

# SYNTAX, PRAGMATICS, POETRY: TOWARD A REAPPRAISAL OF ṬA'LAB'S *QAWĀ'IDU L-ŠI'R*

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**Abstract.** This paper aims to provide a critical review of the results reached by Arabists in their study of the *Qawā'idu l-šī'r* by Ṭa'lab, highlighting various implications that such outcomes can offer to Arab(ic) Linguistics. The paper is also meant to pave the way toward an integrated approach to Arabic medieval poetics as a whole, analyzing it through interpretive tools rooted not only in literary criticism, but in the linguistic science as well. What emerges is that such an approach will bring to light a thus far under-researched conceptual continuity, tying the *Qawā'idu l-šī'r* to subsequent treatises on Arabic poetics, such as the *Naqdu l-šī'r* and *Minhāḡu l-bulagā'*.

**Keywords:** Syntax, pragmatics, Arabic poetry, Ṭa'lab, *Qawā'idu l-šī'r*, Qudāmah, al-Qartāḡannī

## 1. The place of *Qawā'idu l-šī'r* in modern scholarship

Ṭa'lab (d. 291/904) is historically one of the most renowned figures of Arabic linguistic thought, so that we hardly need to mention the primary aspects of his life<sup>1</sup>. However, there is one facet of Ṭa'lab's scientific work that still remains underrepresented in modern scholarship: his interest in Arabic poetry, which according to medieval scholars led to his outstanding treatise of Arabic poetics, the so-called *Qawā'idu l-šī'r* (*QŠ* henceforth).

In their investigation of the Arabic poetics, as laid out by the medieval Arab *literati*, modern Arabists have seemingly thus far given but a cursory nod to Ṭa'lab and, despite the relatively large number of critical editions devoted to the *QŠ*, specifically those of Schiaparelli (1890), Ḥafāḡī (1948), and 'Abduṭṭawwāb (1966), only the studies undertaken by Nöldeke (1890), Trabulsi (1955: 81-85, 215-216), Bonebakker (1956: Introduction, 22-25), Šallūm (1969: 223-234) and Heinrichs (1971, 1973) have been concerned with Ṭa'lab's interest in Arabic poetry<sup>2</sup>, whereas more recent scholars have limited themselves to simply

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<sup>1</sup> Interested readers can refer to Dayf (1968: 223-237), Bernards (2000) and Osti (2013) for further information.

<sup>2</sup> Heinrichs (1971, 1973) doesn't mention Šallūm (1969) among the modern Arabic scholars who have investigated the *QŠ*.

repeating these analyses (see e. g. von Gelder 1982: 46-48, Ouyang 1997: 181, 214, and Hussein 2004: 302)<sup>3</sup>. In the introduction to his accurate critical edition of the *QŠ*, ‘Abduttawwāb (1966: 15-16) makes no exception to this trend, as he fully subscribes to Nöldeke’s ideas, often reporting them literally in Arabic translation.

This paper thus aims to provide a critical review of the main results the aforementioned handful of scholars reached in their study of Ṭa‘lab’s *QŠ*, highlighting various implications that such results can offer to Arab(ic) Linguistics. The paper is also meant to pave the way toward an integrated approach to Arabic medieval poetics as a whole, analyzing it through interpretive tools rooted not only in literary criticism, but in the linguistic science as well. What emerges is that such an approach will bring to light a thus far under-researched conceptual continuity, tying the *QŠ* to subsequent treatises on Arabic poetics, such as the *Naqdu l-ši‘r* and *Minhāḡu l-bulaḡā’*.

## 2. The text and its contents

Given the significant role assumed by the *QŠ* in Ṭa‘lab’s theory of poetry and, more generally, in Arabic literary theory, we can conveniently begin by summarizing its main contents. To this end, the division of the *QŠ* into five conceptual sections, as initially proposed by ‘Abduttawwāb (1966: 16-18), is in effect particularly useful (cp. also Heinrichs 1971: 212):

- Section I introduces *qawā’idu l-ši‘r*, corresponding to four types of syntactic structures<sup>4</sup>: *‘amr* ‘command’, *nahy* ‘prohibition’, *ḡabar* ‘statement’, *istiḡbār* ‘question’ (“*qawā’idu l-ši‘ri ‘arba‘un ‘amrun wa-nahyun wa-ḡabarun wa-stiḡbār*”: *QŠ*, 31);

- Section II deals with notions such as *madḡ*, *hiḡā’*, etc., which subsequent literary critics label as *‘aḡrād* (“*tumma tatafarra‘u hāḡihi l-‘uṣūlu ‘ilā madḡin wa-hiḡā’in*”, etc.: *QŠ*, 31);

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<sup>3</sup> Dayf (1968: 226), Zwettler (1978: 65, 168) and Bohas, Guillaume and Kouloughli (1990: 104), touch very briefly on Ṭa‘lab’s views regarding Arabic poetry. Zaḡlūl Salām (1964: I, 260) lists the *QŠ* among his primary sources, with no further discussion. Cantarino (1975: 43) and Arazi (1997) assign no prominent role to Ṭa‘lab in their description of early Arabic poetics.

<sup>4</sup> Sect. 5 expounds the empirical basis for interpreting *qawā’id* as syntactic structures.

- Section III deals with various figures of speech, and related poetic licenses;
- Section IV identifies two viable practices for the composition of elegant poetry: *ğazālatu l-lafz*, ‘eloquent style’ and *ittisāqu l-naẓm* ‘a well-balanced and self-contained metrical unit’;
- Section V presents a five-fold classification of Arabic verse, sensitive to semantic and metrical criteria.

### 3. The text’s transmission, reception and attribution

It is well established among scholars that, in addition to his important contribution to the field of Arabic grammar, Ṭa‘lab compiled over 40 works on Koranic studies, Arabic lexicography and poetry (Bernards 2000). This knowledge on his attributed works is mainly based on Ibn al-Nadīm (d. 385/995), who credits Ṭa‘lab for writing *Kitābu ma‘ānī l-ši‘r* and *Kitābu l-hiğā’*, as well as commenting various pre-Islamic poems, and dedicating to poetic topics some of the philological discussions later collected into the work *al-Mağālis* (“*wa-li-‘abī l-‘abbāsi muğālasātun ‘amlā-hā ‘alā ‘aṣḥābi-hi fī mağālisi-hi taḥṭawī ‘alā qiṭ‘atin min-a l-naḥwi wa-luğati wa-l-‘aḥbāri wa-ma‘ānī l-qur‘āni wa-l-ši‘ri ... wa-‘amila ‘abu l-‘abbāsi qiṭ‘atan min ‘aṣ‘āri l-fuḥūl*”: *al-Fihrist*, I, 81).

