

Original Research Article

The Evolution of the Semantic Network of Ghinā' and the Reconstruction of Its Jurisprudential Subject Matter

(An Interdisciplinary Study in Historical Semantics and the Theory of Subject (Mawḍū') in Islamic Jurisprudence (Fiqh))

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Abstract

Problem statement: The widespread divergence of jurisprudential edicts (Fatāwā) regarding Ghinā' is frequently attributed to conflicting evidence (Ta'arūḍ al-Adillah) or differences in fundamental principles (Mabānī Uṣūliyyah). This analysis is predicated on the assumption of the stability of the ruling's subject matter (Mawḍū' al-Ḥukm), meaning that the concept of Ghinā' refers to a single semantic reality both in the era of the texts' issuance ('Aṣr al-Ṣudūr) and in subsequent periods.

Research objective: By rethinking this presupposition, the present study seeks to investigate the historical evolution of the conceptual network of Ghinā' and its impact on the formation of the jurisprudential subject matter of this ruling.

Research method: The research was conducted using a historical semantics approach based on the semantic field theory. Within this framework, the usages of the term Ghinā' were extracted across four historical layers: pre-Islamic (Jāhili) literature, the Quran and traditions (Aḥādīth), the musical culture of the Abbasid period, and classical jurisprudential texts. Furthermore, its syntagmatic relations with concepts such as melody (Laḥn), rapture (Ṭarab), vain amusement (Lahw), gatherings (Majālis), female singers (Mughanniyah), and rhythm (Īqā') were analyzed.

Conclusion: The results indicate that Ghinā', throughout its semantic evolution, transitioned from a descriptive meaning concerning vocal quality to a culturally evaluative meaning within the context of amusement gatherings (Majālis al-Lahw), and ultimately to a jurisprudential term denoting the subject of a prescriptive ruling (Ḥukm Taklīfī). Consequently, a portion of the divergence in jurisprudential edicts concerning Ghinā' can be attributed to a focus on different layers of this semantic network, rather than merely a conflict of evidence. Moreover, equating Ghinā' with the modern concept of "music" without reconstructing the historical referent (Madlūl) of the subject poses methodological challenges. In addition to revisiting the issue of Ghinā', this study proposes a theoretical framework for analyzing evolving subjects in Islamic jurisprudence.

Keywords: *Ghinā', Music, Semantic Evolution, Semantic Field, Identification of Jurisprudential Subjects (Mawḍū' -Shināsī), Historical Semantics, Custom of the Era of Issuance ('Urf 'Aṣr al-Ṣudūr).*

Introduction

The disagreement among jurists regarding Ghinā' is a long-standing issue in Islamic jurisprudence. From absolute prohibition in certain classical jurisprudential

readings (Ansari, 1994; Najafi, 1983) to differentiation among instances or restricting the scope of the ruling in some later views, a spectrum of opinions is reported in jurisprudential sources. The conventional analysis of these disagreements' attributes them to the

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conflict of evidence (Ta'arūḍ al-Adillāh), differences in the foundational principles regarding the authority of traditions (Mabānī Ḥujjiyyat al-Khabar), or discrepancies concerning the role of custom ('Urf) in identifying the subject matter. However, these analyses often rely on an unspoken presupposition: the stability of the ruling's subject matter. This presupposition implies that the term Ghinā' during the era of the texts' issuance ('Aṣr al-Ṣudūr) held the same referent (Madlūl) as understood in later periods within jurisprudential texts or contemporary custom. Consequently, the jurists' divergence is attributed merely to the manner of understanding the ruling, rather than the reconstruction of the subject matter. But what if this presupposition is flawed? If Ghinā' has undergone semantic evolution over time, then the issue lies not solely in the derivation (Istinbāt) of the ruling, but also in the conceptualization of the subject matter itself.

In historical linguistics studies, semantic change is a pervasive phenomenon. Words, within the context of social, cultural, and institutional transformations, rearrange their network of significative relations; certain semantic components are strengthened, others weakened, and occasionally, a new evaluative connotation is attached to the word (Traugott & Dasher, 2002; Geeraerts, 2010). Meaning is not a fixed essence, but rather a dynamic network structure formed in interaction with contexts of usage. The application of this approach in Quranic and conceptual studies has previously been demonstrated by scholars such as Izutsu (2002); by analyzing the semantic fields of Quranic concepts, he reconstructed the evolution of their conceptual networks within the context of pre-Islamic (Jāhili) and Islamic Arabic. However, in jurisprudential studies, particularly regarding the issue of Ghinā', such an approach has rarely been employed systematically. The issue of Ghinā' serves as a prime example from this perspective. An examination of lexicographical sources reveals that in certain usages, Ghinā' referred to a quality of voice and vocal modulation (Tarjī') (Ibn Manzur, n.d.). In some traditions (Aḥādīth), the term was used within the context of amusement gatherings (Majālis al-

