



THE APPROACHES OF SCHOLARS TO MELODIOUS RECITATION AND TO THE APPLICATION OF THE MAQĀM STYLES IN THE RECITATION OF THE NOBLE QUR'ĀN

<https://doi.org/10.57033/mijournals-2026-3-0343>

Muhammadloiq Aminov

International Islamic Academy of Uzbekistan, Tashkent, Uzbekistan

Abstract. *The article analyses the positions taken by the scholars of the four schools of law, and by contemporary scholars of recitation, upon reciting the Noble Qur'ān with melody (taghannī, tarannum) and upon applying the rules of the science of the melodic modes (maqāmāt) in recitation. The proofs of the two parties are set out: those of Imām Mālik and Imām Aḥmad and their companions, who held melodious recitation to be impermissible, and those of Imām Abū Ḥanīfa and Imām al-Shāfi'ī and their companions, who held it permissible, together with the ḥadīths adduced on either side and the assessment of their chains of transmission. The article shows, on the authority of al-Ṣābūnī, that the disagreement is formal rather than substantial, since all the jurists are agreed that reciting in a manner that damages the rules of intonation is forbidden. It then examines the ruling of the scientific council of the international «Taḥfīz al-Qur'ān» organization of Saudi Arabia point by point, together with the replies given to it by the specialists in the science of the modes, and sets out the views of contemporary authorities on both sides. The article concludes that reciting the Noble Qur'ān upon the basis of the rules of the modes while observing the rulings of intonation is not contrary to the revealed law in the view of the majority of scholars, and formulates five conditions under which this is so.*

Keywords: *recitation, intonation, melodious recitation, science of the melodic modes, schools of law, Ḥanafī school, permissibility, reprehensibility, contemplation of the verses.*

INTRODUCTION

It is known that the foundation of the science of the melodic modes consists of melodies and of the rules pertaining to them. For this reason, before entering upon the science of the modes, it is in accordance with the purpose to examine the opinions and the rulings set forth by the founders of the schools of law concerning the reading of the Noble Qur'ān with melody. God Most High says in the Noble Qur'ān:

وَرَتِّلِ الْقُرْآنَ تَرْتِيلًا

«...and recite the Qur'ān in measured recitation» (Qur'ān 73:4; Mansur, 2012:574).

That the clause «recite the Qur'ān in measured recitation» in this verse signifies the necessity of reading the Qur'ān in accordance with the science of intonation is a matter



upon which there is no disagreement whatever among the scholars. As to reading the Noble Qur'ān with melody, however, in this question there exist differing approaches among the imāms of jurisprudence, as there were among the Companions and the Successors (al-Suyūṭī, 1996:I/270). The aim of the present article is to set out the proofs of both parties, to weigh them, and to determine the conditions under which the rules of the modes may be applied in recitation.

MAIN PART

In the question of reading the Noble Qur'ān with melody there are two views among the scholars of the four schools of jurisprudence. Imām Mālik and Imām Aḥmad together with their companions say that melodious recitation of the Qur'ān is not permissible, and this opinion is transmitted from Anas b. Mālik, Sa'īd b. al-Musayyab, Sa'īd b. Jubayr, al-Qāsim b. Muḥammad, al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, Ibrāhīm al-Nakha'ī and Ibn Sīrīn. Imām Abū Ḥanīfa and Imām al-Shāfi'ī together with their companions, by contrast, reckon this act permissible, and this ruling is transmitted from 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, 'Abd Allāh b. 'Abbās, 'Abd Allāh b. Mas'ūd and 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. al-Aswad b. Yazīd; among the exegetes, Abū Ja'far al-Ṭabarī and Abū Bakr Ibn al-'Arabī have supported this opinion (al-Ṣābūnī, 2011:584; al-Suyūṭī, 1996:I/270).

In reality this disagreement is outward, for all the scholars are agreed that it is permissible for reciters who know the science of intonation to recite the Qur'ān in a beautiful voice, while no permission whatever has been given to those who do not know intonation to recite the Qur'ān melodiously. The opinions and the proofs of the two parties are as follows.

The possessors of the first position adduce as proof of the reprehensibility of reading the Noble Qur'ān with melody the ḥadīth transmitted from Ḥudhayfa b. al-Yamān: «Recite the Qur'ān in the melodies and the voices of the Arabs, and keep away from the melodies of the people of transgression and of the people of the two Books. For after me there will come a people who will recite the Qur'ān with a melody resembling that of singers, of monks and of those who wail over the dead. It will not pass below their throats. Their hearts, and the hearts of those who are pleased with their conduct, are seduced. They take the Qur'ān as a reed-pipe for themselves. They put forward a man who is neither a jurist nor a scholar, and they bring him forward only that he may sing to them» (al-Bayhaqī, 2003:II/540). This ḥadīth was transmitted by al-Tirmidhī and by



al-Bayhaqī in «Shu‘ab al-īmān», and its chain of transmission is weak, since among the transmitters of its chain there is Baqiyya b. al-Walīd, whose transmitted ḥadīths are reckoned weak because he practised concealment of his authorities in transmission.

Imām al-Jazarī said that the plural of the word *luḥūn* in the ḥadīth is *laḥn*, by which is understood the production of the voice with melody and the making beautiful of the voice in the Qur’ān, in poetry or in song (al-Jazarī, 2011:13). By the people of transgression in the above ḥadīth are meant those Muslims who recite the Qur’ān in such a manner as to add or to subtract a letter and so to take it out of its original form, since this act is forbidden according to the consensus of all the scholars; and by the people of the two Books are meant the Jews and the Christians, reading with whose melody means reading as they read the Torah and the Gospel (al-Qārī, 2002:VII/584).