Curiously enough, Ibn al-Nadīm’s *al-Fihrist* doesn’t include the *Qṣ* in the list of Ṭa‘lab’s works on Arabic poetry, nor, generally speaking, do biographical dictionaries mention it among his works (‘Abduttawwāb 1966: 15). However, this fact doesn’t necessarily contradict the attribution of the *Qṣ* to Ṭa‘lab, if we concur with ‘Abduttawwāb (1966: 16) that it is not unusual for Classical Arabic technical literature to escape the attention of biographers: by way of illustration, we know from the *Ğamharatu l-‘amṭāl* by al-‘Askarī (d. 395/1005), the *Mağma‘u l-‘amṭāl* of al-Maydanī (d. 518/1124), and the *Ḥizānātu l-‘adab* by al-Bağdādī (1093/1682) that Mu‘arriğ al-Sadūsī (d. 195/810) wrote a work entitled *Kitābu l-‘amṭāl*, which nonetheless fails to be mentioned in the authoritative biographical dictionary *Kitābu l-ṭabaqāt* by Ibn Sa‘d (d. 230/845).

However, according to ‘Abduttawwāb (*Ibidem*), the arguments supporting Ṭa‘lab’s authorship of the *Qṣ* go beyond these philological observations, and encompass indirect evidence of a comparative nature: in its conciseness, the style of the *Qṣ* is highly reminiscent

of that found in another work by Ṭa‘lab, the *Kitābu l-faṣīḥ* (cp. *al-Fihrist*, I, 81). What’s more, the comparative evidence for attributing the *Qṣ̣* to Ṭa‘lab is also direct, since both the extant manuscripts of this work, namely Vatican manuscript no. 357 and al-Azhar manuscript no. 1181 (7323, Abaza collection), explicitly indicate Ṭa‘lab as its author. Remarkably, this sort of evidence wasn’t available to Schiaparelli (1890), Nöldeke (1890), Ḥafāḡī (1948), Bonebakker (1956), etc., who could only rely on the Vatican manuscript in preparing their critical editions or studies of the *Qṣ̣*, since the al-Azhar manuscript was only later discovered by ‘Abduṭṭawwāb (1966: 12).

Finally, virtually any scholar that has investigated the *Qṣ̣* would be inclined to attribute it to Ṭa‘lab on the basis of an epistemological argument: thus, Nöldeke (1890), ‘Abduṭṭawwāb (1966) and Heinrichs (1971) regard the Kufan grammarian as the author of this treatise because in describing Arabic poetry, it adopts interpretive tools typical of linguistic analysis, such as the notions *‘amr*, *nahy*, *ḥabar*, *istiḥbār*. Nevertheless, this sort of epistemological argument is less compelling than it might appear at first, considering that interpretive tools borrowed from Arabic grammar are actually found in Arabic medieval treatises on poetry authored by literary critics rather than grammarians. For instance, Qudāmah (d. 337/948?) and al-Qarṭājannī (d. 684/1285), who Cantarino (1975) regards as major figures of the golden age of Arabic poetics, seemingly assign to the genuinely linguistic notions *lafẓ* and *ma‘nā* (‘signifier’ and ‘signified’, respectively) a privileged role in their theories<sup>5</sup>.

This linguistic attitude is adamantly clear in the case of Qudāmah, where a four-fold system of theoretical underpinnings emerges from his work *Naqdu l-ši‘r*, 9, consisting of *lafẓ*, *ma‘nā*, meter and rhyme. This appears to be less evident in the case of al-Qarṭājannī, but may become clearer below. Badawi (1962: 88-89) observes that the Andalusian scholar al-Qarṭājannī faithfully follows Aristotle’s *dictum* that fantasy (*taḥyīl*) is a crucial ingredient of any poetical discourse, yet he also adapts it to his own cultural context, arguing that the epic genre depicted in Greek poetry is one of the *loci* of manifestation of fantasy, whereas this genre is simply not portrayed in Arabic poetry:

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<sup>5</sup> The English terms ‘form’ and ‘meaning’ are consciously avoided here, and the terms ‘signifier’ and ‘signified’ adopted instead, since when denoting a sound-string conceptually opposed to ‘meaning’, the term ‘form’ could wrongly represent ‘meaning’ as having no form, which is actually not the case (cp. the Saussurean axiom that language as a whole “est forme et non substance”).



*wa-hāzim [...] yufarriq bayna l-ši 'r wa-l-ḥaṭābah 'ala 'asas 'anna l-ši 'r ya 'tamid 'alā l-taḥyīl baynamā l-ḥaṭābah ya 'tamid 'alā l-'iqnā' [...] wa-yata 'arraḍ li-'anwā' al-ši 'r al-yūnānī [...] wa-hya 'ašyā' lam taqa 'fī l-wuḡūd [...] wa-hwa yušīr 'ilā ši 'r al-malāḥim [...] wa-lammā lam yara la-hu nazīran fī l-ši 'r al-'arabī marra bi-hi sarī'an wa-lam yatawaqqaf*

Taken a step forward, there is also good reason to believe that in Arabic poetry the *locus* of manifestation of fantasy is rather the conceptual pair *lafz-ma'nā*, considering that in *Minhāḡu l-bulaḡā'*, II, 18-19 al-Qarṭāḡannī affirms that:

- fantasy (and persuasion) use(s) their own forms of expression (“*šūratay l-taḥyīli wa-l-'iqnā'*”);

- such forms manifest themselves as signifier-signified pairs (“*inna l-ma'āniya l-šuwaru*”, “*aqāma l-lafzu l-mu'abbaru bi-hi hay'ata tilka l-šūratī*”);

- this holds especially in poetry (and in rhetoric: “*al-ši 'ru wa-l-ḥaṭābatu yaštarikāni fī māddati l-ma'ānī*”); or, somewhat simplifying: insofar as poetry is concerned, fantasy (indirectly) manifests itself in the form of signifier-signified pairs.

