The Studies of Quranic recitation according to Ibn Taghri in his unpublished manuscript Fatih Al-Bari Fima Yahtaju Ilaihi Al-Muqri’ Walqari’

Os estudos da recitação do Alcorão de acordo com Ibn Taghri em seu manuscrito não publicado Fatih Al-Bari Fima Yahtaju Ilaihi Al-Muqri’ Walqari’

Ebtihaj Abdullah Saad AlSunbul

Abstract

The Quran is the Holy book of Islam and represents the unchanged literal word of Allah in Arabic. The Quran was revealed in various forms and expressions – that is, recitations – to accommodate the diversity of Arabic dialects and the variations in the people’s abilities. Such recitations have been studied extensively, but unfortunately, many of which are not available as scholarly books. One of them is Ibn Taghri’s manuscript, titled: Fatih Al-Bari Fima Yahtaju Ilaihi Al-Muqri’ Walqari’. It underscores the significant perspectives in regards to the most important conditions for accepting or rejecting a particular recitation. It aims at drawing the attention of individuals interested in Quranic studies to new and beneficial insights. The paper is a quality review which adopts the descriptive approach. The subjective perspective is acknowledged as the human experience is involved to explain scholarly views and make judgments. Indeed, the article concludes that Ibn Taghri’s unpublished manuscript provides different perspectives and adopts Ibn al-Jazari’s ideas in most of the issues discussed regarding the Quranic recitations. It also accentuates that the primary criterion for accepting a recitation or rejecting it is the principle of tawatur (continuous transmission). It is obligatory to adhere to the Uthmanic script of the Quran and not deviate from it, except in educational contexts or

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2 Ph.D. in Islamic Studies, Department of Islamic Studies College of Education Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University, Saudi Arabia, Alkharj E-mail: e.alsunbul@psau.edu.sa
Orcid: https://orcid.org/0009-0005-4962-7407
when necessary. This article recommends editing Ibn Taghri’s unpublished manuscript in a scholarly manner and preparing it for the benefit of specialists and experts by disseminating its content to a wider audience.

Keywords: Quran. Quranic Recitation. Ibn Taghri. Tawatur. Uthmanic Script.

Introduction

The Holy Quran is the primary source of secular and religious knowledge for Muslims. It is a revelation from God (known as Allah in Islam) and is revealed in various forms and expressions (i.e. through recitation) to accommodate the diversity of Arabic dialects and the different abilities of people. This prompted the Prophet's companions to devote themselves to his studies and benefit from his vast knowledge. They are immersed in learning, teaching,
reciting and understanding. As the Islamic dominance expanded and the number of people entering Islam from non-Arabic speaking backgrounds increased, the need to teach the Quran and explain its vocabulary and meaning became urgent. During the time of the Muslim Caliph Uthman, this need led to Muslim unification around the single text of the Quran. This article was written after reciting it (Elsayed, 2019). The Muslim nation unanimously accepted this standardization, and it continues to be in place to this day.

Therefore, this Uthmanic manuscript known as "Mus'haf al-Uthmani" has been a subject of interest to Muslim scholars throughout history. They are committed to researching all relevant aspects (Al-Tarawneh, 2019). The purpose is to ensure that Muslims have a complete understanding of the contents of the Qur'an that they recite, as well as the procedures for preserving the Qur'an in written form from its beginning to its dissemination. The subject of Islamic science has been enriched by the contributions of Muslim scholars who have penned critical works on the subject. This has led to a range of unique individual and collective approaches in the field, which provide a treasure trove of valuable research and numerous benefits suitable for examination and analysis.

For centuries, various studies were conducted on the Quran and were not published as scholarly texts accessible to students. However, one such work, "God's guidance in interpreting the needs of the reciter and reader," also known as "Fatih Al-Bari Fima Yahtaju Ilaihi Al-Muqri' Walqari’," is now considered one of the most significant texts on the topic of Quran memorization. This book outlines the fundamental studies that are necessary for individuals to become skilled reciters and readers of the Book of Allah. It covers the stages of revelation, compilation, and documentation of multiple recitations (Al-Tarawneh, 2022), with a focus on the unity of Muslims around a single verse and the rejection of variations that contradict that verse.

Upon conducting an extensive inquiry, it was ascertained that the book remains in its original manuscript form. Therefore, it was decided to conduct research on the recitation studies involved in the manuscript to enrich research in this area. The purpose is to introduce new insights and perspectives that have not yet been discussed by scientists and thinkers in the academic world. These comments may contain new perspectives that are open to review and discussion. Follow the scientific method when examining and asking these questions. These topics are of vital importance to those who study the science of Quranic recitation, as they involve key conditions for the acceptance or rejection of a particular recitation. They emphasize the importance of adhering to the original Muslim consensus on the verses of the

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Qur'an and the importance of maintaining this standard when educating individuals in society to develop appropriate values.