Lahw) and professional singers (Mughanniyān) (Al-Hurr al-Amili, 1993). In jurisprudential texts, it gradually solidified into a terminological title for the subject of a prescriptive ruling (Ḥukm Taklīfī). Concurrently, in the Islamic philosophical tradition, "music" (Mūsīqā) is regarded as a theoretical knowledge concerning the system of melodies and rhythms (Nizām al-Alḥān wa-l-Īqā'āt) (Farabi, 1987; Ibn Sina, 1956), which does not necessarily overlap completely with the jurisprudential meaning of Ghinā'. This conceptual juxtaposition and the evolution of the semantic network provide grounds for divergence in conceptualizing the subject matter. If a jurist centers on the layer of "the quality of a rapturous voice" (Kayfiyyat Ṣawt Muṭrib), they will delineate the scope of the ruling in a specific manner; if another highlights the layer of "the cultural context of amusement" (Lahwī), they will reach a different conclusion. Thus, the divergence in edicts (Fatāwā) may stem not merely from the ruling itself, but from the reconstruction of the subject matter. The significance of this issue doubles especially when the concept of music is considered in tandem with Ghinā' and the scope of the twentieth-century musical repertoire.

Accordingly, the central question of this research is formulated as follows: What is the root cause of the divergent jurisprudential edicts concerning Ghinā'? The research hypothesis posits that this issue stems, in part, from the evolution of the term's semantic network and differences in conceptualizing the subject matter of the ruling.

To answer this question, it is necessary first to reconstruct the historical semantic network of Ghinā', and subsequently analyze the relationship between this evolution and the theory of subject (Mawḍū') in the principles of Islamic jurisprudence (Uṣūl al-Fiqh). Utilizing historical semantics and semantic field analysis, this article strives to present a methodological model for reconstructing evolving subjects in Islamic jurisprudence; a model applicable to other subjects such as vain amusement (Lahw), gambling (Qimār), depiction/image-making (Taṣwīr), and emerging economic concepts. Hence, the significance of

this research is not confined solely to the issue of Ghinā'; rather, it addresses one of the fundamental methodological issues of jurisprudence, namely, the relationship between the customary evolution of concepts and the stability or transformation of the ruling's subject matter.

Theoretical Framework

• Semantic evolution as a network phenomenon

In historical linguistics, meaning is not perceived as a static essence, but rather as a dynamic structure shaped within the context of social and cultural usages. According to theories of semantic change, the shift in the signification (denotation) of words typically does not occur in a linear or simple manner; instead, it unfolds through the reconfiguration of a conceptual network (Traugott & Dasher, 2002). Words are situated within Semantic Fields, and they consolidate or transform their semantic and evaluative load through collocation with other concepts (Geeraerts, 2010). Within this framework, each word can be analyzed as a "node in a network of semantic relations." This network encompasses core meanings and peripheral meanings. Semantic evolution generally occurs through the displacement of this core and periphery, meaning that a previously marginal component shifts to the center of the network, or vice versa. The application of this theory in the conceptual study of religion has previously been demonstrated by Izutsu (2002). By analyzing the semantic field of Quranic concepts, he illustrated that a precise understanding of religious terminology necessitates the reconstruction of their conceptual network within the historical context of the Arabic language. This approach can be similarly employed in the re-examination of jurisprudential (Fiqhī) concepts.

In light of this theory, the central question regarding Ghinā' is formulated as follows: How has the word Ghinā' been situated within its semantic field throughout history, or how has its conceptual network undergone reconfiguration?

• Semantic field and the role of conceptual collocation

A semantic field refers to a set of words and concepts that

reside within a shared experiential or cultural domain, acquiring meaning through relations of collocation and opposition. For instance, the word Ghinā' collocates in certain texts with Lahñ (melody/tune), Tarjī' (vocal modulation), and Taṭrīb (inducing joyous emotion); in others, with Lahw (frivolity/vain amusement), Majālis (gatherings/sessions), Mughanniyah (female singer), and Fisq (transgression); and in later periods, with Mūsīqī (music), Īqā' (rhythm), and Alḥān (melodies). This shift in collocations indicates a displacement in the semantic field. At one stage, Ghinā' is positioned within the field of "vocal quality"; at another, within the field of "frivolous cultural behavior" (Lahwī); and ultimately, within the field of "jurisprudential terminology" (Iṣṭilāḥ Fiqhī). Therefore, analyzing semantic evolution requires examining these collocations across various historical strata. In this research, the semantic network of Ghinā' is reconstructed not based on a singular lexical definition, but through the systematic examination of its relations with adjacent concepts. Thus, rather than focusing on a "comprehensive and exclusive definition" (Ta'rif Jāmi' wa Māni'), the emphasis is placed on the network structure of meaning.

• Semantic evolution and evaluative shift (semantic evaluation shift)

A significant type of semantic evolution is the evaluation shift, meaning that a word, originally neutral or descriptive, acquires a positive or negative evaluative load due to a change in the social context (Blank, 1999). This phenomenon has occurred in many religious and ethical concepts. Regarding Ghinā', the following question arises: Was this word originally merely denoting vocal quality, and subsequently acquired a negative evaluative load as a result of its association with specific gatherings (Majālis)? If so, then a part of its negative signification (Madlūl) is the product of the historical social context, rather than the essence of the vocal quality itself. Analyzing this evaluative shift is of fundamental importance for reconstructing the subject matter of the ruling (Mawḍū' al-Ḥukm); for the subject matter of the ruling in the textual sources (Nuṣūṣ) may not have been the vocal quality per se, but rather a specific cultural behavior.