We can infer from *Minhāḡu l-bulaḡā'*, II, 18-19 that in al-Qarṭāḡannī's interpretation of Arabic poetry the conceptual pair *lafz-ma'nā* is functionally equivalent to the Aristotelian notion of the epic genre, in the sense that this linguistic pair mediates the conceptual relationship between fantasy and poetry, just as the epic genre does<sup>6, 7</sup>. As a corollary, *lafz-ma'nā* not only occupies a significant role in Qudāmah's theory of poetry, it is also

<sup>6</sup> For the sake of completeness, *Minhāḡu l-bulaḡā'*, II, 18-19 is reproduced in its entirety below:

*'inna l-ma'āniya l-šuwaru l-hāšilatū fī l-'aḡḥāni 'an-i l-'ašyā' i l-mawḡūdati fī l-'a'yāni [...] 'idā 'ubbira 'an tilka l-šūratī l-ḡihniyyati l-hāšilatī 'an-i l-'idrāki 'aqāma l-lafzu l-mu'abbaru bi-hi hay'ata tilka l-šūratī l-ḡihniyyati fī 'ašḥāmi l-sāmi 'īna wa-'aḡḥāni-him [...] kāna l-ši 'ru wa-l-ḥaṭābatu yaštarikāni fī māddati l-ma'ānī wa-yaftariqāni bi-šūratay l-taḥyīli wa-l-'iqnā'*

The 'signified' are the forms that arise in one's mind subsequent to the eye's perception of things. [...] If one wanted to convey this form [of expression], as resulting from one's perception, then the 'signifier', which is typically apt to expression, sets up a symbol for it, [understandable] in the listeners' perceptive faculty and mind. [...] Poetry and rhetoric share the substance of the 'signified', whereas they differ as to their form, since they use the forms of fantasy or persuasion, respectively.

<sup>7</sup> In doing so, al-Qarṭāḡannī arguably applies to Arabic poetry an idea that Aristotle originally devised for human language in general. The Greek philosopher, in fact, “apparently held that linguistic meaning derives from imagery, spoken words being but the symbols of the inner images” (Thomas 2013, and references therein).

emphasized in the *ars poetica* of al-Qartāğannī. A caveat is in order, however, since the important point is not that these critics made use of the conceptual pair *lafz-ma'nā*, which is hardly surprising in light of the fact that the science of linguistics was among the pillars of their polished education (Cantarino 1975: 46), but that this linguistic notion was *theoretically relevant* to their literary framework of investigation<sup>8</sup>.

These epistemological considerations on the Arabic theory of poetry have, as alluded to above, a significant import for the issue of attribution of the *Qṣ*, since they show that the presence of a linguistic attitude in this work doesn't necessarily guarantee that it was authored by a grammarian such as Ṭa'lab - contrary to a received view.

In sum, taking stock of the current state of research on the *Qṣ*, we find that textual-stylistic evidence (cp. *Kitābu l-faṣīh*) and transmission-related evidence (the failure to mention technical literature by biographers; the converging opinion of manuscript copyists) support the medieval traditional assertion that this work is a major outcome of Ṭa'lab's interest in poetry, whereas epistemological evidence (presence of a linguistic framework) is far less cogent in this respect.

#### 4. Intratextuality

The issue of attribution of the *Qṣ* to Ṭa'lab discussed in the previous section is a non-trivial philological controversy in the study of this treatise, which 'Abduttawwāb (1966) contributes to resolving convincingly.

Yet another philological issue the Egyptian scholar addresses in the introduction to his critical edition of the *Qṣ* is the fact that the interpretive tools presented within the treatise differ considerably from those traditionally ascribed to Ṭa'lab's analysis. According to 'Abduttawwāb (1966: 18), a telling example is the concept of *'ikfā'*: in his view, *Qṣ*, 64 keeps this notion distinct from that of *'iqwā'*, whereas Ṭa'lab's teachings reported in the *al-'Umdah* by Ibn Raṣīq (d. 463/1070) define the former as synonymous to the latter ("*wa-kalāmu-hu fī l-'iqwā' wa-l-'ikfā' hunā yuḥālif mā ruwiya 'an-hu fī l-'umdah*").

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<sup>8</sup> This is all the more so, if we take into account textual-historical research by Bernards and Nawas (1998: 103), according to which the distinction between grammarians and literary critics is far less clear-cut than it was once thought to be.

In greater detail, the relevant passage in *al-‘Umdah* (*apud* ‘Abduttawwāb 1966: 18) reads as follows:

*wa-‘ammā l-‘ikfā’u fa-hwa l-‘iqwā’u bi-‘ayni-hi ‘inda ġillati l-‘ulamā’i ka-‘abī ‘amrin bni l-‘alā’i wa-l-ḥalīli bni ‘aḥmada wa-yūnusa bni ḥabībin wa-hwa qawlu ‘aḥmada bni yaḥyā ta ‘lab*<sup>9</sup>

On the other hand, *QṢ*, 64, describes ‘*iqwā’* as a poetic license allowing for a rhyme between two word-final vowels that have different values, e. g. *a(:)* rhyming with *i* in (*bšī*)*rā’* (*naḥ*)*ri* (“*wa-l-‘iqwā’u miṭlu qawli l-šā’ir: [... ] fa-bširā [... ] wa-l-naḥri fa-kasara wa-rafa ‘a wa-naṣaba*”); and ‘*ikfā’* as a poetic license allowing for a rhyme between two word-final consonants that are not identical, being instead “similar in pronunciation, such as *ḍ* and *ḏ*, or *n* and *m*”, e. g. (*mu ‘ā*)*dī’* (*aqyā*)*ḏi* (“*wa-l-‘ikfā’u duḥūlu l-dāli ‘alā l-ḏā’i, wa-l-mūni ‘alā l-mīmi wa-hya l-‘aḥrufu l-mutašābihatu ‘alā l-lisān*”).

As can be gleaned from the comparison between the two passages, the problem pointed out by ‘Abduttawwāb revolves around the two different predicates that the *QṢ* and *al-‘Umdah* combine with the subject *l-‘ikfā’u*, notably the definitions *duḥūlu l-dāli*, etc., vs. *l-‘iqwā’u bi-‘ayni-hi*. While ‘Abduttawwāb leaves this conundrum unsolved, a solution to it in principle can be found through a closer reading of the aforementioned definitions.

Beginning with the definition *l-‘iqwā’u bi-‘ayni-hi* recorded in *al-‘Umdah*, a case can be made for rendering the phrase *bi-‘ayni-hi* occurring in this passage as ‘in its essence’, rather than ‘itself’, since the latter is a frequent translation of *bi-‘ayni-hi* (Wright 1896: II, 272) that misguidedly overlooks the technical nuance that several primary sources give to the Arabic original (*apud* Lane: 1863, V, 2216, which accordingly glosses the word ‘*ayn* combined with a genitive (pro)noun as “a thing’s *naḥs* [i. e. *self*”, “its *dāt* [which means the same]; and its ‘*asl* [as meaning *its essence*, or *constituent substance*]). Consequently, the translation of the nominal sentence *l-‘ikfā’u l-‘iqwā’u bi-‘ayni-hi* as “‘*ikfā’* is ‘*iqwā’*, in its essence” is justified since it is faithful to the technical context in which the Arabic phrase *bi-‘ayni-hi* occurs. An equally viable translation of the same sentence is “‘*ikfā’* is the essence of ‘*iqwā’*”, if we consider that the construction [Noun + *bi* + ‘*ayn* + Suffix-pronoun] is transformationally derived from the construction [‘*ayn* + Noun] (Wright 1896: II, 281-282).