**Research Problem**

The research problem is that there are many controversial topics that need to be clarified for those who seek to enhance their understanding and benefit from the Quran, whether they are readers or reciters. This is because differences have arisen in several Quranic matters, including: What are the seven recitations\(^3\) with which the Holy Quran was revealed? Did the companions\(^4\) compile the Quran with these letters (recitations) or not? Perhaps this leads us to wonder about the script of the Uthmanic manuscript: Do the recitations performed out of it include all seven variations of recitations, or not? And when can we judge a recitation as correct and another as deviant, that is, not to be accepted or recited? In this study, all these issues are covered and discussed.

**Research Objectives**

1. Introducing the Muslim scholar Yunus ibn Taghri and highlighting his scholarly contributions and status.
2. Clarifying the differences between the compilation of the Quran by Abu Bakr al-Siddiq (the first Muslim Caliph) and Uthman (the third Muslim Caliph).
3. Explaining the significance of the *isnad* (chain of oral transmission) in the field of Quranic recitation and identifying prominent and well-known Quranic reciters.
4. Understanding the conditions for accurate Quranic recitation.
5. Defining the term "the seven letters" and the revelation of the Holy Quran with them.

**Research Significance**

The importance of this article is obvious as it covers various studies related to the recitation of the Quran, the historical background starting from the revelation of the Quran, \(^3\) In Arabic, the word recitation is not used. Instead, a ‘letter’ is adopted to stand for recitations, so they say in Arabic that the Quran was revealed in seven letters.

\(^4\) The word 'companion' stands for the Muslims who were in contact with the prophet Muhammad.

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the stages of compilation of the Quran, the methods of copying it, and its compilation and
dissemination by the Muslim community Promise of. Transcription, and rejection of any
deviations. This resulted in the establishment of acceptable standards of recitation on the basis
of this compilation. The manuscript also mentions some important merits and subtle insights,
showing the author's extensive knowledge and familiarity with the views of Qur'anic scholars.
The importance of the topic and the reasons for its selection can be summarized as follows:

1. Clarifying the significance of the essential studies required by both readers and
reciters of the Quran, which is necessary knowledge for those seeking to delve into
this field.

2. Establishing a connection between the manuscripts that study the Quranic
recitation scholarship and the art of actual recitation.

3. Expanding horizons for researchers interested in the Quranic recitation
scholarship to explore the works of previous scholars in this field.

4. Drawing the attention of individuals interested in Quranic studies to new and
beneficial insights, and their impact on the development of society.

Methodology

The research is qualitative in nature, using an inductive and descriptive approach,
based on pursuing details to obtain complete facts, while relying on observation of all details.
Additionally, I used an analytical approach based on studying the topic, analyzing the texts,
and then interpreting and evaluating them. However, subjective perspectives are recognized
because human experience involves interpreting scientific ideas and making judgments. I will
address this issue in my research.

Limitations

The challenge of this article is to examine themes discovered in the manuscript that
have not previously been printed, verified, or presented in a scholarly manner for the benefit
of researchers in the field. The manuscripts examined in this work are the primary sources on
which the research is based, which is one of the most significant strengths of this study as it
explores topics in unpublished manuscripts that have not been previously discussed.

Temporal Boundaries:

This research was completed in August 2023.
Spatial Boundaries:
This research is affiliated with Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University in the city of Al-Kharj, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Subject Boundaries:
The research focuses on the studies of recitation according to Ibn Taghri through his manuscript “faḥłu ʿalbārīyī fīmā yaḥṭāju ʿālaʾyhi ʿalmq̣y wālq̣ārīa’”, translated as the God’s guidance in explaining what the reciter and reader need.

Human Boundaries:
This research examines a manuscript authored by Yunus ibn Taghri, aimed at addressing questions posed to the researcher.

Discussion

The first objective: Introducing the Muslim scholar Yunus ibn Taghri and highlighting his scholarly contributions and status.

The name of the scholar being investigated is Yunus ibn Taghri Barda Amir of Khawar. This is how his name is explicitly mentioned at the beginning of the manuscript. The specific dates for the birth and death of Yunus ibn Taghri are not known. It is mentioned in the introduction of his manuscript that he composed this work in response to a request from a friend to write a book that explains some of the concepts related to Quranic recitations scholarship, including their definitions, basics, narrators, and who the ten prominent reciters are. He also addressed whether valid recitations exist beyond these ten. The manuscript is sealed with the name of the king, Almalik Alashraf Abu al-Nasr Qansuh al-Ghouri and his son, who was the ruler of Egypt at the time. He was known for his great intelligence and strong leadership and passed away in the Battle of Marj Dabiq, near Aleppo, in the year 1517. Therefore, it can be inferred that the author was born and died between 1397 and 1494. This is further supported by the fact that he studied at the hands of Al-Sakhawi, who passed away in the year 1496. None of the sources provide detailed information about the author's scholarly life except for what was mentioned by the author of ‘ālḍāw’u ʿallāami’u’ who states that Yunus ibn Taghri one of those who had heard from me (Al-Sakhawi, 1992). The fact that he studied under the renowned scholar al-Sakhawi suggests that the author possessed a high level of knowledge and expertise.

