



# THE SCIENCE OF TAJWID AND RECITATION IN MAWARANNAHR

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## ANNOTATION

*This article is an attempt to illuminate how science of tajwid and recitation developed in Mawarannahr and scholars who worked on it and as well as their works are briefly elucidated. This article can serve as important source because author made all his inferences relying on primary sources.*

**KEYWORDS:** “Shtibi”, recitation, tajwid, source, “Koran”, manuscript, seven recitations, recitation-room.

## Аннотация

Эта статья посвящается развитию науки таджвид и декламации в Мавераннахре, а также ученым, которые работали над ней. Также их работам, кратко освещается. Эта статья может служить важным источником, потому что автор сделал все свои выводы, опираясь на первоисточники.

**Ключевые слова:** «Штиби», чтение, таджвид, источник, «Коран», рукопись, семь чтений, комната чтения.

## DISCUSSION

As soon as Islam was introduced into Central Asia it soon took root in the great cities of the region and then more gradually spread out to the remoter areas. Along with the spread of Islam, sciences connected with it started to develop. Initial science based on holy Koran was tajwid and recitation which means a set of rules for the correct pronunciation of the letters with all their qualities and applying the various traditional methods of recitation. We can say that the point at which this science embarked on the development was VIII-IX centuries. It is noteworthy to mention that a lot of researches have been done on the science of recitation and tajwid in Arabic, African countries and Spain. [1, 184] However, we have only few researches how this process went on the territory of Central Asia. We should admit that the development of science of tajwid and recitation is contingent upon support and attitude of rulers of a country to this science. Put it another way the more support the folk get, the more Koran reciters and hafizes are on increase.

The emergence of centralized states, economic boost, reconstruction of caravan routes, expansion of trade, development of craftsmanship

and agriculture was knock on effect on development of cultural and spiritual life in Mawarannahr. Along with this, scholars' movement to the central cities of Mawarannahr and Khurasan gave a rise to this process. This scenario is relevant to Temurid period. During the Temurid reign hundreds of works on science of tajwid and recitation were written which are of great importance and value so far. We consider that to do researches on them is actual and consequential these days.

It is important to note that there were masters of recitation and tajwid among the teachers of the most distinguished scholar of Hadith Imam Mohammed Al-Bukhari. One of them is Ubaid Allah ibn Musaal-Abasi. He was considered as the apprentice of Imam al-Kisoi and Khamza az-Zayot and he learned thoroughly the knowledge of recitation and tajwid from him.[2, 189-190]

The next scholar of recitation who gained popularity among people was contemporary of Imam Bukhari - Abulqasim Khaysam al-Bukhari (240/854).

The next prominent scholar of his time and who made a great contribution to the science of recitation and tajwid was Abu Nasr ibn Muhammad as-Samarkandi al-Haddodi. He wrote a book entitled “al Gunya fil-qiroat”. He would use this book as the



teaching source. This peripatetic scholar had many students from different parts of the continent and he used this valuable book to teach them. He left precious information about this book, including all his teachers, their teaching methods. He says in his book: "I am proud of leaving the names of all my teachers in this book. I did it because of following reasons: firstly, I wanted to bless and pray for the teachers. Secondly, I wish my students would follow their ways. Lastly, I let them know that I learned from different scholars. By this action I hoped my student got how getting knowledge from different teachers was beneficial. I mentioned that you wouldn't feel the beauty of recitation unless you picked it up by observing various masters". [3, 97-98].

The following scholar whose nickname "Sadr al-qurro" was Muhammad ibn Muhammad ibn Umar ash-Shihobi al-Gunbazi as Samarkandi (died. 620/1223). He was popular among people as the person who knew popular and rarely met recitations. This information was mentioned by his several students. [3, 384].

Another master of recitation was Abulhasan Ali ibn al-Muqaddsi who was known as "Ibn al-Bukhari" among folk (died. 690/1291). He conducted lessons on recitation and tajwid in madrassah and the main source he used was "Kitab al-Iyjoz". Unfortunately, little information was handed down to us.

The next scholar who was popular with the title "Eastern reciter" was Abdulhomid al-Bukhari az-Zandi (died.700/1300). As he was proficient at seven styles of recitations (qira'at) and knew rare styles of qira'at, many people in Central Asia were eager to learn the secrets and beauty of qira'at from him. Therefore, he had a lot of students from different parts of continent.