• **The relationship between semantic evolution and the theory of the subject matter (Mawḍūʿ) in the principles of islamic jurisprudence (Uṣūl al-Fiqh)**

In the Principles of Islamic Jurisprudence (Uṣūl al-Fiqh), one of the fundamental discussions is the role of custom (ʿUrf) in determining the subject matter of a ruling (Mawḍūʿ al-Ḥukm). If the subject matter of a ruling is a customary concept, the identification of its referent or instance (Miṣḍāq) is delegated to ʿUrf. However, if ʿUrf undergoes transformation over time, the issue becomes complex: should one refer to the custom at the time of the text's issuance (ʿUrf ʿAṣr al-Ṣudūr) or to a later custom (ʿUrf Mutaʾakhhir)? For instance, the perception of a Western musical school such as Sonorism (Textural music) may not align with the ʿUrf present at the time the ruling was issued. This is because this phenomenon is fundamentally a subject of serious debate even among musicologists.

Certain scholars of Uṣūl have emphasized the importance of ʿUrf ʿAṣr al-Ṣudūr in understanding the signification of the text (Madlūl al-Naṣṣ) (Akhund Khurasani, 1989), whereas others have highlighted the role of the later ʿUrf in identifying the referents (Maṣādiq). This theoretical divergence assumes special significance in the issue of Ghināʾ; because if the customary signification of Ghināʾ at the time of issuance was restricted to a specific context, generalizing it to all forms of music in contemporary ʿUrf necessitates proving the unity of the subject matter (Ittiḥād al-Mawḍūʿ). Consequently, analyzing semantic evolution can serve as an auxiliary tool in reconstructing the ʿUrf ʿAṣr al-Ṣudūr, thereby aiding in clarifying the scope of the ruling's subject matter.

• **Conceptual framework of the research**

Based on the aforementioned foundations, the analytical framework of this article rests on three pillars:

Reconstructing the historical semantic field of Ghināʾ across various strata;

Analyzing the transition from a descriptive meaning to an evaluative one, and subsequently to a terminological (Iṣṭilāḥī) one;

Examining the implications of this evolution for the

theory of the subject matter (Mawḍūʿ) in Islamic jurisprudence.

In the subsequent sections, this framework will be applied to historical, lexicographical, narrative/hadith (Riwayī), and musicological data to provide a more precise depiction of the evolution of the semantic network of Ghināʾ.

The Theory of the Subject Matter (Mawḍūʿ) in Uṣūl al-Fiqh and the Problem of its Evolution

• **The distinction between the legal ruling and the subject matter within the structure of legal inference**

In the structure of jurisprudential propositions, the legal ruling (Ḥukm Sharʿī) is contingent upon the "subject matter" (Mawḍūʿ). In Uṣūlī analysis, the subject matter is sometimes a Sharʿī concept (such as Ṣalāt) and sometimes a customary concept (such as Bayʿ, Lahw, or Ghināʾ). In cases where the subject matter falls under customary concepts, a precise understanding of its customary signification (Madlūl ʿUrfī) is an essential prerequisite for deriving the ruling (Istinbāt). Scholars of Uṣūl have emphasized that the "identification of the subject matter" (Tashkīḥ al-Mawḍūʿ) is generally delegated to custom (ʿUrf) rather than being established by the Lawgiver (Shāriʿ) (Akhund Khurasani, 1989). Therefore, any ambiguity or evolution in the customary signification can directly impact the scope of the ruling. The fundamental question is whether the intended ʿUrf is the custom at the time of issuance (ʿUrf ʿAṣr al-Ṣudūr) or the later custom (ʿUrf Mutaʾakhhir).

• **The custom at the time of issuance (ʿUrf ʿAṣr al-Ṣudūr) and the issue of subject application**

In Uṣūlī theory, the principle is that the vocabulary of the texts (Nuṣūṣ) is understood based on the customs of their primary audience. Thus, the signification of the subject matter in the textual evidence (Adillah) is contingent upon the ʿUrf ʿAṣr al-Ṣudūr. However, in the stage of application to new referents (Maṣādiq), the later custom (ʿUrf Mutaʾakhhir) also plays a role, as determining whether a title accurately applies to an external referent (Ṣidq al-ʿUnwān ʿalā al-Miṣḍāq) is a

customary matter. These two levels must be sharply distinguished: first, the level of understanding the verbal signification within the text (dependent on 'Urf 'Aṣr al-Ṣudūr); and second, the level of applying the title to an external referent (dependent on the contemporary 'Urf). If a word like Ghinā' undergoes semantic evolution over time, the later 'Urf might assign to it a broader or narrower scope than its original signification. In this case, if the ruling is applied to the new meaning without reconstructing the initial signification, there is a serious risk of unwarrantedly expanding or restricting the ruling.

• Evolution of the subject matter and alteration of the ruling

When confronting the evolution of customary concepts, two scenarios are conceivable:

First scenario (stability of signification, evolution of the referent): In this case, the meaning of the word remains constant, but its external referents have changed. Here, the ruling extends to the new referents, provided the title truly applies to them (Ṣidq al-'Unwān).