The second objective: Clarifying the differences between the compilation of the Quran by Abu Bakr al-Siddiq and Uthman.
The Prophet Muhammad began, from the moment the Quran was revealed to him, by teaching his Companions how to recite the Quran and instructing them in the seven variations of recitation ‘letters’ with which it was revealed (Purwanto, 2017). The Companions dedicated themselves to memorizing and understanding the Quran. They strived diligently, observing every sound diacritic with no addition or omission, until most of them had memorized it.

The Prophet would also instruct them to write down the Quran using whatever writing materials were available to them at that time, such as palm leaves, pieces of bone, and shoulder blades. It was not compiled in a single manuscript, making it easier for them to memorize (Al-Tarawneh, 2019). Instead, it was dispersed among various writing materials that were commonly used at the time. The Companions did not face difficulty with this arrangement because they received guidance directly from the Prophet who emphasized oral transmission and memorization. However, some of the Companions did write down the Quran for their personal reference, such as Obai Bin Ka’ab and Ibn Mas’ud, and others among the Companions.

After the Prophet passed away, Abu Bakr al-Siddiq succeeded him as Caliph (political leader). At that time, some tribes refused to pay Zakat (charity), leading to the outbreak of the Ridda Wars (Apostasy Wars). During this period, approximately seventy reciters, who memorized the Quran by heart, were killed in these wars. The Companions became concerned about the potential loss of the Quran that was preserved orally in their hearts, due to the death of these reciters. Umar ibn al-Khattab (the second Caliph) suggested to Abu Bakr al-Siddiq the idea of compiling the Quran into a single manuscript. Initially, Abu Bakr hesitated because the Prophet had not explicitly commanded or authorized such an action during his lifetime. However, after Umar's persistence and upon reflection, Abu Bakr al-Siddiq made his decision and agreed to the proposal. The consensus of the Companions was also reached on this matter. Abu Bakr assigned Zaid ibn Thabit to collect and compile the Quran. Zaid gathered the Quranic verses from various sources and compiled them into sheets. These sheets remained with Abu Bakr until his death, and then with Umar. After Umar's death, they were entrusted to Hafsa, the wife of the Prophet. At this stage, Abu Bakr's compilation preserved the scattered Quranic verses into one cohesive text that was considered the first official manuscript containing the entire Quran (Modarressi, 1993).

This situation persisted until the caliphate of Uthman ibn Affan. During his time, the Islamic state expanded significantly, reaching the borders of Armenia and Azerbaijan. The initial spark for the second compilation of the Quran in his era came from a dispute among the reciters over variations of pronunciation. Each one accused the other of heresy and errors
in their recitation. This disagreement was brought to the attention of Uthman through a report from Hudhaifah ibn al-Yaman. Hudhaifah urged Uthman to gather the people around a single manuscript, fearing that Muslims might disperse and differ in the book of their Lord, similar to how the People of other religions differed in their scriptures (Al-Tarawneh, 2019). Uthman then sent a request to Hafsa, seeking the copies of the Quran that had been made during Abu Bakr's time. Once he received them, he ordered some Companions like Zaid ibn Thabit, Abdullah ibn al-Zubair, Saeed ibn al-Aas, and Abdullah ibn al-Harith ibn Hisham to make one master copy out of the first compilation, and the new copy is fulfilled according to a specific recitation (Quraysh recitation). He instructed them that if they disagreed on any aspect while writing, they should write it in the dialect of the Quraysh, as the Quran had been revealed in their dialect. Multiple copies of this compiled Quran were made and sent to various regions.

The copies of the Quran were sent to different regions: one to Basra, one to Kufa, one to Sham (Syria), one was left in Medina, and Uthman retained one for himself, known as Al-Imam’s copy. Additionally, a copy was sent to Mecca. The entire Muslim community reached a consensus on the content of these copies, and any variations in recitation or text were resolved. These copies did not include diacritical marks and vocalization, following the writing conventions of that time. Some reports suggest that Uthman sent a reciter along with each copy to facilitate the correct recitation and understanding of the Quran (Von Denffer, 2015).

