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**The Eloquence of the Text Between Abd al-Qahir Al-Jurjani and Ibn Sa'id
Al-Maghribi -Critical and analytical Study-**

بَلَاغَةُ النَّصِّ بَيْنَ عَبْدِ الْقَاهِرِ الْجُرْجَانِيِّ وَابْنِ سَعِيدِ الْمَغْرِبِيِّ

-دراسة نقدية تحليلية-

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Abstract:

Early critics excelled in articulating the poet's originality in all its facets and connotations. Among the foremost figures to address the phenomenon of originality with intelligent insights and a clear methodological perspective was Al-Jurjani, whose efforts reflect a mature and comprehensive understanding of creativity and invention. Ibn Sa'id Al-Maghribi, a later critic, demonstrated an ability to engage with Al-Jurjani's critical legacy and draw from earlier figures like Ibn Sallam Al-Jumahi. This influence is evident in Ibn Sa'id's works, such as 'Unwan al-Marqusat wa al-Mutribat and Rayat al-Mubarrazeen wa Ghayat al-Mumayazeen. Despite notable shared features, there are significant differences between their approaches. This study investigates whether Ibn Sa'id relied on Al-Jurjani's works as a reference and examines the extent and nature of this influence. It also explores how hidden texts can be negotiated to uncover their concealed meanings

Keywords: Originality, invention, eloquence of delving into meanings, strangeness, Al-Marqis.

المخلص:

أبدع النقاد القدماء في وصف الشعير بالأصالة بجميع مصطلحاتها ومدلولاتها والجرجاني من أبرز المؤلفين الذين أشاروا إلى ظاهرة الأصالة إشارات ذكية تدل امتلاكه النظرة المنهجية، والحقيقة أن جهد الجرجاني يمثل اتجاهًا ناضجًا لفهم معنى الإبداع والاختراع فهما واعيا وتأخر ابن سعيد المغربي مكنه من الالمام بتقيد الجرجاني والإفادة من سابقه بمن فيه ابن سلام الجمعي، حتى برز ذلك بوضوح في مصنفاته: "عنوان المرقصات والمطريات" ورايات المبرزين وغايات المميزين" والملاحظ أن بين مصنفات الكاتبين كثيرًا من السمات المشتركة، وكثيرًا من الاختلاف أيضًا. فهل تأثر ابن سعيد بمصنفات الجرجاني؟ وما مدى هذا التأثير؟ كيف يمكن مفاوضة النص الخفي لاقتناص بعض أسرار الخفية؟
الكلمات المفتاحية: الأصالة، الاختراع، بلاغة الغوص على المعاني، الغرابة، المرقص.

1. INTRODUCTION:

Early critics approached literary texts as self-contained entities, emerging from within their own structures. This emergence is inherently complex and varied, mirroring the diversity of artistic experiences and resisting confinement to fixed forms. Consequently, critics excelled in identifying and describing poets as original, capturing all facets of originality, and distinguishing them from other prominent figures within the same artistic domain.

Notably, Abd al-Qahir al-Jurjani and Ibn Sa'id al-Maghribi explored the phenomena of originality and strangeness prevalent in their time. Terms linked to originality include miraculousness, precedence, creativity, and uniqueness, alongside expressions like invention and delving into meanings. This emphasis reflected their belief in the

centrality of language as the essence and foundation of originality, embodying what may be termed the pursuit of excellence in artistic expression.

Both authors examined the phenomenon of artistic ambiguity with methodological precision, treating engagement with the text as an intellectual process integral to moments of creativity, particularly in their exploration of invented meanings. Within the realm of literary criticism, terms such as strangeness, symbolism, suggestion, intentional obscurity, expansion, allusion, indication, and invention emerge. Additionally, terms like opacity, encryption, complexity, hinting, and obfuscation align under the broader concept of ambiguity.

From this perspective, the creative text, as understood by both authors, functions as a "cipher" between creator and recipient. The

deeper the creator immerses the text in obscurity, the greater the recipient's effort to decode and comprehend it. Accordingly, the text may remain self-contained or open itself to the reader, contingent on the author's intended approach.

This introduction outlines the theoretical foundations from which the two authors approached the phenomena of originality and strangeness, examining their intricacies and underlying secrets. The study employs a descriptive-analytical methodology, first describing the phenomenon and then analyzing it. Key questions addressed include: How can the hidden text be negotiated to uncover its concealed secrets? Does the concept of a text's self-containment

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On Dhu al-Rummah, he remarked:

"He is the master of his era in profound meanings, for his passion for similes, analogies, and the beauty of imagination. He is the leader of Islamic-era poets in the art of comparison. 2,,

Ibn Sa'id's criticism was shaped by an aesthetic perspective dominant in his time, emphasizing two key elements: strangeness and innovation.

Strangeness refers to an astonishing poetic image, either entirely original or derived from an existing one but altered, modified, and renewed to appear novel. Similes and metaphors that lacked strangeness and astonishment failed to meet his standards.

Innovation (Al-Badi') had become a foundational principle for evaluating poetry, particularly in the East. This led Ibn Sa'id to prioritize invented and novel meanings in his critiques.