Second scenario (evolution of signification): In this case, the semantic network of the word itself has changed. Consequently, what is termed Ghinā' in the new 'Urf might not be exactly identical to what was designated as such during the era of the text's issuance. In this situation, the ruling cannot simply be generalized; rather, one must investigate whether the unity of the subject matter (Ittiḥād al-Mawḍū') is maintained. This research asserts that regarding Ghinā', at least part of the issue can be analyzed within the framework of the second scenario—meaning that a semantic shift has occurred within the semantic field of this word.

• The role of the “social context” element in determining the subject matter

An important point in modern semantic theories is that meaning is not solely the product of a word's definition; rather, it is stabilized within the context of social usage (Geeraerts, 2010). This aligns with certain jurisprudential analyses regarding the “melody of the transgressors” (Laḥn Ahl al-Fisq) or what is “suitable

for gatherings of amusement” (Munāsib li-Majālis al-Lahw); because in these expressions, the cultural and social context of the performance plays a fundamental role in determining the subject matter.

If the subject matter of the ruling in the traditions (Riwāyāt) referred to a specific cultural behavior in amusing gatherings (Majālis Lahwī), then separating the element of “voice quality” from the “social context” could lead to an alteration in the scope of the subject matter. In other words, omitting the social context might transform a composite concept (quality + context) into a unidimensional one (mere voice quality).

• The issue of Ghinā' as an exemplar of an evolving subject matter

Based on the preceding discussion, the issue of Ghinā' serves as a prime exemplar for examining the theory of the “evolving subject matter” (Mawḍū' Mutaḥawwil) in Islamic jurisprudence. If it can be demonstrated that during one period, Ghinā' was situated within the field of “voice quality”; in another period, within the field of “amusing cultural behavior”; and subsequently stabilized in jurisprudence as a terminological title ('Unwān Iṣṭilāḥī); then the divergence in Fatāwā could stem from a focus on these different strata. In this case, analyzing jurisprudential disagreements merely by referencing the signification of the evidence (Dalālat al-Adillah) will be insufficient; instead, a historical reconstruction of the subject matter becomes essential.

• The necessity of the historical reconstruction of the subject matter

Accordingly, prior to making any judgment concerning the relationship between Ghinā' and modern music, the customary signification of Ghinā' during the era of the texts' issuance must be reconstructed. This reconstruction cannot be achieved merely by citing one or two lexical definitions; rather, it requires a network analysis of conceptual collocations across historical strata. In the following section, this historical reconstruction will be undertaken through a meticulous examination of lexicographical, literary, and narrative data to clarify the semantic field in which Ghinā' was situated during each respective period.

Historical Reconstruction of the Semantic Network of Ghinā'

• Ghinā' in the Pre-Islamic stratum: the field of "Voice Quality"

An examination of lexicographical sources and pre-Islamic (Jāhili) literary evidence indicates that Ghinā', in its primary usages, referred to a specific quality of voice rather than being an evaluative title. In Lisān al-ʿArab, Ghinā' is defined as "the reverberation of the voice" (Tarjī' al-Ṣawt) and "the beautification of the voice with poetry" (Taḥsīn al-Ṣawt bi-al-Shi'r) (Ibn Manzur, n.d.). Similarly, in Al-Nihāyah, the elements of voice prolongation and reverberation are emphasized (Ibn Athir, 1963). In this stage, Ghinā' is situated within the following semantic field:

Ghinā' → Lahw → Tarjī' → Shi'r → Ḥudā'

Ḥudā' (the chanting of camel drivers) is a significant example, as it had a practical and non-amusement (Ghayr-Lahwī) function. This collocation demonstrates that the central element during this period was "vocal quality" (Kayfiyyat Āwāyī) rather than "amusing cultural function" (Kārkard-i Farhangī-yi Lahwī). In semantic terms, the component of "negative evaluation" had not yet been positioned at the center of the network. In this stratum, one can speak of a "descriptive stage," where Ghinā' possesses a neutral or descriptive signification.

• Transition to the evaluative field in the traditions (Riwāyāt)

Upon entering the narrative texts, the semantic network of Ghinā' undergoes expansion. In certain traditions, Ghinā' is situated alongside concepts such as "frivolous discourse" (Lahw al-Ḥadīth), "false speech" (Qawl al-Zūr), and "gatherings" (Majālis) (Al-Hurr al-Amili, 1993). This collocation indicates the transition of the word into the field of "cultural behavior." At this stage, the element of the "social context of performance" is added to the semantic network:

Ghinā' → "Lahw" → Majālis → Mughanniyah → Tarab

Particularly in traditions concerning the "earnings of a female singer" (Kasb al-Mughanniyah), Ghinā' is

perceived not merely as voice quality, but as a social profession within the context of specific gatherings. Consequently, the component of "cultural context" moves closer to the center of the network. From the perspective of historical semantics, this stage can be considered an instance of "evaluative shift"; meaning that a previously neutral word acquires a negative evaluative charge due to its association with specific contexts (Blank, 1999). A crucial point is that within these very texts, there are also traditions regarding "chanting the Quran" (Taghannī bi-al-Qur'ān), which demonstrates that voice quality in itself is not the subject of prohibition (Ḥumah). This diversity of usage indicates that the semantic network was not yet fully stabilized and was in the process of rearrangement.