The third objective: Explaining the significance of the isnad (chain of oral transmission) in the field of Quranic recitation and identifying prominent and well-known Quranic reciters.

Isnad (chain of transmission) is defined as the pathways leading to the reception of the Quran and the various ways of its recitation from the time of revelation up to this moment. It consists of a series of narrators who transmitted the Quran orally and preserved its recitations. Isnads for recitations, especially the ten well-known ones, are still authenticated (Al-Dossary, 2008). Isnad is indeed considered a unique characteristic that distinguishes Muslims because there is no precedence to any other community or nation in caring for the credibility and honesty for the narrators of its reports and the traditions of its Prophets. Through Isnad, the transmission of the Quran from the Prophet has been continuously authenticated. The Sunnah (the prophetic tradition) has been safeguarded from additions, omissions, and alterations. Isnad is deemed to be the path to understanding the rulings of Islamic jurisprudence. Hence, the first condition among the prerequisites for validating the Quranic recitation is the
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continuous and connected Isnad by checking the narrator’s account leading back to the Prophet.

The Quran is conveyed through oral transmission and narration, passed down from one generation of distinguished reciters to their teachers, until the chain of narration reaches the Prophet. Isnad was inevitable due to the proliferation of reciters and their dispersion across the Islamic territories. In fact, differences in recitation emerged, and precision and accuracy waned. This situation prompted scholars to strive to check and standardize recitations, distinguishing the authentic from the weak. To do so, their primary criterion for this task was the authenticity of the Isnad. Muslim scholars have differed in their opinions on whether continuous transmission (Tawatur) is a necessary condition for a valid recitation (Çoruh, 2019). Continuous transmission (Tawatur) in this context means that a specific recitation is precisely narrated by a group of reliable and credible narrators who pass the same account or recitation from other narrators to share the same characteristics. The scholars have divided into two main groups on this issue:

The first group who are the orthodox (Usuliyin) and theological jurists (Fuqaha) who hold the view that continuous transmission (Tawatur) is obligatory in the Isnad (chain of transmission) for a valid recitation. According to their perspective, the Quran is only established through continuous transmission, and what comes through isolated reports (Ahad) is not sufficient to establish a Quranic recitation. This view aligns with the position of scholars like Al-Ja’abari (Ibn Al-Jazri, 1999). The second group has taken the position that it is sufficient for the Isnad (chain of transmission) to be authentic along with popularity (Ishtihâr) for the establishment of a Quranic recitation. In addition to other conditions for accepting a recitation which include conformity with the Arabic language and with the Uthmanic script. Ibn Al-Jazri was among those who held this view (Ibn Al-Jazri, 1999).

Those who stipulate that continuous transmission (Tawatur) is a must in the Isnad (chain of transmission) must ensure that the other two conditions related to the recitation are met, as they are two essential pillars that complement the Tawatur. If a recitation is continuous (mutawatir), it must be accepted whether it conforms to Uthmanic script or does not. This view contrasts with those who argue that continuous transmission is not a necessary condition for the validity of a recitation (Berg, 2013). They contend that authenticity of the Isnad and conformity with the Arabic language and Uthmanic script are sufficient conditions to establish the validity of a recitation. According to this perspective, a recitation transmitted through isolated reports (Ahad) is not adequate on its own to establish the validity of the recitation at the level of the transmitted text.
The author, Yunus ibn Taghri, leaned toward the second opinion, which is to suffice with the authenticity of the Isnad (chain of transmission) in line with the view of Ibn Al-Ja’abri. He stated, “I say that the only condition required is the authenticity of the transmission (Isnad), and the other two conditions are not necessary” (Al-Jazri, 2009). Ibn al-Jazri supported this perspective by saying, "This is a criterion that determines what is credible and trustworthy. Whoever has a thorough understanding of the status of the narrator, excels in the Arabic language, and is proficient in the script, these doubts are cleared for him" (Salman, 2022). The Muslim scholars have unanimously agreed to accept the ten recitations (Qira'at) since their chains of transmission are mutawatir (mass-transmitted) and connected in their Isnad (chain of narration) to the Prophet Muhammad. Therefore, it is obligatory to accept them, and it is forbidden to reject them. They are part of the recitations (seven canonical ways of recitation of the Quran), which are as follows: Nafi' al-Madani, Ibn Kathir al-Makki, Abu 'Amr al-Basri, Ibn 'Amir al-Yahsabi', Asim al-Jahdari, Hamzah al-Zaiyat, Ali al-Kisai, Abu Ja'far al-Madani, Ya'qub al-Hadrami, and Khalaf al-Bazzar. The author lists the Isnads (chains of narration) for each reciter separately. For example, Nafi’ had 144 Isnads from 70 followers. Abu Ja'far had 52 Isnads. Ibn Kathir had 73 Isnads. Abu 'Amr ibn al-'Ala has 154 Isnads. Ibn 'Amir has 130 Isnads. 'Asim ibn Abi al-Najud has 128 Isnads. Hamzah al-Kufi has 121 Isnads. Ali al-Kisai has 66 Isnads. Ya'qub al-Hadrami has 85 Isnads. And Khalaf al-Bazzar has 31 Isnads. All of these chains are considered authentic.