He admired Dhu al-Rummah for his creativity and originality, describing him as: "The master of his time in profound meanings due to his passion for similes, analogies, and imaginative imagery. 3,,

One of Dhu al-Rummah's remarkable similes is:

"As if the beaks of birds in its courtyards

imply rejecting interpretations and relying solely on itself, or does it suggest openness to diverse reading strategies

2. In the Balance of Criticism:

Ibn Sa'id Al-Maghribi combined the art of poetry composition with refined literary taste and a sharp critical sense. In his poet biographies, he went beyond simply quoting excerpts from their finest works, offering commentary and critically evaluating their strengths and weaknesses.

For example, he assessed Antara's poetry, stating:

"Though placed last in the rankings of pre-Islamic poetry collections, he is advanced when considering the depth of his meanings.

were the nibs of pens, writing and blotting".

He similarly praised Ibn al-Rumi for his originality and innovation. The eloquence of delving into profound meanings held a prominent position in evaluating the quality of expressions and the precision of ideas.

A notable example is Ibn Sa'id's admiration for the poet Abu al-Hasan al-Tihami, whom he introduced by saying:

"I prioritize this man for the excellence of his depth in meaning, his inventive creativity, and his innovation".

An example of this is Al-Tihami's verse about Al-Murqis:

"The morning has taken the fingertips of its hand into every pocket of the buttoned darkness".

Ibn Sa'id regarded the poetic imagery in the works of Abu al-Hasan al-Tihami as entirely novel and inventive. Similarly, he described Al-Ma'arri as a master of profound exploration and extensive imagination, enabling him to attain the finest meanings in eloquence and to generate ideas encompassing rare and sublime concepts.

He also characterized certain writers, such as Al-Arjani, as leaders in this domain, commending their precision in refining meanings, delving deeply into them, and thoroughly examining them. What unites these poets is their boldness in language and their ability to craft pioneering and original meanings.

He might evaluate a poet's skill or critique them by highlighting their need for deeper exploration of meanings, as he did in his assessment of the poet Shameem al-Hilli, a renowned poet of the East in the sixth century. Ibn Sa'id stated:

"The overall matter with this man is that his reputation surpasses his poetry. Despite its abundance, I have not found in it any remarkable originality or creativity".

Elsewhere in the poet's biography, he further described him as lacking profound thought and failing to elevate his ideas to a higher level of originality and creativity. Essentially, he criticized him for lacking artistic ambiguity.

From these examples, we can discern Ibn Sa'id's aesthetic perspective on the art of language. He categorized it into five levels: Al-Murqis (captivating), Al-Mutrib (delightful), Al-Maqbul (acceptable), Al-Masmu' (heard), and Al-Matruk (abandoned). This classification aligned with the prevailing critical theory of his era, which emphasized two key elements: innovation and strangeness.

In the preface to his book *Rayat al-Mubarrazeen* (Banners of the Distinguished), Ibn Sa'id highlighted the significance of strangeness in poetry, stating ⁴:

It suffices to note that some of the most prominent poets lacked the strange meanings that could justify including their names in this collection.

From these advanced examples, we can evaluate Ibn Sa'id's artistic mastery and his judgments of poets. Without a doubt, he is among those deeply enamored with the arts of Al-Badi' (innovation) and rhetoric, particularly in the realms of simile, metaphor, and metonymy, as well as inventive and novel literary forms. His overall critical taste reflects the Andalusian tradition.

Some modern critics argue that Ibn Sa'id followed the approach of Ibn Shuhayd and Ibn Bassam, with his classifications of Al-Murqis and Al-Mutrib aligning with the concepts of Al-Badi' (innovation) and

strangeness prevalent in his era. ⁵.

Regarding his views on criticism, Ibn Sa'id emphasized that eloquence is not exclusive to the ancients. He was influenced by the school of Abu al-Qasim al-Hasan ibn Bishr al-Amidi (d. 370 AH) in his profound exploration of metaphor until the idea became fully clear. His book on eloquence, *'Unwan al-Marqusat wa al-Mutribat* (The Title of the Captivating and Delightful), served as a foundation for this theory.

In the book's introduction, he highlighted this goal, referencing his father's statement:

"What has been included in this title from the mentioned categories is limited to the two levels of Al-Murqis and Al-Mutrib, both of which revolve around deep exploration of ideas and the subtle indication of meanings. To this, my father referred when he said: 'If you cannot sense a meaning to inspire, Say: I am a weigher, not a poet'".

Ibn Sa'id did not merely adopt the description of Al-Buhturi, known for his adherence to traditional forms, loyalty to the ancients, and commitment to classical poetic structures. Instead, he diverged, advocating for a theory of artistic creation and innovation. He recognized that each era has its own language and style of expression and viewed the legacy of past generations as artistic heritage—valuable not for its antiquity alone nor dismissible for its modernity.

He acknowledged the value of both the old and the new, appreciating the former for establishing foundations and the latter for refining and embellishing them. He remarked:

"Well said is the one who noted that the ancients built and fortified, while the moderns adorned and embellished. I found in a letter the sentiment that every era has the style of expression appropriate to it, and in another, the observation that people in their times resemble their ancestors ⁶."

