associated with simile, metaphor, the metonymic trope, kināyah (allusive expression), and related forms.

Its technical and theoretical concepts have also developed in terms of description, analysis, understanding, and interpretation through a number of theories, which may be summarized as follows: the theory of deviation or transgression, associated with John Cohen; interaction theory, associated with I. A. Richards and William Empson, according to which a rhetorical figure arises through interactive relationships between words within a particular system; substitution theory; composition theory; and reference theory, associated with Paul Ricoeur in his work La Métaphore vive (The Rule of Metaphor). Within this last approach, metaphors and rhetorical images become means of conveying reality and transforming it into possible or hypothetical worlds (Paul Ricoeur, 1975, p. 15).

The concepts of restriction and unrestrictedness can be incorporated into the modern semantic categories of meaning expansion and meaning narrowing, which are among the concepts developed in modern semantic theory. Figurative usage, meanwhile, can be understood as one manifestation of semantic change, namely meaning transfer. This refers to the transfer of a word from its original meaning to another meaning connected to it by a particular relationship.

When that relationship is one of similarity, the result is metaphor; when it is based on a relationship other than similarity, the result is a metonymic trope.

Vendryes explains the concept of meaning transfer as follows:

"Transfer occurs when two meanings are equivalent, or when they do not differ in terms of generality and specificity, as when a word shifts from a place to something situated in it, from a cause to its effect, or from a sign indicating something to the thing indicated […]. There is no need to point out that expansion and narrowing frequently arise from transfer, and that meaning transfer encompasses various processes to which grammarians have given technical names, such as metaphor and the metonymic trope in its broad sense." (Joseph Vendryes, 1950, p. 256).

Vendryes identifies another distinction between meaning transfer and the expansion and narrowing of meaning:

"Expansion and narrowing occur unconsciously, whereas meaning transfer, in most cases, occurs intentionally for a literary purpose." (Joseph Vendryes, 1950, p. 256).

When a word is repeatedly used figuratively in its new meaning, that usage gradually spreads among speakers, and the figurative meaning eventually becomes established as a literal meaning.

Modern linguists have distinguished between two types of meaning transfer, based on the nature of the relationship between the two meanings:

Meaning transfer based on similarity between the referents.

Meaning transfer based on a relationship other than similarity between the referents.

2. The First Type: Meaning Transfer Based on Similarity This type refers to metaphor. Ullmann illustrates it as follows:

"When we speak of the 'eye of a needle,' we use figuratively the word that denotes the human eye. What justifies this usage is the strong resemblance between that organ and the opening through which the thread passes." (Stephen Ullmann, 1988, p. 183).

Ullmann also identifies another type of metaphor that depends on similarity in feeling or sensation. Examples include expressions such as "a fragrant greeting," "cold speech," and "a heated discussion." In these expressions, we perceive a similarity between a pleasant greeting and fragrance, between calm and ineffective speech and coldness, and between a discussion full of emotion and vitality and heat. (Stephen Ullmann, 1988, p. 183).

Ullmann thus demonstrates that another type of metaphor is based on similarity in feeling and sensation, as illustrated by the examples above. This indicates that metaphor, as understood in Western rhetorical theory, has come to encompass a broad range of literary and artistic forms in order to accommodate the development of knowledge and the sciences.

3. The Second Type: Meaning Transfer Based on a Relationship Other Than Similarity This type refers to the metonymic trope, which is one of the mechanisms of semantic change. Ullmann illustrates it with the word maktab ("office" or "desk"):

"The word office may today refer to the desk at which a person sits and writes, to a government department, or to the place from which business is administered. Clearly, there is no similarity between these referents. However, another kind of connection exists between them: the desk at which we write is placed in locations where business is conducted. The two concepts are therefore associated in the speaker's mind, or they belong to the same conceptual domain. This is the psychological explanation of what is known as the metonymic trope." (Stephen Ullmann, 1988, p. 185).

The concept of figurative usage provided an early theoretical foundation for modern stylistic studies across successive historical periods. Critical approaches examined how a word departs from its literal meaning. Nevertheless, modern Arabic linguistic and rhetorical studies have not fully developed this concept, despite its central importance to literary studies, particularly poetry, as encountered in translated Western critical scholarship on discourse and poetics (Mathnā Mad Allāh al-ʿAsāsifah, 2014, p. 852).