• The Abbasid period (cultural stabilization of the amusement (Lahwī) meaning)

During the Abbasid period, with the formation of advanced systems of melodies (Alḥān) and rhythms (Īqā'āt), and the presence of professional singers (Mughanniyān) in the court, Ghinā' became increasingly intertwined with the culture of courtly revelry (Tarab). In this era, concepts such as "drinking companion" (Nadīm), "wine" (Sharāb), "instruments of amusement" (Ālāt al-Lahw), and "gathering" (Majlis) were used alongside Ghinā'. Concurrently, in the Islamic philosophical tradition, "music" (Mūsīqī) was introduced as a theoretical science concerning the system of melodies and rhythms (Farabi, 1987; Ibn Sina, 1956). These two conceptual domains—one cultural-amusement and the other theoretical-scientific—existed side by side, yet they were not entirely overlapping. At this stage, it can be stated that the component of "amusing cultural behavior" transformed into a central component within the semantic network of Ghinā', while the component of mere "voice quality" was marginalized.

• Terminological stabilization in classical jurisprudence

In classical jurisprudential texts, efforts to provide a precise definition of Ghinā' are evident. Some jurists defined it as "the prolongation of the voice accompanied by a reverberation that induces revelry"

(Madd al-Şawt ma‘a al-Tarjī‘ al-Muṭrib), while others considered the “melody of the transgressors” (Lahn Ahl al-Fusūq) as the criterion (Ansari, 1994; Naraqī, 1994). In this phase, the word Ghinā’ transitioned from a fluid customary concept into a “jurisprudential term” (Iṣṭilāh Fiqhī). This terminological stabilization was typically accompanied by the selection of certain semantic components and the exclusion of others. For instance, a focus on “inducing revelry” (Muṭrib) could bring the emotional component to the center of the network, whereas a focus on “gatherings of amusement” (Majālis al-Lahw) highlighted the element of social context. Thus, the semantic network of Ghinā’ was reconstructed in classical jurisprudence, though this reconstruction did not necessarily correspond to the entire history of the word’s usage.

• The late collocation of Ghinā’ and music (Mūsīqī)

In later periods, particularly in encountering modern concepts, “music” (Mūsīqī) entered jurisprudential discourse as a more general concept. While in the philosophical tradition, music was a theoretical science, in the modern custom (‘Urf), the term is applied to a vast array of sonic arts—both instrumental (Sāzī) and vocal (Āwāzī). Equating this broad concept with Ghinā’—which held a more specific meaning in narrative and jurisprudential texts—could lead to an expansion of the ruling’s scope, without the unity of the subject matter (Ittiḥād al-Mawḍū‘) having been proven.

Based on historical evidence, three stages can be distinguished in the evolution of the semantic network of Ghinā’:

The sonic-descriptive stage (voice quality and reverberation);

The evaluative-cultural stage (amusing behavior in specific gatherings);

The terminological-jurisprudential stage (subject matter of the prescriptive ruling - Mawḍū‘ Ḥukm Taklīfī).

This network evolution demonstrates that the meaning of Ghinā’ was not static, but rather underwent rearrangement throughout history. Therefore, the divergence in Fatāwā could be a reflection of focusing on different strata of this semantic network.

Analysis of Traditions (Riwāyāt)

In this subsequent section, it must be demonstrated that the claim of semantic evolution is defensible through a meticulous examination of narrative data and is not merely a theoretical assumption.

• The necessity of categorizing traditions (Riwāyāt)

In both Shi’ite and Sunni hadith sources, numerous traditions regarding Ghinā’ have been transmitted, which are not uniform in terms of content, social context, and signification (Dalālah). One of the methodological challenges in the jurisprudential analysis of these traditions is that they are frequently cited aggregately, without being differentiated based on their semantic field and the context of issuance (Siyāq al-Şudūr). In the present study, traditions related to Ghinā’ are analyzed in three distinct categories: exegetical traditions (pertaining to the application of concepts such as “frivolous discourse” or Lahw al-Ḥadīth), traditions concerning the profession of the female singer (Mughanniyah) and gatherings of amusement (Majālis al-Lahw), and traditions related to chanting the Quran (Taghannī bi-al-Qur’ān) and vocal enhancement. This categorization enables a more precise reconstruction of the subject matter’s signification (Madlūl al-Mawḍū‘).

• Exegetical traditions: “frivolous discourse” (Lahw al-Ḥadīth) and evaluative charge

In certain traditions, the Quranic verse “And of the people is he who buys frivolous discourse...” (Luqman: 6) has been applied to Ghinā’ (Al-Hurr al-Amili, 1993). In this category, Ghinā’ is situated within the semantic field of amusement (Lahw). The crucial point is that in this application, the elements of “misleading” (Idlāl) and “diversion from the remembrance of God” (Inṣirāf ‘an Dhikr Allāh) are prominent. From a semantic perspective, this collocation indicates that Ghinā’ in this stratum is not considered merely a voice quality, but rather a behavior with a specific cultural function. Therefore, the evaluative element is positioned at the center of the network. However, it must be noted that applying Lahw al-Ḥadīth to Ghinā’ is an exegetical application (Taṭbīq Tafsīrī), not an explicit verbal reference by the Quran to Ghinā’. This fact

demonstrates that understanding the meaning of Ghinā' in this category fundamentally relies upon the cultural context of the era of issuance ('Urf 'Aṣr al-Ṣudūr).