Ibn Sa'id's defense of Andalusian poetry was less combative, more diplomatic towards the Eastern tradition, and better able to articulate the distinctions between the literary

contributions of the East and the West. His critique was based on the principle that fairness should not be limited to one region or era.

This perspective aligns with the view of Ibn Qutayba al-Dinawari (d. 276 AH), expressed in the introduction to his book *Al-Shi'r wa Al-Shu'ara* (Poetry and Poets):

"God has not restricted knowledge, poetry, or eloquence to a specific time or group. Instead, He made them shared and distributed among His servants in every age, making every ancient work modern in its own era.

Judging poetry as "Murqis" (captivating) leads to Ibn Sa'id Al-Maghribi's classification of poetry into five levels: Al-Murqis (captivating), Al-Mutrib (delightful), Al-Maqbul (acceptable), Al-Masmu' (heard), and Al-Matruk (abandoned).

Al-Murqis refers to poetry that is inventive or novel, nearly reaching the level of innovation, due to its secret that captivates hearts and endears it to the audience. It relies on taste and sensibility, often conveying meaning through implication rather than direct expression. An example is a verse by Imru' al-Qais from the ancients: I ascended to her after her people had slept,
Like the rising of bubbles in water, one upon another.

Certain poetic elements underscore originality, granting poets distinction over others. For instance, the poetry of Ibn Hamdis Al-Siqilli is regarded as among the innovative works of the Andalusians due to its freshness in meaning, as seen in his verse: "Rush early to pleasures and mount them, As steeds of joy galloping with exuberance". The elegance and sweetness of poetry hold literary significance, serving as criteria for distinguishing poets. Those who excel in refining diction, creating unique imagery and similes, and achieving rare expressive precision are often favored, particularly when combined with eloquence and exceptional poetic performance.

Ibn Sa'id Al-Maghribi compiled a collection of Arabic poetry in *'Unwan al-Marqusat wa al-Mutribat* (The Title of the Captivating and Delightful), encompassing works up to the

7th century. The book categorizes poets into five levels, ranked by the aesthetic value of their poetry:

- 1 . Al-Murqis: Inventive or novel poetry.
- 2 . Al-Mutrib: Poetry that falls short of full innovation but retains originality.
- 3 . Al-Maqbul: Acceptable poetry.
4. Al-Masmu': Ordinary or unremarkable poetry.
- 5 . Al-Matruk: Rejected poetry.

Ibn Sa'id underscores that no poet, regardless of talent or stature, can consistently produce work confined to Al-Murqis and Al-Mutrib; their poetry inevitably includes elements from the lower levels, such as Al-Maqbul, Al-Masmu', and even Al-Matruk.

Al-Jurjani highlights that a creative work does not disclose itself to the reader without deliberate thought, careful observation, and insightful effort. He states:

"When a meaning comes to you as a representation, it often becomes clear only after it compels you to seek it through reflection, stirring your mind and dedicating your effort to uncovering it. The more subtle the meaning, the more it resists you, its reluctance becomes more evident, and its concealment more pronounced.

Al-Jurjani, with his insight and acumen, identified numerous hidden elements and secrets that contribute to artistic ambiguity in poetry. He viewed ambiguity as a necessity inherent to the nature of creative work. He also addressed the varying capacities of readers to engage with texts, asserting that understanding poetry and its intricacies is not a universal skill. Not all who listen to or recite poetry can be deemed knowledgeable about its depths and secrets.

He articulated this idea, stating:

"If the type of meanings described as subtle, and considered the gems of literary craft, did not require thought, nor provoke your eagerness to seek them by withholding their full clarity, by offering connection after distance, or proximity after separation, then such meanings would become as commonplace as simple words. A verse of profound meaning would lose its status as the centerpiece of eloquence, and the distinction

between listeners in comprehension and insight would disappear. Consequently, everyone who recited poetry would be equally knowledgeable about it".

The project to which Al-Jurjani dedicated his efforts focused on emphasizing the role of the receiver in appreciating creativity, deciphering the complexities of texts that resist easy comprehension, and uncovering their nuances and hidden dimensions. The listener, in their pursuit of meaning, undergoes considerable effort and embarks on a lengthy intellectual journey, unable to attain the pearls of understanding without diving deep, nor achieve insight without grappling with its resistance and elusiveness. According to Al-Jurjani, this level of engagement is possible only for a speaker who is conscious, discerning, and sharp-witted, paired with a listener who is equally aware, insightful, and intelligent, possessing a sharp instinct for perception.

A careful examination reveals that both writers innovated and established foundational principles, rendering them illuminating beacons in the field of Arabic criticism, with contributions that have continued to benefit successive generations.

3. The Eloquence of the Text Between Strangeness and Complexity

Both authors address the phenomenon of strangeness, with Abd al-Qahir al-Jurjani providing a nuanced analysis that differentiates between various levels contributing to a text's difficulty. He scientifically distinguished between complexity and strangeness, basing his approach on an understanding of the stylistic features that define each.

Thus, it can be said that Abd al-Qahir al-Jurjani supported strangeness while opposing ambiguity. In another context, he elaborated on the concept of ambiguity when discussing the distinction between precise representation and complexity, concluding:

"Attaining something after exertion and yearning makes it all the sweeter, taking a more prominent place in the soul. For this reason, the distant, intricate simile holds a level of fascination and delight for the soul

that the near and simple simile cannot match"⁷.