The forth objective: Understanding the conditions for accurate Quranic recitation.

When the number of Quranic reciters increased in the Islamic territories, their recitation methods became diverse. Some of them were highly skilled, while others were less proficient, leading to a decrease in precision in recitation. Differences emerged among them, prompting Muslim scholars to establish criteria for accepting recitations and distinguishing the authentic from the weak ones. This was done to protect the Quran from any distortion or alteration. They even agreed that any recitation with a continuous chain of transmission (tawatur), in accordance with the Arabic language, and even if it aligns with the script of one of the Uthmanic scripts is considered an authentic recitation. It is part of the seven modes of recitation in which the Quran was revealed, and no part of it can be rejected or denied. Put it differently, there are two conditions to determine the accuracy of Quranic recitation (Salman, 2022). The first condition is that the chains of transmission (Isnad) has to be connected (Tawatur). This means that the same recitation to be transmitted with precision by individuals of its like in terms of honesty and credibility, in such a way that it continues,
and the recitation becomes well-known among the scholars who specialize in this field, without any doubt or deviation from what they have transmitted.

It has been mentioned that scholars have different opinions regarding the condition of "Tawatur" (continuous transmission). The first group believes that Tawatur is essential for the Isnad (chain of transmission), and one cannot rely solely on its authenticity, as the Quran is only established through Tawatur and not through isolated narrations. Any recitation that is confirmed through Tawatur is in accordance with the Arabic language and the Uthmanic script, even if it is a rare occurrence (Abdullayev, 2021). Therefore, these two conditions are considered subordinate to it. The second group believes that it is sufficient for the Isnad to be authentic and does not require Tawatur. Both of these conditions are essential for the acceptance of the recitation. In this matter, the author Ibn Taghri agrees with some of his predecessors, such as Ibn Shamma and Ibn al-Jazari.

In this context, Abu Shama said that Tawatur (continuous transmission) is not required in this regard. Instead, authentic individual narrations in accordance with the Uthmanic script, and not criticized by scholars, are sufficient, at least, with regard to the language (Abi Shamma, 2003). Al-Jazri added, “this is what cannot be ignored, that is, when Tawatur (continuous transmission) is established, it does not require reliance on the last two aspects of the script or other elements. When any differences in the script are confirmed to be transmitted continuously from the Prophet, they must be accepted and considered part of the Quran, regardless of whether they conform to or deviate from the script. If we were to insist on Tawatur for every letter of the script’s variations, many confirmed script variations from these seven scholars and others would be excluded. I used to lean towards this opinion at first, but its flaws became apparent, and it contradicts the consensus of early and later scholars” (Al-Jazri, 1999). Ibn Taghri also commented, “some later scholars have indeed imposed the condition of Tawatur on this aspect (script variations) and did not consider its authenticity in the chain of narration. They argued that the Quran is only established through Tawatur, and that what comes through solitary narrations cannot be used to establish the Quran” (Sha’ban, 2012).

Moreover, any recitation that conforms to one of the aspects of the Arabic language, even if it differs in some way, is acceptable, as long as the difference does not harm it. It is not necessary for a reading to be the most eloquent or the most accurate, especially if it is a widely accepted and well-documented reading. The chain of transmission (isnad) is the most crucial pillar, and it is the foundation upon which the acceptance or rejection of a recitation is based. Many readings have been accepted by consensus, even though some grammarians may
consider them weak. Their rejection is not significant because recitations are not based on the
most eloquent or the most accurate language, but rather on what is well-established in the
transmitted texts and what is supported by strong chains of transmission (Denny, 1980).
Another point in this regard is to what extent a recitation conforms to one of the Uthmanic
scripts. In fact there are two streams regarding this issue. The first of which is how the
recitation is intended to refer to what is established in some Qur'anic manuscripts in terms of
recitations that are not confirmed in others, such as the recitation of Ibn 'Amir in Surah Al-
Baqara from the verse: "اتخذ الله ولدا" (He has taken a son) without the letter "و" (and), and the
phrase: "وبالزبر والكتاب المنير" (and the Scripture and the illuminating Quran) with an additional
"ب" (baa) in both words. This is confirmed particularly in the Sham (Syrian) manuscript. For
example, the recitation of Ibn Kathir in the last part of Surah Al-
Bayyina from the phrase:
"تجري من تحتها الأنهار" (Beneath it rivers flow) with an additional "من" (min), is confirmed only
in the Makki (Meccan) manuscript, distinct from the rest of the manuscripts. In various places
where the manuscripts differ, the recitations are attributed to the reciters of those regions and
are in accordance with their manuscripts (Denny, 1980). If it were not found in any of the
Uthmanic manuscripts, this recitation would be considered rare due to its deviation from the
consensus on the standard text.