In the history of Central Asia XIV century is defined as the blossom of culture and science. At that time the great Temur ruled over the continent. While Temur and his successors ruled the region, science flourished. Islamic sciences are not exception to this either because Temur had a great passion and reverence to Islam. For this reason, Temur and Temurids' princes supported any research on Islamic sciences. One of the branches of Islamic science which thrived was the science of recitation and tajwid. Reciters of Koran were well-respected and those who were masters of recitation and tajwid gained recognition soon among the rulers and folk. The event with great Temur and Khoja Abdulkhadir al-Marogi (died. 838/1435) who was a prominent musician and in the meantime reciter and khafiz of that time proves above mentioned statement. He was the author of many books. For instance, "Kanz ulalkhon", "Jome ulalkhon", "Maqosid al-alkhon", "Sharhaladvor". Great poet and writer Alisher Navoi

elucidated this event in his book "Majolis un-nafois". According to him one of Amir Temur's sons, Miranshah, who ruled in Tabriz got drunk. He disrupted justice a lot and began to do unworthy things. This statement reached Samarkand to Amir Temur. The Emir was informed that three of Miranshah's pointers had misled him and allowed him to drink. The Emir ordered them to go to Tabriz as soon as possible and cut off head all three of them. The criminals involved in this terrible punishment were Hodja Abdulkadir, Mawlana Muhammad Qahi and Usta Kutb Noi. The executioner cut the heads of two of them. But the third one escaped. He showed himself as a dotty and walked with the eremite. When Amir Temur made his way to Iraq, it was found that Khoja Abdulkadir was here. He was ordered to be seized. Despite her devotion, Khoja was seized and brought to the Emir. Amir was sitting on the throne. Khoja's main virtue was the recitation of the Qur'an with great pleasure before the death order was issued. When Khoja was captured and brought to the emir, he knelt down and began to read the Qur'an aloud. He was reading with a very pleasant voice. After that, Amir's anger changed with grace. Amir Temur read the following verse to the people of virtue and perfection around him:

Abdol zi biym chang mus'haf zad.

(Eremite shielded the Qur'an from fear.)

Amir Temur accepted the excuse of Khoja Abdulkadir and forgave him. He was pleased with him and made him a guest of honor. [4, 411]

Another scholar who lived in the period of Temurid is Abdulloh as-Saba. He was from Khwarasm and good at seven styles of recitation. The word "As-Saba" means 7 recitations. He was the student of eminent scholar in the world of recitation Abu Ishoq Ibrohim al-Jabari (640-731/1242-1332). Here it is noteworthy to mention another scholar's name from Khwarasm-Ali ibn Muhammad al-Khwarazmi (died.759/1358) who gained qira'ats of ten different recognized schools. Therefore, he was honored with the title "Precious scholar at ten styles of qira'at". Interestingly, we met information in the book "Tabaqot al-muffasirin about another scholar on recitation and tajwid who had the same name as the scholar mentioned above. This". Ali ibn Muhammad al-Khwarazmi (died. 571/1175) wrote a book entitled "Tafsir al-Khwarazmi". Surprisingly, during our research we came across another scholar with the same name who was popular with the title "the pride of sheikhs". Ali ibn al-Khwarazmi (died.560/1165) was the student of Makhmud az-Zamakhshari" who wrote a book about grammar Arabic language. Besides he was the author of tafsir of the Koran. [5, 430-431] There was not any research about above mentioned three scholars with the same name. Perhaps, aforesaid information might be about one and the same scholar but with the different



information.