Here, it is worth highlighting Ibn Sa'id al-Maghribi's perspective, as articulated in his book 'Unwan al-Marqusat wa al-Mutribat (The Title of the Captivating and Delightful), where he stressed the importance of clarity in expression, free from affectation and complexity, achieved through inventive meaning adorned with pleasing diction.

An example he cited is a verse by Tarafa ibn al-Abd ":She parts the bubbles of water with her prow,As soil is split by the plowman's hand.

This verse exemplifies the harmony of innovative meaning and eloquent diction, achieving clarity without compromising aesthetic depth.

This verse is an example of Murqis poetry that is criticized for the obscurity of its language, rendering it, according to critics, a sterile simile. It describes a ship splitting the sea and the waves parting as it sails, comparing this to a plowman dividing soil. The term "al-Mufayil" refers to someone playing with soil, dividing it to hide something in one part and retrieve it from another.

Ibn Sa'id emphasized that in such contexts, creativity and the avoidance of linguistic opacity are crucial for achieving quality. He valued poetic innovation that remained clear and accessible, avoiding unnecessary complexity.

Ibn Sa'id and Al-Jurjani converged on several terms and concepts, likely due to their shared focus on similar subjects. One such concept is complexity, which Al-Jurjani criticized for failing to produce clear meaning through the arrangement of words. He regarded this type of expression as flawed because it imposes undue effort on the reader, exceeding reasonable demands for comprehension. Such complexity results from poor articulation, presenting ideas in an uneven, unpolished, rough, and jagged form. Extracting meaning from such language becomes laborious, and even when uncovered, the meaning emerges distorted

and devoid of aesthetic quality.

An example of this critique is found in Al-Mutanabbi's verse :And that is why the covers of the eyes are called their eyelids , Because they act like swords in their deeds.

The imagery in this verse is dense and overly intricate, making it challenging for the reader to grasp its intent smoothly or fully appreciate its beauty. This type of complexity detracts from the eloquence and clarity that both Ibn Sa'id and Al-Jurjani valued in poetic expression.

The meaning Al-Mutanabbi conveys is an explanation of the term "covers of the eyes" as eyelids, with jafn (eyelid) also signifying the scabbard of a sword. However, this conceptual divergence creates intellectual disarray within the verse. Al-Jurjani observed that such poetry does not justify the considerable effort it requires for comprehension.

Al-Jurjani argues that complex poetry and speech are not criticized simply because they require thought for comprehension. Rather, they are faulted when the poet or speaker impedes the reader's thought process, blocks the path to meaning, and complicates the journey to understanding. Even worse, such expressions may fragment and scatter the reader's perception, leaving them unsure how to proceed or where to begin seeking meaning.

This critique underscores Al-Jurjani's insistence on clarity and coherence, even within intricate and subtle meanings, as a defining characteristic of eloquence.

This observation advocates for distinguishing between ambiguity and complexity. In the previously cited text, Al-Jurjani, with precision and clarity, articulates his understanding of complex poetry—poetry that entangles the reader's journey to uncovering meaning.

Al-Jurjani's critique emphasizes that while subtlety in expression can enhance the aesthetic experience, excessive complexity acts as a barrier, obstructing the reader's engagement and appreciation of the text. The distinction he draws between ambiguity, which invites reflection, and complexity,

which frustrates comprehension, is central to his literary analysis.

Classical Arabic criticism actively addressed the issue of negative ambiguity or excessive strangeness, while also showing an interest in strangeness and awe, often coupled with novelty. These terms frequently appeared in the works of Abd al-Qahir al-Jurjani.

In fact, the term badi' (innovation) itself conveys this meaning, often associated with gharaba (strangeness) in Al-Jurjani's writings. The connection between badi' and gharaba is evident in twelve instances throughout his work, highlighting the interplay between innovation and the unusual in creating impactful literary expressions.

4. Points of Convergence and Divergence Between the Two Critics

4.1 Points of Convergence

A close examination of Abd al-Qahir al-Jurjani's works reveals numerous shared features with those of Ibn Sa'id Al-Maghribi, alongside notable differences. One prominent similarity is their use of the term creativity (ibda'), which holds multiple meanings in their writings. For both, it signifies novelty and innovation in expression, often linked to the quality and categories of simile.

Both critics emphasized creativity and admiration, which are achieved through strangeness (gharaba), while cautioning against excessive difficulty and obscurity in poetic expression. Although neither overlooked the conceptual depth of poetry, they also highlighted its aesthetic function, which encompasses delight, admiration, and the sense of wonder evoked by strangeness. This balance between meaning and beauty underscores their shared perspective on the dual role of poetry as both intellectually engaging and emotionally captivating.

Ibn Sa'id frequently employs obscure terms, such as "Samsam Omar," referring to Amr ibn Ma'ad, the owner of the famous sharp sword, though he was not skilled in using it. Moreover, he often revisits ancient themes in Eastern poetry, a tendency observed by Al-Tughrayi.