<sup>9</sup> In this passage, *Ta‘lab* also describes a transmission chain relative to ‘*ikfā’*, which includes, among others, *al-Ḥalīl*: see Bonebakker (1956: Introduction, 34-35) for details.

Bearing this in mind, let's now turn our attention to the definition *duḥūlu l-dāli*, etc., which effectively involves the two consonantal classes *d/z* and *n/m*, a statement that is grounded in two arguments:

- historically, Ṭa'lab was well acquainted with the linguistic theory of al-Ḥalīl (d. 175/791), as is inferred from his ability to recognize al-Ḥalīl's influence on Sībawayhi's *al-Kitāb* ("qawl ṭa'lab 'al-'uṣūlu wa-l-masā'ilu fī l-kitābi li-l-ḥalīl", Ḍayf 1968: 34), and the transmission-chain mentioned in fn. 9 above;

- epistemologically, al-Ḥalīl subsumed *d/z* and *n/m* under the classes, respectively, of *ḥurūf al-dulq* and *l-ḥurūf al-liṭawiyyah* ("summiyat ḥādīhi l-ḥurūfu dulqan [...] min-hā ṭalātātun dalīqatun r l n [...] min-hā ṭalātātun šafawiyyatun f b m", "wa-l-zā'u wa-l-dālu wa-l-tā'u liṭawiyyah": *Kitābu l-'ayn*, I, 51, 58 and Fleisch 1961: I, 227).

Furthermore, this in-depth look at the definition *duḥūlu l-dāli*, etc., has an interesting implication on a transphrastic analytical level: the definition of 'iqwā' that immediately precedes that of 'ikfā' in the text of the *QŠ* also involves a *consonantal* class, to wit *i, u, a* ("fa-kasara wa-rafa'a wa-naṣaba"), which Arab grammarians actually conceptualize as 'reduced' consonants and/or syllabically conditioned allophones of *y, w, 'alif*, respectively (Fleisch 1961: I, 232)<sup>10</sup>. Ṭa'lab follows this interpretive tradition, in that he adduces as an example of 'iqwā' the rhyme (*bšī*)rā/ (*nah*)ri, where this poetic license affects not only the 'reduced' consonant *i*, but also its full counterpart 'alif. In particular, Ṭa'lab follows al-Ḥalīl's teachings in this respect, since the order *i, u, a* in which the 'reduced' consonants are listed in *QŠ*, 64 reproduces the order *y, w, 'alif*, in which their full counterparts are listed in *Kitāb al-'ayn*, I, 58 ("wa-l-yā'u wa-l-wāwu wa-l-'alifu wa-l-hamzatu ḥawā'iyyah"), in sharp contrast with later sources, where the order 'alif, *y, w* is found instead (see e. g. Fleisch 1961: I, 205, 215). In this light, a transphrastic analysis of the definitions of 'iqwā' and 'ikfā' reveals that in *QŠ*, 64 Ṭa'lab's linguistic reasoning:

(A) posits a property shared by both these poetic licenses, i. e. the consonant; and (B) proceeds from 'iqwā', which is sensitive to a particular case of consonant, i. e. the 'reduced' consonant, to 'ikfā', which concerns its general case, i. e. the consonant proper.

<sup>10</sup>The linguistic reality of the consonant 'alif lies more in its morphological behavior than phonological realization: see Fleisch (1961: I, 239-241) for details.

Broadly speaking, these two definitions show that in *QŠ*, 64 Ṭa‘lab construes the notions of ‘*iqwā*’ and ‘*ikfā*’ as an inductive relationship, proceeding from particular to general (cp. B), consequently uniting the former to the latter by means of a common property (cp. A). It follows that the *QŠ* is informed by an inductive approach that is far from implausible, and under the circumstances in which the treatise was composed is totally expected, in view of the fact that the Kufan school adhered to by Ṭa‘lab was systematically availing itself of induction (‘*istiqrā*’), as discussed in Carter (1999). This amounts to saying that in *QŠ*, 64 the concept of ‘*ikfā*’ qualifies as the *general or essential* core of ‘*iqwā*’, so that it is strikingly similar to the concept of ‘*ikfā*’, as Ṭa‘lab defines it in *al-‘Umdah*, stating that “‘*ikfā*’ is the *essence* of ‘*iqwā*’” (see above). Although conceptually identical, Ṭa‘lab’s definitions of ‘*ikfā*’ as found in the *QŠ* and *al-‘Umdah* differ as to their formulation, being practical in the former (cp. the abundance of examples) and rather abstract in the latter (cp. its conciseness).

Thus, the picture that emerges from this case-study regarding the notion of ‘*ikfā*’ is that the incorporation of intratextual observations in the analysis of the *QŠ* (e. g. a comparison between the passages concerning ‘*iqwā*’ and ‘*ikfā*’) can help resolve the philological issue, first raised by ‘Abduttawwāb (1966), that Ṭa‘lab’s theory of poetry is not consistent throughout his work.

## 5. Intertextuality

There is a further philological issue that ‘Abduttawwāb and Heinrichs discuss relative to the *QŠ*, and it regards the oblivion this treatise was consigned to by subsequent theorists of Arabic poetry and literary critics. ‘Abduttawwāb (1966: 18) acknowledges that certain terms or notions used in the *QŠ* have survived in later works, but rules out the possibility that the theoretical apparatus of this treatise, as a whole, has exerted any influence on them (“*mu‘zam hādīhi l-‘iṣṭilāḥāt lam yarid la-hā dīkr fī kutub al-balāḡah [... ] ka-mā ‘anna hādā l-kitāb qawā‘id al-šī‘r lam yaqtabis min-hu ‘ayy mu‘allif*”). Likewise, Heinrichs (1971: 212) argues “that we do not encounter this [=QŠ’s] theory anywhere else in Arabic literature”, although he concedes to Bonebakker (1956: Introduction, 23-25) that Qudāmah retained some concepts expounded in the *QŠ*, such as the identification of *tašbīh* ‘similitude’ with a *ḡaraḍ* (Heinrichs 1973: 40).

However, based on the results of the previous section, we may perhaps shed some new light on the (alleged) historical neglect of the *QŠ*, through a closer reading of the primary

sources. In this respect, it would appear sensible to take into consideration the three theoretical notions which, according to Heinrichs (1971: 212, 1973: 40, fn. 46) are at the core of the *QŠ*, namely (see also sect. 2):

I. *qā'idah*

II. *ğarađ*

III. the relationship between (I) and (II) in terms of '*aşl-far*' ('base-and-derivative')

We can adopt (I) as our starting point, which Nöldeke (1890: 711) has long proposed to interpret as an entity belonging to a syntactic level of analysis, i. e. a syntactic structure (see also Hussein 2004: 302).