The second one is what conforms, as a possibility, to the script of the Qur'an, i.e., even
if conformity to the script can be an actual match or just a possibility, as matching the script
can be both actual and hypothetical. An example of this is the verse "مالك يوم الدين",
which can be recited as "ملك" in accordance with the script in an actual match, or it can be recited as
"مالك" in a hypothetical sense. Explicit deviation from the script, such as assimilation of a
sound, substitution, omission, affirmation, or similar changes, is not considered deviant if the
reading is confirmed and well-known. These are the pillars of a correct recitation. If these
pillars are compromised, the recitation is considered irregular and weak. Any recitation that
combines the consistency of the chain of transmission, linguistic strength, and conformity to
the script is the chosen recitation among the reciters. Therefore, the ten recitations are
considered valid ones that must be accepted, and they are among the seven canonical modes
of recitation to fulfill the pillars of correct reading. Ibn Tagri said, "It cannot be stated that
these three recitations are irregular; rather, they are valid and must be accepted, and it is
prohibited to deny them among the seven canonical modes of recitation" (Al-Zarqani, 1943).
He also added, “The best to be said is that whenever a recitation encompasses all three
principles: conformity to the script, linguistic correctness, and the authenticity of transmission,
it falls within the seven modes of recitation that the Prophet alluded to. Even if it does not
belong to the ten well-known mode. Anything that deviates from these three or some of them is considered irregular, and there is a difference of opinion regarding it.”

All in all, everything narrated in the Quran falls into three categories, as outlined by Maki ibn Abi Talib (Abi Taleb, 1977): The first category includes recitations where all three conditions align—conformity to the script, linguistic correctness, and authentic transmission. Such recitations are valid and can be recited in prayers with confidence in their correctness and authenticity. The second category consists of recitations that deviate in wording from the script of the Quran but have a valid chain of transmission supporting them. These recitations are accepted for Quran’s interpretation and clarification but should not be recited in prayers or used for acts of worship. The third category encompasses recitations that are recited by individuals who are not considered trustworthy or whose recitation lacks linguistic validity. Such recitations are not accepted, even if they happen to align with the script of the Quran. In summary, the first category is valid for both recitation and worship, the second category is accepted for interpretation and clarification but not for recitation in worship, and the third category is not accepted at all, even if they match the script of the Quran.

The fifth Objective: Defining the term “the seven letters” and the revelation of the Holy Quran with them.

Scholars are not unanimous regarding the definition of “the seven letters” – that is, the seven recitations of the Quran. In the authentic Hadith narrated by the Prophet Muhammad, "This Quran was revealed in seven modes, so recite what is easy for you" (Al-Bukhari, 2001). This Hadith has led to various interpretations among scholars:

1. It is seven dialects among the dialects of the Arabs in which the Quran was revealed, and there is a difference in the number of dialects. Some said seven which are the dialects of Quraysh, Hudhayl, Thaqif, Hawazin, Kinana, Tamim, and Yemen. Others argued for five dialects which are Hawazin, Sa'd, Thaqif, Kinana, Hudhayl, and Quraysh.
2. These are seven dialects among the dialects of the Arabs in which the Quran was revealed, and they are distinct from each other. Some of them were in the dialect of Quraysh, some in the dialect of Hawazin, some in the dialect of Hudhayl, and some in the dialect of Yemen. This is the opinion of Abu 'Ubayd. These mentioned tribes were the most eloquent among the Arabs in their language, and they were known for their pride and dominance. Supporters of this view argue that these seven dialects are intended by the term "modes." This is because the roots of Arab tribes ultimately converge into seven, and there are indeed seven classical languages. Ibn al-Jazari
mentioned this opinion, relying on the incident involving Umar ibn al-Khattab and Hisham ibn Hakim when they had a dispute over the recitation of Surah Al-Furqan, as documented in the authentic Hadith. Both Umar and Hisham were Qurayshis, sharing the same language and tribe.

3. That each individual letter of it has seven aspects of realization in different dialects. It is noted that such a phenomenon exists only in a limited number of words.