During our research we found out information about a mutakallim with name Abu Bakr Ahmad ibn Umar as-Samarkandi. He was skilled at recitation and art of Koran calligraphy. According to some sources he died in 813 according Hijri calendar (1410 according to Gregorian calendar). This date comes out from word "bayoz" (بياض) according to abjad alphabetic numeral system. [3, 40]

Academician D. Yusupova in her research gives information about several scholars who lived in Temurid period. For instance: Mavlono Mu'iniddin Farohiy (died. 907/1500), Amir Ihtiyoriddin Hasan Turbati (died.927/1521), Jamoliddin Atoulloh (died. 905/15000), Amir Said Asliddin Abdulloh Husayni (died. 883/1478), Hafiz Giyos (died.872/1468), Shamsiddin Muhammad ibn Sharafiddin Usmon (died. 901/1495), Shaikhulislom Saifuddin Ahmad Taftaoni (died. 916/1511), Kamoliddin Husayn Vaiz Koshifi (823/910), Shamsiddin Muhammad Tabadgoni (891/1486). They were scholars who worked on such Islamic sciences as hadith, tafsir, fiqh, tasawwuuf, recitation. [6, 110-119]

In the period of Timurid dynasty the city Samarkand is noted for being an Islamic center for scholarly study. Different scientists from different parts of the world gathered here. An outstanding scholar on recitation in Islamic world Shamsiddin Jazari paid a visit to Samarkand and his compilation about tajwid rules - Al-Manzumah al-Jazariyyah was written here.

Another master of recitation by name Abdulkhayr Muhammad al-Jazari (751-833/1350-1430) came to Mawarannahr by official request of Amir Temur and led scientific research in Kesh, Samarkand, Nasaf on Islamic sciences. Later he again visited Samarkand when Mirza Ulugbek ruled over the empire. He spent the last days of her life in Shiraz working as kazi (a civil judge).

He left rich scientific heritage to next generation. He is the author of more than ten books. His book written in poetic verse "al-Muqaddima al-Jazariya" had been used as the main teaching source on recitation and tajwid in Mawarannahr madrassahs. Aside from this, his books dedicated to recitation "an-Nashr", "Toyibbat an-Nashr", and "ad-durrat al-muziya" have been used as the main manual in Islamic world of qira'at. What is more, his books "Goyat an-nihoya", and "Nihoyat ad-diroyat" which were about the life and works of scholars on recitation are still popular in Islamic world. Furthermore, his book "al-Hisn al-hasin" devoted to dua (supplication) and zikr (ritual prayer or litany practiced by Muslim mystics (Şūffī) for the purpose of glorifying God and achieving spiritual perfection) had been in use in the cities of Turkistan till XX century. The copy of manuscripts of his books have been preserved in the Abu Rayhan al-Biruni Institute

of Oriental Studies of the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Uzbekistan and Research Centre.

The great Uzbek poet Alisher Navai was also good at recitation tajwid. In the chapter of his book "Majolis un-naffois" which devoted Sharafiddin Ali Yazdi he remembers an event when he was 6-year-old boy: "in 1449, my parents drove through the city of Taft, where the famous historian Timur Sharafaddin Ali Yazdi lived at that time. The caravanserai where the travelers stopped was located near the khanaki of Sharafaddin. I was playing with other children, accidentally ran into the courtyard of the khanaki and saw a venerable old man there. The scientist called out to him I sensibly and judiciously answered all the historian's questions. He praised me and asked if I was already going to school. I proudly replied that I was already studying the Qur'an and managed to learn till Tabarak sura<sup>1</sup>. Timur Sharafaddin Ali approved my wit and courage and blessed me". [4, 310] From this story it can be derived that first educational book for children of that time was Koran and six-year-old Alisher Navai learnt by heart Koran to some extent and was able to recite it even in early age of his life.

Due to a lot of sources we know that Alisher Navoi opened up ample opportunities to promote education, science and art by supporting students financially and morally. From the story elucidated in his book "Hamsat ul-mutahayyirin" we can know that how he paid great attention to men of science and students with the desire of getting knowledge. According to this story Khodja Dekhdor had seen in his dream how Abdurakhmon Jomiy urged him to learn by heart holy Koran. After several days Khoja Dekhdor told Alisher Navai his dream. With the recommendation and impetus of him Khoja Dekhdor memorized Koran completely and grew as good hafiz. The following lines also prove what we said above:

Faqir so'iy va bois boldumkim, ul Quron oqib, yod tutti va hob hafizi mjavvid boldi"

( Due to me he learned and memorized Koran and as a result became a good reciter).