Thus, if we want to make sense of *QŠ*, 31, which establishes that in a given line of poetry expressions such as '*aqillū 'alay-him min-a l-lawmi*' are instances of command, we must take into account its syntactic structure (e. g. sentence-initial verb, verb taking an imperative form, etc.), and exclude its semantics, since the latter – in accordance with Nöldeke – would instead point to an instance of prohibition (cp. Nöldeke's paraphrasis of '*aqillū*', etc. as "Tadelt nicht"). Simply put, when using the terms '*amr*', '*nahy*', etc., Ta'lab refers to a syntactic structure contained within a single verse (Heinrichs 1973: 39, Hussein 2004: 294).

However, a word of caution is in order here, since this statement does not deny that Ta'lab's theory of poetry is concerned with semantics, but is rather meant to highlight that it has a conceptual structure that is more fine-grained than is usually assumed.

Actually, the semantic dimension of Ta'lab's poetics becomes apparent in the *ğarađ* (II), which plausibly belongs to a pragmatic level of analysis, i. e. to a semantic level that considers the speaker's intention toward his addressee as linguistically relevant. In fact, Heinrichs' (1973: 41) textual research in Arabic lexicography has shown that in "old Arabic

usage” *ğaraḍ* meant “the ‘intention’ of the poet in connection with his addressee”, on the basis of glosses of this term such as *qaṣd* and *niyyah*<sup>11</sup>.

To this, we can add that in Ṭa‘lab’s view the linguistic notion of *ma‘nā* dealt with in sect. 3 appears to qualify as a ‘purer’ kind of semantic level, which denotes a referent in the real world, abstracting away from situational information such as the speaker’s intention toward his addressee – not unlike the sememe in modern linguistics. This is self-evident in *QṢ*, 53, which highlights the exceptional behavior of the metaphor in this respect, since this figure of speech “assigns to a given referent a word or meaning that originally does not denote it” (“*wa-qāla fī l-’isti’ārati wa-hwa’an yusta’āra li-l-šay’i-smu ġayri-hi ’aw ma‘nā sawā-hu*”), thus disrupting the natural correlation between a (pure) *ma‘nā* and the denoted thing.

In a broader perspective, Ṭa‘lab conceives these poetic referents (‘*ašyā*’ encoded into *ma‘ānī*) as the basic ingredients of the poetic syntactic structure (*qā’idah*), as is inferred from *QṢ*, 58. In the latter passage, which deals with a poetic license known as a ‘juxtaposition of contraries’ (*muğāwaratu l-’aḍḍād*), the Kufan grammarian affirms that “one referent can be uttered along with another, which neutralizes it” (“*dikru l-šay’i ma’a mā yu’dimu wuğūdah*”), and exemplifies this definition through Koran 20: 74 “*lā yamūtu fī-hā wa-lā yahyā*” ‘he shall neither die nor live’ (Arberry’s transl.), where the structure resulting from the juxtaposition of the two (contrasting) referents *lā yamūtu* and *lā yahyā* is a complex form of *qā’idah*, and specifically an instance of *nahy*.

This is all the more evident in the poetic examples that Ṭa‘lab mentions in connection with *muğāwarat al-’aḍḍād*, in view of the fact that the pair of (contrasting) *ma‘ānī* involved in each of these examples consists of a single line, which is precisely the defining characteristic of the *qā’idah* (see above). That the *ma‘ānī* give rise to a single verse – hence, by transitive property, to a *qā’idah* – is also shown by *QṢ*, 38, where, in discussing the kind of *tašbīh* called *l-tašbīh l-ḥāriğ’an-i l-ta’addī wa-l-taqšīr*, the Kufan grammarian explicitly states that “this is the best way of comparing a given pair of referents to another pair of referents in one and the same line of poetry” (“*hādā ’aḥsamu šay’in wuğida fī tašbīhin šay’ayni bi-šay’ayni fī baytin wāḥid*”).

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<sup>11</sup> Bohas, Guillaume and Kouloughli (1990) and Firanescu (2009) introduce the fundamental notions of modern pragmatics, applying them to medieval Arabic grammar.

On the whole, the aforementioned passages can lead us to hypothesize that in Ṭa‘lab’s view two or more poetic referents and their meanings (‘ašyā‘/ma‘ānī) become a poetic syntactic structure (*qā‘idah*) through a process that assembles them, akin to the Western syntactic notion of combination.

One may argue against this hypothesis, by pointing out that in the texts we’ve just examined no technical term is found for the notion of a syntactic combination that assembles the two contrasting *ma‘ānī* (‘*aḍḍād*). However, such a hypothesis gains plausibility from the fact that – despite the lack of linguistic terminology – the notion of combination can be easily grasped from:

- the *comitative* meaning encoded in the informal expression *dīkr...ma‘a*
- the rhetorical term *muğāwarah* ‘juxtaposition’, actually denoting a *combination* of two adjacent elements
- the rhetorical term *tašbīh* ‘similitude’, implying a *combination* of two or more *comparanda*.

Summarizing the discussion thus far, the linguistic background of the *QŠ* outlined in (I-II) is better reconceptualized as a tripartite conceptual domain: a pragmatic level (*ğaraḍ*) based on a syntactic level (*qā‘idah*), in turn based on a sememic level (*ma‘nā*), similar to modern linguistic theories<sup>12</sup>.

Moreover, this relation of ‘X’s being based on Y’, which unites *ğaraḍ* and *qā‘idah* on the one hand and *qā‘idah* and *ma‘nā* on the other, is rather vague and can be more accurately restated in logical terms as a notion of ‘inclusion’. This interpretation finds its *raison d’être* in two facts.

Firstly, Ṭa‘lab characterizes the *ğaraḍ* as a *far‘*, a concept that Arab Grammarians by definition construe as non-primitive, and rather decomposable into the so-called ‘*aṣl* plus an additional element (Guillaume 2006: 177). In this case, the ‘*aṣl* is the syntactic level

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<sup>12</sup> Such a threefold level of analysis, characterized by an important role of semantics, cuts across modern linguistic theories, being found even in prominently formalist approaches such as the Minimalist Program, according to which a lexicon of *pure* signified feeds syntax, which in turn feeds the so-called *conceptual-intentional* component (Chomsky 1995: Ch. 1).



(*qā'idah*), as explicitly stated in *QŠ*, 33 (see sect. 2), whereas the additional element is the situational information added to the *qā'idah*, i. e. the speaker's intention toward the addressee, as inferred from the technical usage of *ğaraḍ* at Ṭa'lab's time (see above). In set-theoretical terms, the *ğaraḍ*, being a *'aṣl* endowed with a particular property, is a subset of the superset *'aṣl/qā'idah*, i. e. an inclusion relation unites one to the other. In linguistic terms, the relation entered by the syntactic *qā'idah* and pragmatic *ğaraḍ* makes it possible to reconceptualize the syntactic and pragmatic levels of analysis as a single syntactic-pragmatic level.