4. It is meant by it the various recitations of the Quran, and the term "modes" (letters) could be used in a manner similar to how Arabs commonly name things after what they are related to or resemble. However, this interpretation is also less likely, as scholars generally agree that the "seven modes" do not refer to the seven canonical recitations of the Quran since they were not established during the time of the Prophet. The first person to compile these recitations was Ibn Mujahid in the fourth century (Al-Sakhawi, 1997).

5. It refers to the meanings of Sharia rulings, such as what is permissible (halal) and forbidden (haram), the decisive (muhkam) and the allegorical (mutashabih) verses, parables (amthal), statements of fact (insha), informative statements (ikhabar), abrogating (nasikh) and abrogated (mansukh) verses, specific (khass) and general ('am) commands and prohibitions, explicit (mujmal) and detailed (mubayyin) statements, interpretations (tafsir), syntactic analysis (i'rab), and explanations (ta'wil).

6. The intent behind the term "seven" is not necessarily a strict numerical count, where it cannot exceed or decrease. In Arabic, people often use the words "seven," "seventy," and "seven hundred" to indicate abundance or exaggeration without necessarily implying a precise count. This can be seen in verses like the one you mentioned, such as "like a grain that sprouted seven ears" or "If you seek forgiveness for them seventy times." Ibn Taghri mentioned this perspective because Hadiths indicate that the Quran was revealed in "seven modes," and if the number were not intended, there would be no reason for emphasizing it (Al-Zarkashi, 1957). So, in this context, the term "seven" is meant to emphasize the multiplicity of modes rather than specifying a precise number.

7. These are seven aspects of variation that occur within the Quranic word, and they do not deviate from it. These aspects include: Variation in Vowels (diacritics) without Changing the Meaning and Form: For example, "البخل" (al-bukhl) and "البخل" (al-bakhil), where the meaning and form remain the same. Variation in Meaning without Changing the Form: For instance, "تلقوته" (talqawnahu) and "تلقوته" (talqawntah).
(talqawwunahu), where the form changes but not the meaning. Variation in Letters without Changing the Meaning: Examples include "تَنْشَرْهَا" (nanshizha) and "تَنْشَرْهَا" (nanshirha), where the letters change but not the meaning. Variation in Both Letters and Meaning: For instance, "وَيَايَالُ" (wayatal) and "وَيَايَالُ" (wayata'alu), where both the letters and meaning change together. Variation in Word Order (Taqdim and Ta'khīr): Such as "فِيْقَتَلْهُمَا" (fiyqataluna) and "فِيْقَتَلْهُمَا" (yaqtaluna), where the word order changes. Variation in Addition and Omission: For example, "أوصِ" (awsa) and "وصِ" (wasa), where there is a difference in addition and omission. These seven aspects of variation do not take the variation outside the boundaries of the Quranic word. This view has been favored by many scholars, including Ibn Qutaybah, Al-Razi (Al-Razi,, 2011), and Ibn al-Jazari. As for matters related to the rules of Tajweed, such as assimilation (Idgham), clear pronunciation (Izhar), and others, these are not considered part of the variation that affects both form and meaning but rather represent various attributes of pronunciation. They do not change a single word into different words.

Ibn Taghri favored the interpretation that the "seven modes" refer to seven dialects among the Arabs in which the Quran was revealed. He stated that the intended meaning is languages, and many scholars have also leaned towards this interpretation (Al-Jawzi, 1987). However, there has been some disagreement among scholars about which specific dialects are being referred to. Some have suggested dialects like Quraysh, Hudhayl, Thaqif, Hawazin, Kinana, Tamim, and Yemen as possibilities. Even the meaning within the seven modes of recitation is disputable. The meanings of the Quranic words, in terms of their occurrence and repetition, vary and are both exceptional (shaz) and valid (sahih), and they are hardly categorized in terms of enumeration. Instead, they can be traced back to two main categories:

- Words with Different Forms but the Same Meaning:
  These are words where the form (the actual word) differs while the meaning remains the same. This can involve complete differences or partial differences, such as "العهن" (al-'uhan) and "الصوف" (al-suf), where the meaning is the same.

- Words with Different Forms and Different Meanings:
  These are words where both the form and the meaning differ. Examples include "الدوناهم" (lanabu’innahum) and "الدوناهم" (lanathwayinnahum), as well as "اتخذوا" (attakhathu) and "اتخذوا" (ittakhadhu), where both the form and meaning change.

These variations in the Quranic words can be due to differences in pronunciation, grammatical structures, or intended meanings, and they contribute to the richness and depth of the Quranic language and message.
The wisdom behind the Quran being revealed in seven modes (ahruf) is to ease the burden on the Muslim community and facilitate their access to the Quran. This is in line with what is authentically reported in Hadiths that the Prophet Muhammad asked his Lord for concessions and was granted them, eventually receiving the Quran in seven modes. This concession was granted in consideration of the diverse dialects spoken by the Muslims. By revealing the Quran in these various modes, people with different dialects could recite it without difficulty. This allowed the message of Islam to reach them effectively, establish the evidence against them, help them understand God’s intent in creating them, and ensure that they would receive rewards for reciting the Quran (Al-Ash'ari, 1984).