Accordingly, the concept of poetics in contemporary literary criticism has incorporated certain aspects of the semantic development of rhetorical terminology, particularly figurative usage. Modern stylistics has likewise drawn upon the rhetorical concept of figurative usage. We can observe the presence of this concept in both modern disciplines—stylistics and poetics—in closely related meanings, such as deviation and its various forms in stylistic analysis.

It is therefore incumbent upon diligent researchers to delve into the rich resources of the Arabic rhetorical heritage and extract the concepts formulated by its eminent scholars throughout history, enabling these concepts to find their place within the context of linguistic globalization and contemporary linguistic challenges.

III. Conclusion

Arabic rhetoric today is in great need of renewing its tools, modernizing its rhetorical figures, expanding its conceptual and terminological framework, and developing its approaches so that it can keep pace with advances in science and knowledge. This can be achieved only by broadening the concept of the rhetorical figure to encompass all literary and artistic genres and forms.

It is therefore essential to revisit our rhetorical heritage through a fresh reading that takes its intellectual foundations into account while drawing upon the contributions of modern linguistics. This requires connecting classical Arabic rhetoric with contemporary Western rhetorical theory.

In this study, we have not privileged one classification over another. Instead, we have adopted a comparative approach, presenting the issues in a scholarly manner consistent with the requirements of objectivity and methodological rigor. We have also sought to reread the intellectual heritage concerning figurative usage in a way that reflects the spirit of the present age, without forcing this aspect of the legal-theoretical tradition to yield conclusions it does not support.

Nor have we sought to impose modern linguistic theory upon a classical corpus of Islamic legal theory. Rather, we have examined the writings of scholars of uṣūl al-fiqh alongside those of modern linguists, highlighting the valuable contributions and remarkable findings of the former that can benefit linguistic studies. We have discussed both approaches without distorting their foundations or automatically privileging one over the other, except where comparison and contrast are necessary.

We must acknowledge that the foundations of these inquiries lie with scholars of Islamic legal theory rather than exclusively with linguists, while recognizing the contributions of modern linguistic scholarship. The principles in question have deep and firmly established roots in the history of uṣūl al-fiqh. This provides a legitimate basis for rereading this substantial intellectual heritage in a contemporary manner, taking into account the intellectual foundations of modern linguistic and semantic inquiry and thereby connecting the past with the present and its contemporary problems.

The meaning of figurative usage becomes clear through contextual indicators (qarāʾin) that establish whether the meaning originally assigned to a word is intended. The attention given by scholars of Islamic legal theory to identifying and distinguishing these indicators brings their treatment of figurative usage close to semiotic studies, which have attached considerable importance to the concept

of the contextual indicator and its semantic function, regarding it as an essential sign directing interpretation towards meaning.

- The fundamental approach to updating the Arab intellectual heritage lies in incorporating it into new perspectives that give it additional dimensions within a new historical context. This entails recognizing the contributions of earlier scholars in general, and scholars of Islamic legal theory in particular, to linguistic knowledge, so that their work can generate insights capable of addressing contemporary questions.
- What matters most is achieving accuracy, validity, originality, and depth in linguistic studies of the work of scholars of uṣūl al-fiqh, especially in the semantic domain. The aim should not be to establish complete equivalence with the findings of Western linguistics, which have emerged through successive research projects, scholarly seminars, conferences, and the use of modern technology, while drawing upon the achievements of human thought throughout its historical development. The work produced by scholars of Islamic legal theory in their study of figurative usage differs in purpose from that of modern linguistics: the former was directed towards deriving legal rulings and serving the Islamic faith, whereas the latter developed within different intellectual and methodological contexts. This distinction rules out the possibility of complete equivalence, although similarities do exist in several areas.
- It is essential to avoid sweeping judgments that claim either complete equivalence between scholars of Islamic legal theory and modern linguists, or the absolute superiority of the former over the latter in every aspect of linguistic and semantic research. The more accurate approach is to situate the ideas of scholars of uṣūl al-fiqh within their intellectual, theological, jurisprudential, and historical contexts, recognizing that differences in these circumstances lead to differences in conclusions.
- Finally, we may state that uṣūl al-fiqh is fundamentally concerned with meaning at the level of the word, sentence, text, and context, and with the distinction between literal and figurative usage. These are also central concerns of contemporary semantic studies and constitute important subjects of their research.

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