Secondly, *al-'Umdah* (*apud* Hussein 2004: 303) reports that an anonymous authority construes as a four-fold set of *qawā'id* what Ṭa'lab regards as a *ğaraḍ*, notably *madh*, *hiğā'*, *nasīb*, *'i'tidār*, instead of the syntactic structures *'amr*, *nahy*, etc. (“*wa-qālu qawā'ida l-ši'ri 'arba'atan-i l-rağbata l-rahbata l-ṭaraba l-ğaḍaba fa-ma'a l-rağbati yakūnu l-madhū [... ] wa-ma'a l-rahbati yakūnu l-'i'tidāru [... ] wa-ma'a l-ṭarabi yakūnu [... ] riqqatu l-nasībi [... ] wa-ma'a l-ğaḍabi yakūnu l-hiğā'*”)

There is little point in assuming that the medieval critics responsible for such a conceptual overlapping between *qā'idah* and *ğaraḍ* misunderstood the *QŠ*, given their solid knowledge of the linguistic background informing this work. Hence, we can alternatively consider this overlapping – via an argument by exclusion – as triggered by a common feature shared by both *qā'idah* and *ğaraḍ*: namely, that in all likelihood, on the sememic and syntactic levels, *qā'idah* is for *ma'nā* what, on a syntactic-pragmatic level, *ğaraḍ* is for *qā'idah*. From a linguistic perspective, this amounts to saying that the relation entered by the sememic *ma'nā* and syntactic *qā'idah* makes it possible to reconceptualize the sememic and syntactic levels of analysis as a single level, indicated here as a ‘compositional-syntactic level’. In set-theoretical terms, this relation also entails that, on a compositional-syntactic level, *qā'idah* is the subset of the superset *ma'nā*, just as, on a syntactic-pragmatic level, *ğaraḍ* is the subset of the superset *qā'idah* (see above).

To put it differently, the definition of *qā'idah* presented in *al-'Umdah* arises from its double status in the *QŠ*, where this notion conceptually varies according to the level in which it occurs: a subset on a compositional-syntactic dimension, and a superset on a syntactic-pragmatic dimension. It ensues that the *'aṣl-far'* relationship in (III) above, which Heinrichs (1973: 40, fn. 46) sees at work between *qā'idah* and *ğaraḍ*, is part and parcel of a more general inclusion relation, which also holds between *ma'nā* and *qā'idah*, as illustrated in Fig. 1 below.

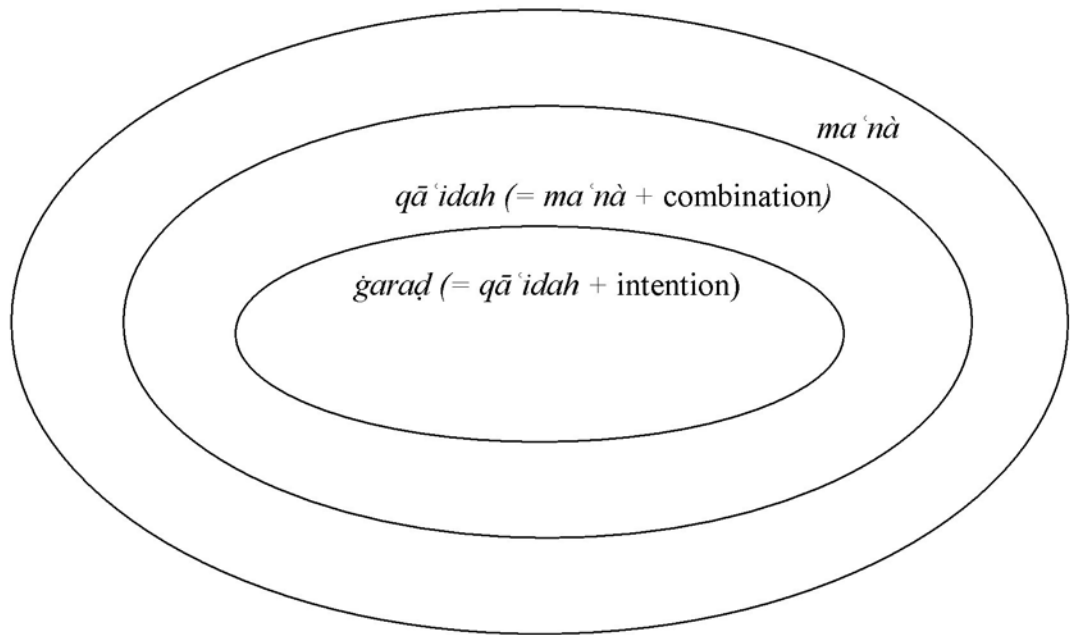


Fig. 1: *QŠ* – Overall Linguistic Framework

In this light, the issue of oblivion for the *QŠ* raised by ‘Abduttawwāb and Heinrichs, if any, concerns a tripartite and internally-coherent conceptual domain, rather than the three isolated theoretical constructs (I-III). With this in place, we can now take an in-depth look at Qudāmah’s *Naqdu l-ši’r*, in order to ascertain whether the influence of the *QŠ* on this work is confined to only certain terms, as ‘Abduttawwāb and Heinrichs maintain, or is sufficiently deeply entrenched within it to transfer the overall linguistic framework depicted in Fig. 1 above.

Historically, the latter hypothesis would not appear to be so far-fetched, if we consider that primary sources report that Qudāmah was in contact with Ṭa’lab (Heinrichs 1973: 40, Bonebakker 1956: Introduction, 23); whereas from a textual perspective, the burden of proof for an hypothesis of this kind mainly – though not exclusively – rests on the first chapter of *Naqdu l-ši’r* (*NŠ* henceforth), because of its definitional nature (Bonebakker 1956: Introduction, 9). Accordingly, we will proceed by introducing and translating various portions

from this chapter, including related passages from other sources, all of which will subsequently serve as *loci probantes* for the hypothesis under discussion:

(α) A distinction exists between *ma'nā* (and related *ğarađ*), as generally found in poetry and prose, and *ma'nā* as found in poetry alone. Cp. *NŠ*, 1: “They have also spoken about the poetic signified expressed in poetry”, “the science of unusual phrases and grammar and *’agrāđ* of the signified is something needed to form the basis of the human discourse common to poetry and prose”<sup>13</sup> (“*wa-takallamū fi l-ma’ānī l-dālli ’alay-hā l-si’ru*”, “*’ilma l-ğarībi wa-l-naḥwi wa-’agrāđi l-ma’ānī muḥtāğun ’ilay-hi fi ’ašli l-kalāmi l-’āmmi li-l-ši’ri wa-l-naṭr*”).