After a little while Khoja Dekhdor paid a visit to Abdurakhmon Jomi. Unfortunately, Jomi was at the brink of death. Alas, there was nobody around him who was able to read Koran. He immediately started to read Koran and during his reading Jomi went to final rest. Alisher Navai describing this story he said that Jomi's push him into reading Koran paid off after 30 years. [7, 76]

Alisher Navai's contribution to Koranic sciences was enormous. For instance, according to suggestion of Alisher Navai and under his patronage

<sup>1</sup> This is chapter 67 of the Noble Quran. It is called Surah Al-Mulk



two books on tafsir of Koran—"Javohir at-tafsir" and Mavohibi Aliya" were written.[ 8, 29 ]

It is important to note that in Medieval centuries buildings called "Dor al-Huffoz" were built in almost all cities of Mowarannahr. They served as school for students who wished to learn Koran and lead scientific researches. [9, 470<sup>6</sup>-472<sup>a</sup>] From XX century they began to be called "Qira'athona" and used as madrassah. [10, 54]. The school of this type prepared hafizes. Initially, the word hafiz started to be used from VIII-XV centuries. The word hafiz was used to note a person who learnt by heart more than 1000 hadiths. [ 11, 89] This term was also used to mean a man who memorized Koran and was able to read it in seven styles of Koran. From XVI-XVII centuries onward this word began to be used massively to mean a person who knew a lot of songs and poems.

Notable hafizes (who memorized Koran) of that time was Hafiz Ali Jomi (XV) who was the teacher of Alisher Navai. In his book "Majolis anafois" he said: "Hafiz Ali Jomi had a lot of students and I was also one of them. I was proud of being his student and having opportunity to learn from him. [4, 31]. In this book it is also mentioned that Hafiz Jaloliddin Makhmud, Hafiz Yari, Hafiz Muhammad Sultonshoh, Hafiz Sharbati were famous scholars on recitation who lived at that time.

It is worth noting another scholar's name of that time who was adept at recitation - Shamsiddin Muhammad as-Sherozi (725-790/1325-1388). The scholar was able to read Koran by heart and to top off it all he knew 14 styles of reading Koran (10 mutawatir and 4 shaz). [ 12, 257] Therefore, he was known among folk by name Khodja Kafiz Sherozi. As being scholar he gave a comment to Makhmud az-Zamakhshari's tafsir (467-538/1075-1144) entitled "al-Kashshof". He was considered as the student of Azudiddin al—Iyji (died.765/1355) whose books had been used as the main manual in Medieval centuries in madrasshs of Mowarannahr.

The scholar who was known "Hafiz Kohaki" also made a substantial contribution to the developments of recitation and tajwid of Koran. He was the author of more than ten books. One of his books is "ar-Risola fi fan at-tafsir". As its name tells us that it was devoted to the practical aspects of tafsir and kalam. His real name was Sulton Muhammad Hafiz Toshkandi. He lived in Tashkent during the period of Shaybanid. Hafiz Kohaki built madrassah in the yard of his house (in the street Sagban in Tashkent) and worked there as a teacher. [13, 203]. He knew 14 styles of Koran therefore, people used to add the word "hafiz" to his name to show respect.

The land of Mowarannahr was the place which brought up thousands of Islamic scholars and hafizes to the Muslim world. The main reason for this are followings:

- first and foremost, people of that country had a great affection and reverence to holy Koran. For this reason people held a high regard for scholars and those who memorized Koran completely;

- secondly, thirst and lust for gaining knowledge was very high;

- lastly, rulers, wealthy and powerful people supported financially wise men and hafizes. By the patronage of them they toiled in peace for years without concern for their daily sustenance.

One representatives of such kind of rulers is Muhammad Rashidhon. It is known from history that he ruled the state (1534-1560) which was known "Qashgar Khanate" located in Eastern Turkistan. According to Mutrubi Samarkandi's book (964-1039/1556-1629) "Tazkirat ash-shuoro" Abdurashidhon spent most of his time on reading Koran in mosque. [14, 55] In this book the author also mentions about the benefits of reading Koran:

Dardli dillarga davodir Quran,  
Majruh jonlarga shifodir Quron.  
Istaganing izla sen Qurondan,  
Imlar ganjiga ma'vodir Quron.[14, 57]