Ibn Sa'id acknowledges the difficulty readers

face in understanding his poems without consulting language dictionaries to uncover the meanings of archaic terms and their contextual references. This reliance on rare and classical expressions reflects his deep connection to traditional poetic heritage but underscores the challenges it poses for modern readers to grasp the intended meanings without significant effort.

As for Abd al-Qahir al-Jurjani, he employed the concept of the "self-contained text" as central to defining its completeness. This does not imply the text's rejection of free interpretations but rather its self-sufficiency, presenting it as a linguistic and literary statement that is independent and complete in its meaning.

A practical reading that starts with the text and interrogates its latent elements must demonstrate methodological maturity to ensure deeper and more insightful engagement. This approach aligns with Al-Jurjani's emphasis on the intrinsic coherence and richness of literary works⁸

4.2 The Poetic Text and the Effectiveness of Reception

The understanding of reception requirements imposed specific expectations on the poetic text, which poets skillfully adapted to. In their effort to satisfy the audience, poets infused a significant degree of harmony between their poetry and the recipient's cultural context. This intentional alignment created cohesion between the text and its creator, while also reshaping entrenched notions in the Arab reader's mind, steering them towards new semantic fields more attuned to the evolving nature of reception⁹.

The reader emerged as the central figure in generating meaning and creative interpretation—so much so that, in certain critical approaches, the reader was elevated to the role of the primary producer of the text. This shift marked a significant transformation in the trajectory of literary criticism, amplifying the role of the implied reader in producing meaning and uncovering

the text's latent connotations and components.

In this context, the reader represents an authority that complements the authority of the text and the rules of writing, adding layers of complexity for the author, who must consider multiple directions simultaneously. This dynamic is evident in the works of Abd al-Qahir al-Jurjani, who repeatedly emphasized that uncovering the excellence of eloquent speech requires thought, reflection, study, and refined taste.

As he explains, the beauty of a text is not immediately apparent through mere listening but demands deeper engagement "It is not where you hear it with your ears, but where you perceive it with your heart, where you employ your intellect, apply your reasoning, review your thoughts, and ultimately rely on your understanding¹⁰".

In this statement, with precision and clarity, Al-Jurjani articulates his understanding of the role of the ideal reader, one who employs interpretation and various forms of knowledge to unravel the text's ambiguity. This ideal reader actively engages with the text, applying intellectual effort and interpretive strategies to decode its meanings and fully appreciate its depth.

In contemporary terms, what Al-Jurjani discusses about the role of the astute and intelligent reader—who employs interpretation and various forms of knowledge to unravel the text's ambiguity—aligns with Wolfgang Iser's concept of the ideal reader (Implied Reader). Within this framework, the text becomes a creative space through the act of reading, enabling the ideal reader to decode its layers and symbols in a dynamic and imaginative way.

"From this perspective, texts—whether ancient or modern—manifest as forms that address our understanding through the lens of another mind that shaped these works. In interpreting and understanding the message, we effectively recreate the text.

This perspective highlights that the receiver directly or indirectly shapes the creative process. The choices made by the creator are,

to some extent, informed by the expectations of the audience. This dynamic underscores the collaborative relationship between author and reader, where the act of reading becomes an integral part of the creative process.

We arrive at the conclusion that "The structure of the text and the structure of the act of reception together represent the completion of the communicative process, which occurs as the text becomes intertwined with the reader's consciousness. This transformation of the text into the reader's domain is often perceived as mere submission to the text. However, the reality is that as the text undergoes this transformation, it does not become new unless the reader's awareness uses it as a medium to demonstrate its ability to capture and reconstruct meaning. 11 "

The shared aim between the two authors, Al-Jurjani and Ibn Sa'id Al-Maghribi, lies in creativity and innovation. Ibn Sa'id openly acknowledges that his two works, *Rayat al-Mubarrazeen* (Banners of the Distinguished) and *'Unwan al-Marqusat wa al-Mutribat* (The Title of the Captivating and Delightful), were conceived as a dialogue between two familiar domains.

Similarly, the title of Al-Jurjani's work reflects his pursuit of excellence in meanings and expressions, seamlessly combining breadth and subtle implication, and striving for harmony between depth and clarity in literary expression.

Both authors explored the pleasure of reception and the magic of response evoked by artistic ambiguity in the reader's psyche. When discussing the joy of reception, Al-Jurjani places significant emphasis on meticulous examination and reflection on the unique differences inherent in linguistic signs.

It is noteworthy that the terms pleasure and reception are modern critical concepts that align with the centrality of the reader, their authority, and their response. This perspective marked the end of the concept of the "closed text" and introduced a

comprehensive framework primarily concerned with the authority of the text itself. This viewpoint leads directly to a discussion of the examples Al-Jurjani provided in his exploration of artistic ambiguity, emphasizing how such ambiguity fosters a dynamic interplay between the text's structure and the reader's interpretive engagement.

Al-Jurjani elaborates on this idea, considering ambiguity a beautiful quality that elevates texts. It is an artistic element that offers the recipient both the pleasure of contemplation and the challenge of uncovering hidden meanings. This process is likened to the joy experienced by a diver who finds pearls after enduring significant effort and danger.

