

Emergence and Development of Tawjeeh al-Qira'at

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Abstract--- *Tawjeeh al-Qira'at is a science which draws on shari'ah and Arabic studies. Likewise, it is a comprehensive field of study to which many branches of knowledge are related. However, some may think that it is not an independent or distinct field as it relates to Qur'an interpretation and grammar. This paper aims to trace the emergence of Tawjeeh al-Qira'at as a field of study and its evolution until it becomes an independent field of study. It also seeks to identify scholars who contributed to this science and those who have published books on it. The research adopted an analytical method through which the texts of Tawjeeh al-Qira'at were traced in the scientific literature, and concluded that Tawjeeh al-Qira'at has existed since the revelation of the Noble Qur'an. The research concluded that Tawjeeh al-Qira'at was an established field of study which draws heavily on Arabic grammar and Qur'an exegeses. The research also found that Harun bin al-A'war was the first author in this field of study through his book "Wujuh al-Qira'at" (Modes of Recitation).*

Keywords--- *Tawjiah, Qira'at (Recitations), Emergence, Development, the Qur'an.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Tawjeeh al-Qira'at is refers to the explanation of a particular mode of recitation, showing its linguistic inimitability, or justifying it by referring to the other modes of recitation that support it. The approaches adopted by Tawjeeh al-Qira'at include justifying the reading with the Holy Qur'an, hadiths, poetry, Ottoman orthography and other approaches used by scholars of Qur'an recitations in justifying and explaining the readings. We can identify the initial emergence of Tawjeeh al-Qira'at as a field of study by relying on approaches to Qiraat, especially the approached which adopt comparing explaining Qiraat using the Quran or by other Qiraat.

II. PREFACE

Tawjeeh al-Qira'at has now developed into an independent and distinct field of study that has its rules, foundations, authors and scientific literature. However, the focus here will be on the emergence, development, independence, literature, as well as the curricula of this field of study which are widely taught in schools and institutes and departments of Quranic recitations in academic colleges and universities.

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III. EMERGENCE OF TAWJEEH AL-QIRA'AT (QUR'ANIC RECITATIONS)

Tawjeeh al-Qira'at as a field of study has coincided with the emergence of the Qur'anic recitations. The Prophet (PBUH) used to answer the questions raised by his Companions and direct them to the meaning intended by Quranic verses.

3.1 Tawjeeh al-Qira'at during the time of the Prophet (PBUH)

Tawjeeh al-Qira'at as a field of study has emerged since the time of the Prophet (PBUH). When the Almighty Allah revealed the noble verse of sura al-'an'am: " *They alone who believe and do not mix their belief with injustice— those will have security, and are guided on the right path.*" (sura al-'an'am:82), the Companions protested to the Prophet (PBUH) saying, "Who among us can avoid doing injustice to themselves?" According to another narration, they said, "Who among us did not do injustice to themselves?". The Prophet (PBUH) explained by telling them that the word "injustice" was related to another word that was mentioned in sura Luqman. He (PBUH), then, said: "It is not that, but it is polytheism. Did you not hear what Luqman said to his son when he was instructing him: *"O my son, do not associate [anything] with Allah Indeed, association [with Him] is great injustice.*" (Sura Luqman: 13) ^[1].

3.2 Tawjeeh al-Qira'at during the time of the Companions

The Companions - may God be pleased with them - continued this optimal approach – i.e., Tawjeeh al-Qira'at and explaining their readings—using the Holy Qur'an, Arabic words, etc. The learned master of the Umma and interpreter of the Holy Qur'an, Abdullah bin Abbas - May God be pleased with him –preferred to use the Arabic verb "nunshiraha" (We resurrect it) instead of "nunshizuha" (We raise) in the verse of sura al-Baqarah :259, "*And look at the bones [of this donkey] – how We raise them and then We cover them with flesh.*" He explained his recitation with the verse, "*Then when He wills, He will resurrect him*" (Sura Abasa: 22) and by saying that Allah Almighty resurrected the dead who became alive again.^[2] Ibn Abbas - may God be pleased with both him and his father—believed the word indicated the meaning of resurrection and bringing someone to life by explaining his recitation through another verse from the Noble Qur'an.

The Companions also used to explain their recitations using Arabic and dialects of the Arabs, as was done by the Commander of the Faithful Umar ibn Al-Khattab - may God be pleased with him – with Allah Almighty's saying: "*And whoever He wants to send astray – He makes his breast tight and constricted as though he were climbing into the sky*" (sura al-'an'am:125). He used to read "harajan" (tight) when some of the companions read it "harijan", so he said: I want a shepherd from Kananah and from Bani Mudlaj in particular. When the man came to him, he said: What is "harijah" in your language. The man answered, "It is a tree among other trees that is inaccessible to either shepherds or animals. Omar said, "This is the case with the heart of the hypocrite. Nothing good reaches it" [3].

Some Companions may express their disagreement with others' explanations of their recitations. It was narrated that Abdullah bin Abbas - may Allah be pleased with both him and his father - was reading: "*[They continued] until, when the messengers despaired and were certain that they had been denied, there came to them Our victory,*" (sura Yusuf: 110). He used to explain his recitation saying, "Until when the messengers lost hope and people thought that the messengers had lied." He also said: "Until when the messengers doubted that their people would believe them,

and their people thought that their messengers had lied to them ..." [4]. He used to explain his recitation with another verse, *"Until [even their] messenger and those who believed with him said, 'When is the help of Allah?' Unquestionably, the help of Allah is near."* (sura al-Baqara: 214). However, the mother of the believers, Aisha - may God be pleased with her –did not agree with that recitation and interpretation saying, "Allah forbid! The Messenger of Allah believed that what Allah promised him would take place before he died, but the scourge faced by the messengers was so great that they were worried that their people would not believe them". She used to read the word (quzzibu) with a stress on the letter dhal" [5].