Koran is a treatment for people with heavy heart

Koran is a cure for wounded hearts

Koran is a source of knowledge

So holy Koran- a solution to every problem of the world

From above mentioned it can be derived that Muhammad Rashidhon appreciated Koran. Apart from having great respect to Koran he was the patron of science especially Koranic sciences. That's why, there were a lot of scholars on recitation and qāris at that time (is a person who recites the Quran with the proper rules of recitation (tajwid). In medieval centuries in Mowarannahr many of rulers were good at Koranic sciences therefore they paid a great attention to the development of them and even raised them to the level of public policy. For instance, due to book "al-Mufrada al-mufida" (927/1521) which was written by Hafizi Kalon one of rulers of Shaybanid khanate Ubaydullahon had a thorough knowledge of tafsir, hadith, fikh, sarf-nahw (Arabic Grammar):

Nazhiroat nazari u kas nest,  
Odamero hamin hunar bas nest.  
"Shotibiy" ro chunon kunad taqrir,  
Ki shavad shod ruzi Shayx Zarir.  
Mufradotash Chunon Shuda Mazbut,  
Ki, naoyad ba-yodash az mabsut.  
Lahni Dovudiyash ravon Baxshad  
Dar tani murda kuvvati jon Baxshad [15,

3<sup>6</sup>]....

Meaning: "No one can surpass him in recitation of Koran. He analyzed Shotibi so adeptly



that it was certain that the soul of deceased Sheykh Zarir<sup>2</sup> was content. He memorized simple rules of recitation but never forgot the complex ones. As Dawud he had an extremely beautiful melodies voice in recitation. Whenever he read Koran, any soul could find solace”.

The next person who was master of recitation was Hafizi Kalon Samarkandi. According to “Muzakkiri ahbob” he was one of the respected qaris of his time. Moreover, he was a person who gained complete trust of Shaybani Khan and many hafizes learned from him. [16, 159]. He got a nickname “sohibi waqf hafiz” because he was good at waqf affairs in Koran and his book “Muzakkiri ahbob” was also dedicated to that topic.

The next notable qari of Medieval centuries was Hafiz Merosi (died. 934/1528) who was special imam of Ubaydullakhan. He was one of rare khatibs who was able to read in seven qira’at styles. [16, 110].

Another scholar of recitation who lived during the reign of Ubaydullakhan was Hafiz Mir Akhmad khatib al-Bukhari. He taught students on Shatibiyah. It was said that he was the scholar who was acutely aware of Mālikī madhab principles.[16, 162]. Here it is noteworthy saying that Ubaydullakhan also was hafiz who completely memorized Koran. He learned recitation of holy Koran from Mavlono Yormukhammad qari. [17, 233] Khasankhoja Nisori in his book “Muzakkiri ahbob” says followings about Ubaydullakhan and his interest to Koran: “Among qaris of that time Yormukhammad was the best one therefore, Ubaydullakhan paid great attention to recitation of Koran and never read it without tajwid”. [16, 24]

The scholar by name Yormukhammad was from Samarkand that’s why you can meet his name with his home town name affixed to his personal name. Yormukhammad Samarkandi was the author of the book entitled “Qavoid al-Quran” which was devoted to recitation and tajwid. Imam Osim and his narrators’ qira’at styles and rules illuminated in this book. Its manuscript has been preserving in the Abu Raykhan Beruni Institute of the Oriental Studies of the Academy of Sciences of Uzbekistan. Even Mavlono Ali al-Qari (died. 1014/1606) used this book while writing comment to book “al-Muqaddimat al-Jazari”. “Qavoid al-Quran” was popular in XVI-XIX centuries. The author dedicated it to Ubaydullakhan. Apart from this book another book of this author entitled “Kitab al-Mufrada” was also devoted to khan mentioned above. In introduction part of this book Ubaydullakhan was

described. Some lines of the introduction part are given below:

دايرةً بادشاهی و مرکز مدار شهنتشاهی، قطب فلك خلافت، (در) برج شرف كرامت، بدر آسمان سعادت و شهریارى، آفتاب سماء رفعت كامكارى، والى لواء الولاية فى الآفاق، مالك سرير الخلافة بالآثر و الإستحقاق، ناشر رايات العدل و الإحسان، باسط أجنحة الأمن و الأمان، كاشف أسرار الحقائق، عارف أسرار الدقائق، رافع رأية العلم الى الغاية القصوى، مظهر كلمة الله العليا، المؤيد من السماء بالتأيين و التمكين، المظفر على الأعداء بالفتح المبين و النصر المتين، المستنصر من النصير المستعان أبو الغازى عبيد الله بهادر خان خلد الله تعالى ملكه و سلطانه و أفاض على العالمين بره و إحسانه.