He articulates this notion, stating:

"What enhances your joy in attaining meaning and your delight in grasping it is the effort it demands of you, provided you are capable of such engagement. It is like the diver in the sea, enduring immense hardship and risking his life, only to retrieve mere beads instead of pearls"¹².

This analogy underscores the value of ambiguity as a catalyst for intellectual effort, rewarding the reader with profound satisfaction upon unraveling the depths of meaning.

Al-Jurjani reiterates this truth through another analogy, reinforcing his earlier point. He compares the attainment of meaning after intellectual effort to gathering ripe blossoms and quenching one's thirst after enduring parching dryness.

He describes this process, stating:

"It leads your thought to clear springs, to verdant meadows, where you quench your thirst and gather the ripe blossoms"¹³ "

This vivid imagery underscores the rewards of intellectual perseverance and the profound satisfaction derived from deeply engaging with a text to uncover its layered meanings.

One of the points of similarity between the critics lies in their exploration of the joy in attaining meaning after enduring significant

effort in pursuing original and elusive ideas. Al-Jurjani, like his predecessors, fused the dual notions of a text's resistance and its openness to the reader's understanding, which are unlocked through thoughtful reflection and contemplation. He likened the attainment of meaning after intellectual effort to quenching thirst after parching dryness, emphasizing the intellectual satisfaction derived from such engagement.

This dynamic relationship between the resistance of the text and its eventual yielding to understanding was vividly represented in the imagination of earlier poets. For example, Abu Tammam invoked another term from the same conceptual field: "seizure" (*al-ightisab*). He envisioned phenomena through the lens of sexual relations, particularly between a man and a woman. This is evident in his poetry, where nature is personified in erotic terms, as seen in his portrayal of the earth trembling with delight at the rainfall, much like the joy of a virgin bride on her wedding night. This reliance on the metaphorical female body reflects the interplay between textual resistance and the reader's effort to uncover meaning.

Arab poets, influenced by Andalusian poetry, skillfully employed these metaphorical images in their works, often likening the poem to a virgin maiden or a noblewoman. These metaphors highlight the delicate interplay between beauty, allure, and the intellectual challenge of engaging with the text. This literary tradition underscores the intricate relationship between the text as an object of desire and the reader as an active participant in uncovering its secrets.

The recipient experiences a renewed sense of pleasure with each return to the artistic work, engaging with it afresh. This pleasure is comparable to the delight of returning to intoxication after sobriety, or conversely, to the clarity and relief of returning to sobriety after intoxication.

Thus, the pleasure of reading ensures that the text reveals its "charms only to a persistent reader" who engages intimately with it, comprehending its formation history, the

specificity of its operation, and its artistic variations across diverse manifestations.

From this, we conclude that texts are precious pearls, attainable only by those who truly deserve them. The imagery varies and diversifies but consistently portrays texts as rare pearls, valuable necklaces, or enchanting virgin brides presented to their worthy recipients. Critics have observed that the text, in its role, caters to sensory and sexual pleasure.

Ibn Sa'id admires exquisite poetry and delights in the original ideas skillfully conveyed by poets. These works embody a combination of novelty in meaning and elegance in form. In the preface to his book *Rayat al-Mubarrazeen* (Banners of the Distinguished), he writes:

"This is a collection in which I have included the rare gems of Maghrebi poetry, whose meanings are more delicate than the breeze, and whose words are more beautiful than a graceful face, so that the fragrance of their essence may refresh hearts, and ears may cling to their melodies as the eye of a lover clings to the vision of their beloved"¹⁴.

Ibn Sa'id established critical standards for poets to achieve high-quality poetic performance, reflecting his sharp critical acumen. He emphasized aligning poetry with the aesthetic preferences of his era, which prized innovation in style, novelty in meaning, and excellence in expression. If a poet failed to meet these widely accepted standards, they could not be regarded among the upper ranks of poets. Consequently, his poetic selections fluctuated between the categories of *Al-Murqis* (captivating) and *Al-Mutrib* (delightful).

Ibn Sa'id did not hesitate to make enthusiastic remarks such as: "I have not heard anything like so-and-so's verse" or "I have not come across anything more excellent than the words of so-and-so." These observations were documented by Al-Maqrizi in *Nafh al-Tib* while discussing Ibn Sa'id Al-Maghribi's critiques. Among such remarks is his praise for Al-Sharif Al-Shamsi Al-Makki's verse:

'Eyes drowned in tears,
And a heart fluttering in flight".

Ibn Sa'id favored the poetry of Al-Sharif Al-Shamsi Al-Makki for its unique and striking approach, its distinctive style, and the exceptional emotional and aesthetic impact of the poem, especially in its farewell to his beloved. The poem's sweetness and profound emotional resonance led Ibn Sa'id to conclude that no one had achieved a similar effect.

While Ibn Sa'id might not fully approve of a poet's entire body of work, he often admired innovative and exceptional meanings within it and would highlight such instances. He stated:

"I stipulated that I would only include verses whose meanings had not been preceded by others, or that were earned through superior expression or refined phrasing"¹⁵.