3.3 Tawjeeh al-Qira'at after the Time of the Companions

Explanations of recitations continued by the followers and their followers, and even by the reciters themselves. Imam Abu Amr Al-Basri - may Allah have mercy on him – read, "Malik Yawm Edin" (Sura al-Fatihah: 4) deleting the letter "alif" from the word "Maalik". He read "malik" (sovereign) and justified his recitation saying: "The word "sovereign" includes the word "owner" but not the vice versa. "Do you not read *"So high [above all] is Allah, the Sovereign, the Truth."* (Sura al-Mu'minun: 116), and also, *"And if it were not for Allah preserving [some] people by means of others, the earth would have been corrupted, but Allah is the possessor of bounty for the worlds."* (Sura Al-Baqara: 251). The word "daf" (sparing) was replaced by Nafi' with "difa'" (defense). Therefore, Abu Amr Al-Basri, may God have mercy on him, justified his reading using the view of the majority of scholars by saying: "defense" is an act done by people and sparing is from Allah".

Some reciters may justify their and others' recitations. In sura al-Shu'ara': 56), *"And indeed, we are a cautious society"*, several reciters read "haazirun" with the letter "alif" while others read "hazirun" without "alif". Imam al-Kissa'i used the two recitations and said, "Both words are derived from the same origin; that is caution. A man will get armed for fear of murder. Arabs say, "someone is "haazir" or "hazir" when he is cautious" [6].

IV. DEVELOPMENT OF TAWJEEH AL-QIRA'AT AS AN INDEPENDENT FIELD OF STUDY

The books of grammarians and Qur'an commentators were filled with explanations and justifications for different recitations (Tawjeeh al-Qira'at) as it may be clearly seen in Sibawayh's book or the interpretation of al-Tabari. Tawjeeh al-Qira'at was sporadically addressed in the books of the grammarians and the people of interpretation until books were written about Tawjeeh al-Qira'at as an independent and distinct field of study. It has been said that the first author to write exclusive books about Tawjeeh al-Qira'at and the justification of Qur'an recitations was Imam al-Allama, Abu Abdullah, Harun bin Musa al-A'war al-Basri al-Azdi. The year of his death is not known but it is said that he died before the year 200 AH. Imam Ibn Al-Jazri - may God have mercy on him – said "He was the first in Basra to address the different modes of recitation. He wrote about them, tracked the abnormal ones, and studied their chains of narrators" [7]."

Accordingly, the first stage in which Tawjeeh al-Qira'at as a field of study went through was the oral stage, in which it was scattered and dispersed and had no controls. Then came the era that was characterized by writing books in grammar and interpretation when Qur'an commentators and grammarians could not dispense with the explanation

of the Qur'an recitations. Harun bin Musa al-A'war wrote a book exclusively in the field, then more books were written, until the field has its independent literature.

The book of Harun bin Musa al-A'war is called a book on the modes of recitation, which is considered the first block in the independent authorship for Tawjeeh al-Qira'at as a field of study. Then came al-Jami' book of Imam and reciter Yaqoub bin Ishaq Al-Hadrami (died in 205 AH), in which he combined, in general, the different faces of the Qur'an recitations and attributed each set of readings to their authors. Later, "ihtijaj al-Qurra" of Abu al-Abbas Muhammad bin Yazid Al-Mubarrad (died in 285 AH) [8]. Books were continuously written in the fourth century until tawjeeh al-qira'at has developed in its current form.

It can be argued that the initial emergence and writing down of Tawjeeh al-Qira'at as an independent and distinct field of study coincided with the beginning of the independence and writing down of the Arabic language. So, Arabic linguists were the first to write down this great branch of knowledge in the form of separate and scattered topics in their books such as books of the meanings of the Qur'an, the strange of the Qur'an, the declension of the Qur'an, etc. This is why a good number of those who were involved in the field of Tawjeeh al-Qira'at were Arabic linguists, such as Sibawayh (died in 180 AH), al-Mubarrad (died in 285 AH), al-Farra' (died in 207 AH), and al-Zajaj (306 AH) and others. In addition, a group of the most prominent Arabic linguists were Qur'an reciters, such as Imam Abu Amr bin al-'ala'al-Mazni al-Basri (died in 154 AH), Ali bin Hamza Al-Kissa'i Al-Kufi (died in 189 AH), and Abu Ubayd al-Qasim bin Salam (died in 224 AH).

V. CONCLUSION

In view of this investigation of emergence and development of Tawjeeh al-Qira'at as a field of study, significant findings may be concluded:

- Tawjeeh al-Qira'at has emerged since the revelation of the Qur'an
- Tawjeeh al-Qira'at was scattered in the books of linguists and grammarians.
- Arabic grammarians, linguists and Qur'an commentators were the people who served Tawjeeh al-Qira'at most.
- The first to write an exclusive book on Tawjeeh al-Qira'at was Harun bin Musa al-'war in his book (Faces of Recitation).
- Tawjeeh al-Qira'at has acquired its independent literature since the beginning of the second century AH.

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