The variations among these seven modes (ahruf) of recitation do not imply contradictions or conflicts but rather serve several beneficial purposes (Al-Abed, 2005):

- **Clarification of Consensus Rulings:**
  Some variations help clarify rulings that are unanimously agreed upon. For example, the recitation of Sa'īd ibn Abi Waqqas in Surah An-Nisa (4:23), "أَوْ لَمَسْتُمُ النِِّسَاءَ ("or have touched women), illustrates that the term used refers to a maternal sibling, which is a matter of consensus.

- **Preferential Rulings:**
  In cases where scholars hold differing opinions, the variations help support the preference of one ruling over another. For instance, the recitation "أَو تَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ مُّؤْمِنَةٍ ("or freeing a believing slave) in the expiation of breaking oaths leans towards requiring the presence of faith, which is a preferred interpretation.

- **Dual Legal Rulings:**
  Some variations occur due to two legitimate legal opinions. For example, the recitation "وَأَرْجُلُكُم" with both tashkeel (vowelization) options, representing "wearing sandals" and "washing," allows for both opinions to be accommodated.

- **Clarity of Meaning:**
  Variations can help clarify intended meanings that might be misconstrued. For instance, the recitation "فَامْضُوا إِلَىٰ ذِكْرِ اللََِّ ("so proceed to the remembrance of Allah) makes the intended action clear, as compared to "فَاسْعُوا ("so hasten), which could be misunderstood.

- **Explanation of Unfamiliar Words:**
  In some cases, variations provide explanations for unfamiliar words or phrases, aiding comprehension. For example, the recitation "كَالصُّوفِ الْمَنْفُوشَ serves to clarify the meaning of the الصُّوفَ."
Variations can serve as evidence for the proponents of truth and refute the claims of those in error. For example, the recitation "وَمَلِكًا كَبِيرًا" (and a great king) with the pronunciation of the letter "ل" supports the view of those who believe in seeing Allah in the Hereafter.

- Supporting Scholarly Opinions:
  Some variations align with the opinions of certain scholars. For instance, the recitation "أَو لَمَّا سْتُمُ النِِّسَاءَ" with the pronunciation of "ل" in "لَمَّا سْتُمُ" supports the view of some Arabic linguists.

- Grammatical Evidence:
  Variations can provide grammatical evidence for certain linguistic principles. For example, the recitation of "وَالأَْرْحَا" with the change of vowelization offers evidence for a grammatical construct.

In essence, the variations among these seven modes of recitation enrich the understanding and application of the Quran's teachings, accommodating linguistic diversity and providing a comprehensive framework for interpreting and implementing its guidance.

**Conclusion**

Studying Quranic recitations is not an easy task because there is no consensus amongst Muslim scholars. Indeed, Ibn Taghri in his manuscript provided different perspectives and adopted Ibn al-Jazari's ideas in most of the issues he discussed in his book. The only case where he disagreed with him was on which of the seven modes of recitations is the most prevalent. The study also highlights how Isnad (chain of narrators), has distinguished the Muslim community in terms of the conveyance of religious narratives, setting it apart from other nations. The Quran has been transmitted through the method of Isnad and continuous chain of narration, not through independent reasoning (ijtihad) or analogy (qiyas), as well as the various recitations. Moreover, the inimitability of the Quran lies in its revelation in seven modes of recitation, which do not contradict each other but rather show diversity and variation. The compilation of Uthman ibn Affan is considered an extension of the compilation by Abu Bakr, as both relied on the same scribe, Zaid ibn Thabit. Uthman's compilation aimed to standardize the Quranic text due to concerns about potential variations. The primary criterion for accepting a recitation or rejecting it is the principle of tawatur (continuous transmission). The other two criteria serve as complementary factors. It is obligatory to adhere to the Uthmanic script of the Quran and not deviate from it, except in educational contexts or when necessary. There is a consensus among scholars on the continuous transmission (tawatur) of
the ten recitations and their obligatory acceptance as part of the seven modes. The Uthmanic manuscripts contain what can be attributed to the seven modes of recitation based on the latest presentation made by the Prophet Muhammad to Gabriel. Please note that these results are based on the research conducted, and the interpretation and understanding of these findings may vary among scholars and individuals. This article recommends editing the manuscript in question in a scholarly manner and preparing it for the benefit of specialists and experts by disseminating its content to a wider audience.

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