(β) The *ma'nā* characterized as “poetic” in the above passage is expressed by means of the so-called *qawl* (in addition to co-occurring with meter and rhyme). Cp. *NŠ*, 2: “poetry is a metrically rhythmic and rhymed *qawl* expressing a signified”<sup>14</sup> (“*’inna-hu [= l-ši’ra] qawlun mawzūmun muqaffān yadullu ’alā ma’nān*”).

(γ) The *qawl* can be assimilated to a certain extent to the Western notion of ‘signifier’ (cp. sect. 3 and *NŠ*, 7: “*kāna l-ši’ru ’alā mā qulnā-hu lafẓan mawzūnan muqaffān yadullu ’alā ma’nān*”), although this is not the whole of the matter. Cp. *NŠ*, 95: “the conditions of nouns, verbs and what results from their combination, i. e. *’aqwāl*” (“*’awđā’u l-’asmā’i wa-l-’af’āli wa-l-mu’allafati min-hā wa-hya l-’aqwāl*”), where *qawl* effectively corresponds to a syntactic structure<sup>15</sup>. This passage also entails that the *ma'nā* occurring within a *qawl* is compositional.

(δ) Equally compositional is the *ma'nā* that occurs within a single line. Cp. *NŠ*, 8: “from the standpoint of what it expresses, it [= rhyme] combines its own signified with the signified of the remaining part of the verse” (“*min ġihati mā ’anna-hā [= l-qāfiyata] tadullu ’alā ma’nān li-dālika l-ma’nā llađi tadullu ’alay-hā-’tilāfun ma’a ma’nā sā’iri l-bayt*”).

(ε) The *qawl* also qualifies as the *’ašl* of the so-called *kalām*. Cp. *NŠ*, 2, which glosses the word *qawl* in the passage (β) above as: “*qawlun dāllun ’alā ’ašli l-kalām*”.

<sup>13</sup> Translation based on Cantarino (1975: 119), with terminological adaptations.

<sup>14</sup> Translation based on Cantarino (1975: 120), with terminological adaptations.

<sup>15</sup> The syntactic dimension of *qawl* and *lafẓ* is alluded to in Cantarino (1975: 47), given that he explicitly states that at least *lafẓ* has a syntactic dimension: “*lafẓ* however, especially with literary critics, often takes on the more pregnant meaning of the concrete formulation of an idea; the sound combination produced by a series of words such as the one making up a whole verse”.

(ζ) Ibn Wahb (d. early fourth/tenth c. ), a scholar who shared his linguistic tools and ideas with Qudāmah<sup>16</sup>, provides a definition of poetry that is strikingly similar to that found in the *NŠ*, but crucially departs from it in that he replaces *qawl* with *kalām* in his work *al-Burhānu fī wuḡūhi l-bayān* (“*kalāmūn mawzūnūn muqaffān*” apud Bonebakker 1956: Introduction, 17). Another point of difference between Ibn Wahb and Qudāmah, highlighted by Bonebakker (*Ibidem*), concerns their commentary of certain lines from Imru’ al-Qays. Whereas Qudāmah observes that “...the idea expressed in the second line [...] is only an addition to the idea in the first line”, thus adopting a merely compositional-syntactic analysis, Ibn Wahb regards them as “examples of how one should ‘put ideas in the places which suit them’”, adopting an integrated syntactic-pragmatic analysis instead (cp. the key-terms “put...in” and “suit”, respectively).

The different attitudes of Qudāmah and Ibn Wahb in commenting Arabic poetry (compositional-syntactic vs. syntactic-pragmatic approach) have an interesting theoretical correlate in their different definition of poetry as *qawl* and *kalām*, respectively, so that the former term is compositional-syntactic (cp. also β, γ above), and the latter is syntactic-pragmatic. Given the common linguistic background of these two scholars, the integrated syntactic-pragmatic nuance of *kalām*, as found in *al-Burhānu fī wuḡūhi l-bayān*, can likely be extended to the *NŠ* as well.

(η) The so-called *ḡaraḍ* behaves like *kalām* in that it can have a hybrid pragmatic-syntactic nuance, since, on the one hand, it is glossed as *maqṣūd* and refers to the speaker’s intention toward his addressee, and, on the other, is said to result from a syntactic combination (*tarkīb*). Cp. *NŠ*, 23, 28, 30: “the poetic *ma’nā* must take into consideration an intended *ḡaraḍ*” (“*’an yakūna l-ma’nā muwāḡihan li-l-ḡaraḍi l-maqṣūd*”); “mostly the *ḡaraḍ* of the poets [when including verses of praise] is to praise the men”<sup>17</sup> (“*kāna ḡaraḍu l-ṣu’arā’i fī l-’aktari ’inna-mā hwa madḡu-hum li-l-riḡāl*”); “Regarding the *madīḡ*, poets can excel in describing human virtues, and in enumerating the aforementioned four kinds of moral qualities, as well as their aspects and the ways in which they are combined” (“*wa-qad yatafannanu l-ṣu’arā’u fī l-madīḡi bi-’an yaṣifū ḡusna ḡuluḡi l-’insāni wa-yu’addidū*

<sup>16</sup> A recent study by Heck (2002: 87) supports the hypothesis of the linguistic background shared by these two scholars, providing textual evidence which mainly consists of several conceptual and stylistic commonalities between *al-Burhānu fī wuḡūhi l-bayān* and the linguistic themes dealt with in Qudāmah’s *Kitābu l-ḡarāḡi wa-ṣinā’ati l-kitābah*.

<sup>17</sup> Translation based on Hussein (2004: 300), with terminological adaptations.

‘anwā‘a l-‘arba‘i l-faḍā‘ili llatī qaddamnā dīkra-hā wa-‘aqsāma-hā wa-‘aṣnāfa tarkībi ba ‘dī-hā ma‘a ba ‘d’’).

An overall analysis of the aforementioned passages reveals that in the *NS* the combination of the more basic *ma‘ānī* gives rise to the poetic *ma‘nā*, also known as *qawl*, which differs from the generic *ma‘nā* ( $\alpha$ ,  $\beta$ ), in that it manifests itself as a syntactic structure coinciding with a single verse ( $\gamma$ ,  $\delta$ ). What follows from the first finding (*qawl* informed by a syntactic structure and single line) is that Qudāmah’s *qawl* is conceptually equivalent to Ṭa‘lab’s *qā‘idah*; whereas it follows from the second finding (generic *ma‘nā* vs. poetic *ma‘nā* /*qawl*) that Qudāmah’s *qawl* is a subset of the superset (generic) *ma‘nā*, so that in the *NS* an inclusion relation exists between the (generic) *ma‘nā* and *qawl* on a compositional-syntactic level, which parallels that holding between *ma‘nā* and *qā‘idah* in the *QS*.