According to this Abdulgozi Ubaydullox bahodirhon is characterized as patron of science, defender of his nation, Allah’s caliph on the earth, symbol of justice and benevolence, defender of God’s words. [18, 4<sup>a.6</sup>.]

Subhankulikhan- a representative of Ashtarhanids dynasty (reign periods-1681-1702) was interested in science of recitation and always supported scholars financially and morally. Consequently, during his reign Islamic sciences developed. For instance, scholar on Quranic recitation Mukhammad Baki ibn Mavlono Tursun Mukhammad ibn Mulla Bobojon ibn Mavlono Miron al Bukhari as-Soktari commented the ode of Shatibi in Persian language. This work is called “Kashf Hirz al-amonī” and written in 1064/1654 year. It was dedicated to Subhankulikhan and it was written when Mukhammad Baki al- Bukhari taught Subhankulikhan “Shatibi”. From aforesaid it can be concluded that Mukhammad Baki al- Bukhari was a teacher of Subhankulikhan.

The comment of the ode “Shatibi” by Mukhammad Baki al- Bukhari was published in Tashkent in 1914 with the comments of Mavlono Ali al-Qari and Muhammad Sho’la (623-656/1226-1258)<sup>3</sup>.

Mukhammad Baki al- Bukhari mentions the names of three scholars on recitation from Mowarranahr who lived prior to him and their works in the introduction part of his book. [ 19, 3]. They are Yormukhammad as-Samarkandi (“Qavoid al-Quran”), Hafiz Badriddin qari Bukhari (Durrat alfarid”), Hafiz Dostmukhammad ibn Yodgor al Vaziri (“Majma al-ajoyib). The latter work was about seven styles of reading Koran and “shaaz” and “ashara” qira’ats. Above mentioned three books have been preserving in the Abu Raykhan Beruni Institute of the Oriental Studies of the Academy of Sciences of Uzbekistan.

This book was written due to Mulla Shoh Mukhammad ibn Mulla Olim Termizi’s request who

<sup>2</sup> Author by Sheykh Zarir means Imam ash-Shatibi, he was blind therefore he used the word “Zarir” which means visual impairment.

<sup>3</sup> It was published in 1914 under the name “Shatibi” by Porsev publishing house. It contains 3 comments. The number of pages: 419+81



was close friend of Mukhammad Baki al- Bukhari. However, to our perspective this book is result of patronage of khans and their curiosity to science of recitation and tajwid.

The publication of “Shatibiya” and three comments in tandem was special event for men of science in Central Asia. About 200 copies of this book were presented to specialists and students in Saudi Arabia. For this reason, it gained popularity not only in madrassahs in Turkistan but also among the students and teachers in Makkah and Madinah. One of enlighteners of that time and in the meantime Muslim modernist reformer, writer, calligrapher, author of several books Sidqi Hondaliqi (1884-1934) wrote epilogue to this book. In it he mentioned that 200 copies of the book were bestowed as a gift.

Another scholar on recitation of XVI-XVII century Hafiz Ma'sumhoja ibn Mukhammad Sodiq al-Keshi al-Ishqi. He knew completely seven styles of reading and preferred to use Imam Nafe qiraat in namaz time. His students and admirers always were entranced by his impressive command of qira'at. [16, 195]

During XVIII-XIX centuries there were written a lot of books on recitation and tajwid in Central Asia, especially in cities Samarkand, Bukhara, Tashkent Kokand. However, those books haven't been learnt thoroughly so far. Doing research on them, comparing with those written by representatives of other countries are the tasks that awaiting their fulfilment.

To recapitulate it can be said that Islamic scholars from Mowarranahr made genuine contribution to the Islamic science in particular, to science of recitation and tajwid. Herein the role of rulers is great because they always supported financially wise men and hafizes. The main reason for this was that they had a great affection and reverence to holy Koran. Furthermore, thirst and lust for gaining knowledge was very high in Mowarranahr. Subsequently all of these factors contributed to the development of science of recitation and tajwid in Mowarranahr.

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