• **Traditions of the “earnings of a female singer” (Kasb al-Mughanniyah) (the element of social context)**

The second category encompasses traditions that discuss the prohibition (Ḥurmah) of a female singer's earnings or attendance at gatherings of Ghinā'. In these traditions, Ghinā' appears in conjunction with the following elements: the professional nature of the performance, attendance at specific gatherings, and connection with other amusing behaviors. Here, the element of “social context” plays a pivotal role in determining the subject matter (Mawḍū'). Ghinā' is the subject of the ruling (Mawḍū' al-Ḥukm) not merely as a voice quality, but as a socio-cultural action. From the perspective of semantic field theory, at this stage, the component of “performance context” lies at the center of the network. Consequently, eliminating this component and focusing solely on voice quality could lead to altering the legitimate scope of the subject matter.

• **Traditions of “chanting the Quran” (Taghannī bi-al-Qur'ān) (differentiating quality from function)**

Conversely, some traditions encourage believers to chant the Quran (Taghannī bi-al-Qur'ān). In these instances, vocal enhancement and reverberation (Tarjī') in Quranic recitation are not only unobjectionable but are considered desirable. This category of traditions demonstrates that the element of “voice reverberation” (Tarjī' al-Ṣawt) is not, in and of itself, the subject of prohibition (Ḥurmah); rather, what is reprehensible is its association with a specific cultural context and amusing function (Lahw). This is highly significant from the viewpoint of semantic network analysis, as it shows that voice quality is a shared component between two different semantic fields: one religious and the other amusement-oriented (Lahwī). Thus, it can be stated that the semantic network of Ghinā' during the era of issuance ('Aṣr al-Ṣudūr) was multi-layered and fluid, and cannot be reduced to a single-dimensional definition.

• **Semantic analysis (Taḥlīl Dalālī) (quality, revelry (Ṭarab), or context?)**

By comparing the three categories of traditions, three possibilities emerge regarding the subject matter of the ruling (Mawḍū' al-Ḥukm): the subject is the revelry-inducing voice quality (Kayfiyyat Ṣawt Muṭrib); the subject is a specific cultural behavior in gatherings of amusement; or the subject is a combination of voice quality and social context. The divergence among jurists (Fuqahā') can be re-examined in light of these three readings. Those who emphasized “inducing revelry” (Muṭrib) have leaned towards the first possibility; those who considered “suitability for gatherings of amusement” (Munāsib Majālis al-Lahw) as the criterion have gravitated toward the second or third possibility. This diversity of interpretation signifies that the semantic network of Ghinā' during the era of issuance ('Aṣr al-Ṣudūr) possessed multiple components, and jurists have emphasized different elements in their respective reconstructions of the subject matter (Mawḍū').

• **Analytical conclusion of the traditions section**

The categorized analysis of the traditions (Riwāyāt) demonstrates that: Ghinā' acquired a negative evaluative charge in certain contexts; voice quality in itself was not the subject of prohibition (Mawḍū' al-Ḥurmah); and the element of cultural context plays a decisive role in some traditions. Based on this, it can be stated that the signification (Madlūl) of Ghinā' during the era of issuance ('Aṣr al-Ṣudūr) was a composite and contextual concept. Therefore, generalizing it to all forms of modern music, without meticulously reconstructing the central components of this semantic network, poses a methodological difficulty.

Comparative Musicological Analysis: Ghinā', Ṭarab (Revelry), and Acoustic Structure

• **Conceptual distinction between Ghinā' and “music” in the Islamic tradition**

In the Islamic philosophical tradition, “music” (Mūsīqī) was considered a branch of mathematics that studied acoustic ratios, intervals, melodies (Alḥān), and rhythms (Īqā'āt) (Farabi, 1987; Ibn Sina, 1956). Within

this framework, music is theoretical knowledge about the structure of sound, not necessarily a cultural or amusing (Lahwī) action. In contrast, Ghinā', in many traditional and jurisprudential texts, refers to a specific performative behavior accompanied by the element of revelry (Ṭarab) and the social context of gatherings (Majālis). Therefore, from a conceptual perspective, these two terms have distinct origins:

Music (Mūsīqī): Theoretical structure of sound (Melodic & Rhythmic Structure)

Ghinā': Vocal performative action in a specific social context

This distinction indicates that completely equating the two requires twofold argumentation.