Concerning the passages in ( $\epsilon$ ,  $\zeta$ ,  $\eta$ ), they show that in the *NS* the *kalām* or *ḡaraḍ* is not a primitive notion, since it is reduced to a compositional-syntactic *qawl* ( $\epsilon$ ,  $\zeta$ ) that also bears a pragmatic nuance ( $\zeta$ ), the latter being identified, among other things, with the speaker’s intention toward the addressee ( $\eta$ ). In this interpretive scenario, the notion of *kalām* or *ḡaraḍ*, as used in the *NS*, can be assimilated to the notion of *ḡaraḍ* as used in the *QS*, because one shares with the other a hybrid syntactic-pragmatic nature. Furthermore, the expression *qawl...‘aṣl al-kalām* ( $\epsilon$ ) proves that, on a syntactic-pragmatic level, an inclusion relation exists between *qawl* (*‘aṣl*, i. e. a superset: see above) and *kalām* (*far‘*, i. e. a subset)<sup>18</sup>, so that a parallelism arises between this kind of inclusion relation and the inclusion relation that unites *qā‘idah* to *ḡaraḍ* in the *QS*.

In sum, the key-terms *ma‘nā*, *qawl*, *ḡaraḍ* found throughout the *NS* reveal that the tripartite conceptual domain of the *QS*, as schematized in Fig. 1, has survived in its entirety in Qudāmah’s treatise, a conclusion which militates against the claim, voiced in the literature, that the *QS* was neglected by subsequent literary critics.

It is also worth observing that the *QS* doesn’t represent an isolated case in this respect, since appreciative textual evidence against the above claim arguably also lies in *Minhāḡu l-bulaḡā‘*, II, 11, which reads:

<sup>18</sup> Cantarino (1975: 46) seemingly fails to recognize the difference between *qawl* and *kalām* in the *NS*.

*yağibu 'alā man 'arāda ḡawdata l-taṣarrufi fī l-ma 'ānī wa-ḥusna l-maḏhabi fī-ḡtilābi-hā  
wa-l-ḥidqa bi-ta 'līfi ba 'dī-hā 'ilā ba 'dīn 'an ya 'rifā 'anna li-l-ṣu 'arā 'i 'aḡrādān 'uwala  
hiya l-bā 'itatu 'alā qawli l-ṣi 'r*

“Whoever wants to achieve mastery in the *ma 'ānī*, to appropriately inspire himself to the *ma 'ānī* already found in poetry, and artfully combine one *ma 'nā* to another, must know that the poets have primary *'aḡrād* [of which they avail themselves] to vivify the *qawl* of poetry”.

This passage deals with three key-concepts already encountered in the *QŠ* and *NŠ*, to wit *ma 'ānī*, (*qā 'idah*) *qawl* and *'aḡrād*, which neatly point to the relevance of an integrated semantic, syntactic and pragmatic framework of linguistic analysis to the *Minhāḡu l-bulaḡā* by al-Qartāḡannī (cp. end of sect. 3). Moreover, these key-notions, along with the key-notion of *ta 'līf*, appear to enter two interesting relations: on the one hand, the (logical) protasis *man*, etc., establishes a relation opposing the simple *ma 'nā* to the *ma 'nā* undergoing syntactic combination, not unlike the compositional-syntactic level observed in the *QŠ* and *NŠ* (see e. g. *mu 'allafati* in  $\gamma$  above); on the other, the (logical) apodosis *yaḡibu*, etc., establishes a relation opposing *qawl* to *ḡarād*, akin to the syntactic-pragmatic level observed in the two above mentioned treatises. Taken as a whole and to a large extent, this text offers an account of Arabic poetry modeled after the overall linguistic framework depicted in Fig. 1, in the sense that the relations described in the (logical) protasis and apodosis of *Minhāḡu l-bulaḡā*, II, 11, are all too generic to qualify as instances of inclusion, in contrast to the relations described in the framework in question; however, this detail doesn't affect the main point that in intertextual terms the *QŠ*, *NŠ*, and *Minhāḡu l-bulaḡā* share the bulk of this overall linguistic framework.

Going beyond intertextual considerations, it is also important to emphasize that the commonalities shared by these treatises lead us to expect, in historical terms, a tradition of knowledge transmission that in the case of al-Qartāḡannī might have been in principle indirect (Ṭa'lab > Qudāmah > al-Qartāḡannī), or direct (Ṭa'lab > al-Qartāḡannī). According to Hussein (2004: 300) al-Qartāḡannī's criticism of the ways in which Arabic *literati* divide the poetry into *'aḡrād* bears witness to his acquaintance with Qudāmah's work, an observation implying an indirect transmission of the *QŠ*.

As regards the direct transmission of this work, its main lines have plausibly been described by Arab scholars in the late sixties. In fact, although Ṭa'lab's legacy into al-

Qartāğannī's work is a poorly studied phenomenon, we know that the Andalusian cultural milieu to which al-Qartāğannī belonged (Ibn al-Ḥūğah: 1966: I, 45-53) revived the otherwise marginalized views of the Kufan school (Ḍayf 1968: 288), manifesting a renewed interest in Ṭa'lab's work: for instance, the Sevillian scholar Ibn Ṭalḥah (d. 618/1221) is reported to have taught *Kitābu l-faṣīḥ* (Ibn al-Ḥūğah: 1966: I, 51).

To conclude, the issue of oblivion concerning the *QŠ* disappears when we adopt an intertextual approach in its analysis: two case-studies in the *NŠ* and *Minhāğū l-bulağā'* have in fact substantiated the hypothesis – also supported by historical facts – that Ṭa'lab's treatise on poetry has deeply and globally influenced the linguistic framework used by subsequent literary critics.

## 5. Conclusion

This paper has shed new light on the linguistic attitude of Ṭa'lab toward Arabic poetry, arguing that it consisted of two main interpretive tools: inductive reasoning, in line with his Kufan affiliation, and a consistent linguistic framework, based on three key-concepts (*ma'nā*, *qā'idah*, *ğarağ*) and their relations (inclusion). This study has also highlighted that the aforementioned interpretive tools significantly contribute to solving philological issues related to the *QŠ*, among which are discrepancies in the definition of technical notions (e. g. *'ikfā'*, *'iqwā'*), and the question of its (alleged) oblivion. In particular, the solution to the latter problem offered in this study reveals a conceptual continuity between Ṭa'lab, Qudāmah and al-Qartāğannī, thus paving the way toward a global reassessment of the place of the *QŠ* within the history of Arabic poetics.

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