This approach is evident in his evaluation of the Egyptian poet Al-Jazzar. When Ibn Sa'id first met him in Alexandria and listened to his poetry, he initially found Al-Jazzar's work unimpressive, failing to elevate him to the higher ranks of poets. However, upon hearing a unique and remarkable concept on the theme of friendship and friends, Ibn Sa'id deeply appreciated it. He later admired a selection of Al-Jazzar's poetry, including some of it in his work Al-Maghrib.

Among Ibn Sa'id's judgments on fine poetry is his remark in the biography of Ibn Utba Al-Ishbili "Among the verses he recited to me was poetry that struck me like a sword in the hand of a brave warrior, achieving the pinnacle of creativity and perfection"¹⁶.

This statement underscores the depth of Ibn Sa'id's engagement with the poetry of Ibn Utba Al-Ishbili, drawing attention to the connection between creative genius and the emotional and artistic impact it had on Ibn Sa'id's psyche. It highlights the profound resonance and admiration evoked by such exceptional literary artistry.

In conclusion, it becomes evident that Al-Jurjani's methodology was founded on the magic of simile, a concept intricately tied to

the ideas of pleasure and delight. The term magic holds a prominent place in Arab critical tradition, reflecting the profound influence poetry exerts on its audience's psyche.

Arab critics thoroughly examined poetry's influence and enduring power, which found expression through various aesthetic terms, such as: enjoyment, magic, stirring, pleasure, submission, relaxation, captivation, emotion, and delight. These terms converge on the functional effect of the aesthetic experience, demonstrating poetry's transformative and enduring power in shaping the emotional and intellectual response of its audience.

4.3 Points of Difference:

Upon examining the works of the two authors, it becomes evident that Ibn Sa'id deliberately minimized emphasis on terms such as eloquence (balagha), articulation (fasaha), clarity (bayan), and innovation (badi'), giving them less prominence in his critical framework. This may indicate a deliberate effort to position himself as a specialized critic rather than a generalist.

In contrast, Abd al-Qahir al-Jurjani engaged deeply with these terms, reflecting an intent to present himself as a well-rounded scholar. His methodical and consistent approach underscored his intellectual breadth and adherence to a structured critical methodology.

It is also notable that Ibn Sa'id did not consistently apply his stated critical methodology, which emphasized inventive and original meanings, in his own poetic compositions. Instead, he frequently drew from earlier Eastern poetic traditions, revisiting and adopting their metaphors, themes, and stylistic elements. At times, he modeled his work after Al-Buhturi, while at other times, he followed the style of Al-Nabigha Al-Dhubyani.

Al-Jurjani devoted extensive effort to the study of badi' (innovation), marked by its breadth, comprehensiveness, and clarity, offering meticulous analyses to distinguish excellent speech from flawed expressions.

In contrast, while Ibn Sa'id expressed a preference for murqis and mutrib poetry and

frequently described poets using terms like creativity, invention, and delving into meanings, his critical evaluations often lacked explicit justification or detailed reasoning.

5. In Pursuit of Excellence:

Both authors emphasized the eloquence of the text and its underlying philosophy, exploring its diverse manifestations. Al-Jurjani, in particular, referred to the Theory of the Meaning of Meaning, which necessitates intellectual engagement from the listener, as comprehension arises only through reflection and reasoning. He compared this endeavor to diving for pearls: It is like pearls at the bottom of the sea; one must undertake the effort of diving to retrieve them.

The significance of this concept lies in its role as part of a broader framework, contributing to the establishment of a comprehensive theory on the reception and reinterpretation of texts.

The significant issue Al-Jurjani hinted at in his discussion of the Meaning of Meaning pertains to the coherence of words in poetry, which he likened to pearls and shells for their strength, crafting, and elegant arrangement. This analogy underscores the importance of the type of reader—one who can only uncover hidden meanings through intellectual reflection and reasoning. Al-Jurjani likens such meanings to precious pearls at the bottom of the sea, requiring the effort and skill of diving to retrieve.

To remain focused, Al-Jurjani provides another example that aligns with his concept of attaining meaning after effort and longing: It is ingrained in human nature that when something is attained after effort, longing, and enduring yearning for it, its attainment becomes sweeter and more deserving of distinction. Its place in the soul is greater and more delightful, and one becomes more attached to it and more captivated by it.

Al-Jurjani concluded that attaining something after effort and yearning makes it sweeter and grants it a more prominent place in the soul. For this reason, the allure of distant and intricate similes elicits greater

admiration and delight than simpler, more direct comparisons. He states:

"The idea is that there are subtle resemblances that are difficult to discern. When your thought delves deep and perceives them, you have earned merit. Thus, one who scrutinizes meanings is likened to a diver seeking pearls¹⁷

One of the key justifications for this view is Al-Jurjani's description of these subtle resemblances as akin to magic, emphasizing their enchanting and captivating effect on the intellect and imagination.

Abd al-Qahir al-Jurjani's analytical approach to meanings is rooted in persistent negotiation with texts to uncover what is hidden and latent. He likens the joy of discovering meaning after intellectual effort to the happiness of one who finds pearls after a challenging dive. He concluded that attaining something after effort and yearning makes it sweeter, a concept closely aligned with the eloquence of delving into meanings presented by Ibn Sa'id Al-Maghribi in his book "Al-Marqusat wa Al-Mutribat".