• The element of Tarjī' and vocal structure

In numerous lexical definitions, Ghinā' is defined as the "reverberation of sound" (Tarjī' al-Ṣawt) (Ibn Manzūr, n.d.). From a musicological perspective, Tarjī' can be understood as a form of vocal fluctuation or melisma (Taḥrīr), which relates to subtle variations in pitch and duration during vocal performance. In Iranian Dastgāh music or the Arab Maqām tradition, melisma and vocal ornamentations are integral parts of musical expression. However, this characteristic alone neither indicates an amusing nature (Lahwī) nor holds any specific evaluative criterion. Vocal ornamentation (Taḥrīr) can also be utilized in Quranic recitation, eulogies, elegies (Nawḥah), or classical singing. Consequently, if Tarjī' is considered the primary component of Ghinā', its scope would be exceedingly broad, encompassing religious domains as well. This aligns harmoniously with the traditions advocating "chanting the Quran" (Taghannī bi-al-Qur'ān).

• The concept of Ṭarab and emotional arousal

A recurring element in jurisprudential definitions is the quality of "inducing revelry" (Muṭrib). From a musicological standpoint, Ṭarab can be regarded as a form of emotional arousal resulting from an acoustic experience. However, the experience of Ṭarab depends on several factors: melodic structure, rhythm, and meter (Īqā'), the social context of the performance, and the psychological background of the listener. In the classical Islamic musical tradition, many modes (Maqāmāt) were

associated with specific emotional states; nevertheless, this connection did not necessarily carry a negative evaluative charge. Thus, Ṭarab, as emotional arousal, is a broad and fluid concept and cannot be deemed the absolute criterion for prohibition (Ḥurmah). This point is crucial, because if being Muṭrib is taken as the primary standard for Ghinā', it must be elucidated which specific type of emotional arousal constitutes the subject matter of the ruling (Mawḏū' al-Ḥukm) and how it is differentiated from other artistic or religious experiences.

• The element of "performance context" in musicological analysis

Ethnomusicological studies have demonstrated that the meaning and function of music are contingent upon the social context of its performance. An identical acoustic structure may possess a sacred meaning in a ritualistic context and an entertaining or amusing (Lahwī) meaning in another. This finding corroborates the preceding analysis of traditions: in many narrations, what is condemned is the association of Ghinā' with specific gatherings and their accompanying behaviors. Therefore, it can be argued that in the historical semantic network of Ghinā', "social context" has been a determining factor.

• Proposed analytical model (three components in defining Ghinā')

Based on the interdisciplinary analysis, three components can be proposed for the historical reconstruction of the concept of Ghinā': the acoustic component (reverberation, melisma, vocal extension or Madd al-Ṣawt), the emotional component (Ṭarab and arousal), and the contextual component (gatherings and the cultural background of the performance). The divergence among jurists (Fuqahā') can be analyzed based on their emphasis on each of these components. If the contextual component is placed at the center, the scope of the ruling (Ḥukm) will be more restricted; if the acoustic or emotional component becomes the focal point, the scope widens. This model reveals that the issue of Ghinā' is not merely a dispute over a verbal definition (Ta'rif Lafẓī), but rather a divergence in determining the "central component" of the semantic network.

• Implications for the relationship between Ghinā' and contemporary music

In contemporary music, diverse genres exist: ritual, traditional, classical, pop, epic, etc. If we consider the historical concept of Ghinā' as a composite and contextual entity, then a single, universal ruling (Ḥukm) cannot be issued for all these genres, unless the unity of the subject matter (Ittiḥād al-Mawḍū') with the historical signification is proven. Consequently, musicological analysis indicates that generalizing the ruling of Ghinā' to the entirety of the modern concept of music necessitates a meticulous reconstruction of its semantic components.

The Conceptual Model of the Semantic Network Evolution of Ghinā' and the Explication of Divergent Fatāwā

• From historical analysis to theoretical formulation

Based on the preceding analyses, it became evident that the term Ghinā' underwent a displacement in the center of its semantic network within its historical context. In the first stage, the "acoustic quality" component was central; in the second stage, the "amusing cultural context" (Bāft-i Farhangī-yi Lahwī) became prominent; and in the third stage, this concept was consolidated as a jurisprudential term (Iṣṭilāḥ Fiqhī). This evolution can be formulated as a three-layered model:

First layer (acoustic core): Reverberation (Tarjī'), melisma (Taḥrīr), and vocal extension (Madd al-Ṣawt).

Second layer (emotional-cultural core): Emotional arousal (Ṭarab), gatherings (Majālis), female singers (Mughanniyah), and the amusing function (Kārkard-i Lahwī).

Third layer (jurisprudential terminological stabilization): The melody of transgressors (Lahn Ahl al-Fisq), suitability for gatherings of amusement (Munāsib li-Majālis al-Lahw), and the title of the ruling's subject matter (Mawḍū' al-Ḥukm).

This model demonstrates that the divergence in defining Ghinā' is, in fact, a divergence in determining the "center of the semantic network."

• Rereading the divergence of jurists in light of the network model

Applying the aforementioned model to jurisprudential views reveals that: jurists who defined Ghinā' as "the extension of sound with emotion-inducing reverberation" (Madd al-Ṣawt ma'a al-Tarjī' al-Muṭrib) focused on the acoustic-emotional layer. Those who considered "suitability for gatherings of amusement" as the criterion centered the network on the cultural layer. Others provided a composite definition by combining these elements. Consequently, the divergence in verdicts (Fatāwā) can be understood not merely as a conflict in the signification of the evidence (Ta'arūḍ fi Dalālat al-Adillah), but rather as the result of differences in reconstructing the semantic network of the subject matter (Mawḍū').