Ibn Sa'id frequently repeated the term "delving into meaning" throughout his book, reflecting his fascination with innovative ideas. This fascination is also evident in his work "Al-Ghusun Al-Yani'a". Referring to the verses of Najm al-Din Ibn Mujawir Al-Masri describing a servant, Ibn Sa'id remarked:

"Whoever deeply considers what he presents in this collection will realize that he possesses a penetrating intellect, and that innovative meanings and creative expressions do not present any challenge to him.

Ibn Sa'id's artistic propositions include features that realize poetic suggestion, as exemplified in the verses of Najm al-Din Ibn Mujawir Al-Masri. These verses are distinguished by their deep exploration of ideas, striking novelty, and creative expressions, all of which evoke poetic suggestion.

The eloquence of delving into meanings aligns with deep reading, which requires active engagement and intellectual effort. It

is both an act of revelation and integration, as well as penetration—an effort to uncover connections and semantic links within the text, thereby bringing its layers into clarity and coherence.

To elucidate meaning and reveal the hidden, Abd al-Qahir al-Jurjani emphasizes the specific nature of reception, viewing it as an engagement with the concealed and a taming of the elusive and buried. This concept underpins his view of the recipient, who unveils hidden meaning by relying on hints and gestures, transcending mere clarity or explicit explanations.

Al-Jurjani articulates this as follows:

"Since I devoted myself to the pursuit of knowledge, I have reflected on what scholars have said regarding the meaning of eloquence and rhetoric, and their explanations of these terms. I find that some of these explanations resemble cryptic symbols, gestures, and subtle hints, while others serve as guidance to the location of the hidden, to be sought, or the buried, to be excavated and brought forth".... Al-Jurjani's attempt to establish the foundation of elusive meanings closely aligns with the concept of resistance. This resistance functions as a defensive stance against the reader, refusing to yield the text's meaning easily. The text engages in perpetual deferral, akin to language itself—deliberately postponing revelation. However, this deferral is neither centralized nor closed; it is infinite, pointing not to an absolute idea but to a dynamic, diverse interplay¹⁸.

In this context, the relationship between the text and the reader is dialectical. The aesthetics of the text depend on an active, aesthetic reading characterized by skill, taste, and competence to engage with texts that resist direct understanding. Such texts, elusive and evasive, do not surrender themselves at first glance. They are like fire hidden within flint, requiring effort and persistence to ignite.

6. Conclusion:

This study focused on the phenomena of originality and strangeness in the works of Abd al-Qahir al-Jurjani and Ibn Sa'id Al-

Maghribi, employing a reading that integrates analysis and interpretation. The key findings include:

Abd al-Qahir al-Jurjani significantly enriched the fields of rhetoric and criticism, laying the groundwork for a rhetorical theory centered on the premise that words are vessels for meanings, which do not immediately reveal themselves to the reader. Among Al-Jurjani's most notable contributions is his emphasis on persistent negotiation in textual analysis, urging readers to engage deeply to uncover hidden and latent meanings.

Ibn Sa'id Al-Maghribi combined the art of poetry with a refined critical sense, establishing criteria for distinguishing between poetic levels. His works emphasized innovation and originality, while also drawing from classical traditions, reflecting a blend of creative ingenuity and classical emulation.

In the field of simile eloquence, Al-Jurjani stands out for his meticulous and comprehensive approach, which ranks among the most impactful contributions to classical Arabic criticism. He rigorously distinguished between good, bad, and flawed similes, emphasizing their aesthetic and rhetorical qualities with remarkable clarity.

In contrast, Ibn Sa'id Al-Maghribi classified his poetic selections into *murqis* (captivating) and *mutrib* (delightful), frequently attributing qualities such as creativity, invention, and delving into meanings to poets. However, his critical evaluations often lacked detailed justification.

Al-Jurjani is recognized as one of the foremost critics in the field of eloquence. He addressed every significant aspect of rhetoric, enriching it with critical and poetic insights. His pioneering use of terms such as strangeness, admiration, and novelty established a framework for understanding literary aesthetics. These terms, including *badi'* (innovation), appear frequently in his writings, with strangeness explicitly linked to innovation in twelve instances throughout his works.

Al-Jurjani underscored the necessity of moderation in imagination, advocating for clarity of meaning and discouraging exaggeration that leads to complexity and obscurity. He introduced the idea of the closed text, which does not imply rejection of interpretation or self-sufficiency but rather reflects a systematic structure within the text's codes.

Emphasizing harmony and coherence, Al-Jurjani viewed these qualities as indicative of consideration for the audience. He also prioritized poetic craftsmanship, asserting that mastery of structured artistic construction is the essence of true poetry.

Both Al-Jurjani and Ibn Sa'id Al-Maghribi acknowledged the dynamic relationship between the text and its recipient. In their discussions of the creative process, they highlighted the importance of novel, strange, or unique meanings, which elicit responses from the reader.

An examination of Ibn Sa'id's poetry reveals a tendency toward excess and complexity, which stands in contrast to his own critical principles. Both critics, however, placed significant value on word choice and artistic arrangement, evaluating quality based on the meanings produced by textual construction. They emphasized that the organization and alignment of words and ideas are central to poetic excellence.

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