• The problem of the unity of subject matter (Ittiḥād al-Mawḍū') in confronting modern music

The network model facilitates a more precise analysis of the relationship between Ghinā' and modern music. To extend the ruling (Ta'mīm al-Ḥukm) from Ghinā' to a new musical genre, it must be examined whether:

- 1) Which central components of the historical network are present in that specific instance?
- 2) Is the element of a similar cultural context established?
- 3) Is mere acoustic similarity sufficient for the unity of the subject matter (Ittiḥād al-Mawḍū')? If only the acoustic component is shared, while the cultural context and social function differ, the unity of the subject matter remains questionable.

• Methodological implications for Islamic jurisprudence (Fiqh)

The proposed model of this article is not limited to the issue of Ghinā'. Many jurisprudential concepts rooted in historical custom ('Urf)—such as amusement (Lahw), gambling (Qimār), image-making (Taṣwīr), imitation of the opposite sex or non-believers (Tashabbuh), or even certain economic concepts—may have undergone semantic evolution over time. Therefore, before extending a ruling to novel instances (Maṣāḍiq Mustahdathah), it is imperative to reconstruct

the historical semantic network of the subject matter. This approach can be regarded as a preliminary stage in the process of deduction (Istinbāt); a stage that bridges historical linguistics and the principles of jurisprudence (Uṣūl al-Fiqh).

• Theoretical conclusion of the proposed model

The historical semantic network model demonstrates that meaning is not a static structure, but a dynamic network; a jurisprudential subject (Mawḍūʿ Fiqhī) can undergo rearrangement within the context of customary (ʿUrfī) evolution, and the divergence in Fatāwā in certain cases stems from different layers of this network. Thus, the present article illustrates that analyzing semantic evolution can provide an explanatory tool for understanding jurisprudential disagreements, without necessarily aiming to prefer one viewpoint over another.

Conclusion

By redefining the issue of Ghināʾ beyond the mere conflict of evidence, the present study sought to demonstrate that a portion of the jurisprudential dispute in this regard traces back to how the subject matter of the ruling (Mawḍūʿ al-Ḥukm) is reconstructed. Contrary to prevalent analyses that attribute the divergence of Fatāwā primarily to the conflict of traditions (Taʾāruḍ al-Riwāyāt) or differences in foundational principles (Mabānī Uṣūliyyah), this article showed that the term Ghināʾ underwent a form of network evolution in its historical context, transitioning from a descriptive meaning concerning voice quality to an evaluative-cultural concept, and subsequently to a jurisprudential term. Historical semantic analysis indicates that the semantic network of Ghināʾ consists of at least three primary components: the acoustic component (Tarjīʿ and Taḥrīr), the emotional component (Ṭarab), and the contextual component (the cultural background of the performance). The divergence in the jurists' viewpoints can be partly attributed to each one's focus on one of these components as the central element of this network. From this perspective, the issue is not solely a disagreement in the ruling

(Ḥukm), but a disagreement in determining the center of the subject's semantic network.

Furthermore, a comparative analysis of the concepts of Ghināʾ and "music" reveals that the two have distinct conceptual origins. In the Islamic theoretical tradition, music was a discipline concerned with the acoustic structure and system, whereas Ghināʾ, in many narrative texts, refers to a performative action within a specific cultural context. Accordingly, generalizing the ruling of Ghināʾ to the modern concept of music, without establishing the unity of the subject matter (Ittiḥād al-Mawḍūʿ), faces a methodological challenge.

From the perspective of Uṣūl al-Fiqh, this research emphasizes the importance of reconstructing the custom of the era of issuance (ʿUrf ʿAṣr al-Ṣudūr) in understanding the signification (Madlūl) of the subject matter. If the evolution of the signification of a customary word is proven, it is necessary to distinguish between understanding the initial signification and applying it to new instances. Neglecting this distinction can lead to the unjustified expansion or restriction of the ruling's scope. This article attempted to propose the "historical semantic network analysis" model for reconstructing jurisprudential subjects. By integrating historical semantics, semantic field analysis, and the theory of subject matter in Uṣūl al-Fiqh, this model provides an interdisciplinary framework for examining evolving concepts. The application of this approach is not restricted to the issue of Ghināʾ; it can also be utilized in analyzing concepts such as Lahw, Qimār, Taṣwīr, Tashabbuh, or even newly emerged economic and artistic subjects. In the horizon of future research, a more precise picture of the historical semantic network of Ghināʾ can be delineated by utilizing broader textual data and even corpus-based analysis methodologies. Moreover, a comparative study of the jurisprudential views of various Islamic schools of thought (Madhāhib) in light of this model can lead to a deeper understanding of the roots of divergence in this issue. Ultimately, this research demonstrates that a precise understanding of the subject matter is the

necessary prelude to any jurisprudential judgment, and historical semantics can serve as a methodological tool in the reconstruction of this subject.

Conflict of Interest Declaration

The author declares that there are no conflict of interest in conducting this research.

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