The same party further adduces the report of Ibn ‘Abbās: «The Messenger of God had a caller to prayer who gave the call with modulation. The Prophet said to him: ‘The call to prayer is light and gentle. If your call too is light and gentle, then give the call; but if it is not so, then do not give the call’» (al-Dāraqūṭnī, 2003:II/86). This was transmitted by al-Dāraqūṭnī in his Sunan, and the chain of this report is extremely weak, for among its chain there is Ishāq b. Abī Yaḥyā al-Ka‘bī, whom al-Dāraqūṭnī himself reckoned weak. It is transmitted from ‘Abd al-Waḥḥāb al-Mālikī that Imām Mālik said that reciting the Qur’ān with melody is forbidden; Abū al-Ṭayyib al-Ṭabarī, al-Māwardī and Ibn Ḥamdān al-Ḥanbalī transmitted this from the majority of the people of learning, while Ibn Baṭṭāl, ‘Iyāḍ, al-Qurṭubī among the Mālikīs, al-Bandanījī and al-Ghazālī transmitted that this act is reprehensible (Quran.uz, n.d.).

The second party, which comprises the representatives of the Ḥanafī and the Shāfi‘ī schools, explained the «measured recitation» of the verse as reading with intonation and in a beautiful voice, and they adduce further proofs for the permissibility of reciting the Noble Qur’ān melodiously. Abū Hurayra transmits from the Messenger of God: «He is not of us who does not recite the Qur’ān melodiously» (al-Tabrīzī, 1985:I/496; Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, 1999:VII/375; al-Dārimī, 1987:I/454; al-Bayhaqī, 1998:II/54). Ibn ‘Uyayna holds that the *taghannī* in this ḥadīth is in the sense of *istighnā*, that is, of having no need; Imām al-Shāfi‘ī objected to this, saying: «No, it is not so. Had it been in that sense, the word *yataghānā* would have had to come in place of *yataghannā*. The word *taghannī* in this ḥadīth is in the sense of reading with melody» (Ibn Kathīr, 1989:I/60; Bashshār ‘Awwād Ma‘rūf, 2001:11; Labīb al-Sa‘īd, 1970:20).



Al-Barā' b. 'Āzib transmits: «The Messenger of God said: 'Adorn the Qur'ān with your voices'» (al-Nasā'ī, 2007:I/348; Ibn Māja, 1998:I/426; al-Dārimī, 1987:II/475; al-Bayhaqī, 1998:II/53); this was transmitted by Abū Dāwūd, al-Nasā'ī, al-Dārimī, Ibn Māja, al-Bayhaqī and others, and its chain is sound. In this noble ḥadīth the Messenger of God urges that the Noble Qur'ān be adorned with the voice in the course of its recitation. For the Qur'ān is the speech of God Most High and is reckoned the highest of all speech; for this reason it is not read simply and in an ordinary manner like the words of servants, but there exist rules, directions and standards proper to the reading of the Qur'ān. Striving to perform the recitation in a beautiful voice is likewise one of the directions proper to the Qur'ān, and the Prophet himself urges this, since a beautiful voice increases still further the beauty of the Qur'ān.

Al-Barā' b. 'Āzib likewise transmits: «I heard the Messenger of God say: 'Make the Qur'ān beautiful with your voices, for a beautiful voice increases the beauty of the Qur'ān'» (al-Dārimī, 1987:II/475; al-Bayhaqī, 2003:II/386; al-Tabrīzī, 1985:I/499); this was transmitted by al-Dārimī, al-Ḥākim and al-Bayhaqī in «Shu'ab al-īmān», and its chain is sound. Anas b. Mālik likewise transmits from the Prophet: «Everything has its ornament, and the ornament of the Qur'ān is a beautiful voice» (Quran.uz, n.d.), which 'Abd al-Razzāq transmitted in «al-Muṣannaf» and al-Ḍiyā' al-Maqdisī in «al-Aḥādīth al-mukhtāra», saying that the end of its chain is sound.

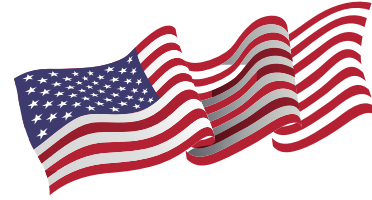
Ibn Abī Mulayka transmits that he heard 'Ubayd Allāh b. Abī Nahīk say: «I was standing with 'Abd Allāh b. al-Sā'ib b. Abī al-Sā'ib when Abū Lubāba passed by us. We followed after him, and when he entered his house we asked his permission, and he gave us leave. We saw that his house was in ruin and that he lived in hard circumstances. He asked, 'Who are you?', and we named our lineage to him. He said, 'Welcome, merchants and earners!' And I heard him say: 'The Messenger of God said: He is not of us who does not read the Qur'ān with melody.'» Ibn Abī Mulayka continues: «I asked, 'O Muḥammad, and if a man has no beautiful voice, what then is he to do?' He said: 'He makes it as beautiful as he is able'» (Abū Dāwūd, 2001:I/480; al-Bayhaqī, 1998:II/54); this was transmitted by Abū Dāwūd, by al-Bayhaqī in «al-Sunan al-kubrā» and by al-Ṭabarānī, and the transmitters of its chain are trustworthy. Ibn Baṭṭāl transmitted from a group of the Companions and the Successors the permissibility of reciting the Qur'ān with melody, and Imām al-Nawawī emphasized this particularly in «al-Tibyān» (Quran.uz, n.d.).



Abū Hurayra likewise transmits from the Prophet: «God has not listened to anything as He has listened to a Prophet reciting the Qur'ān with melody»; in the transmission of Muslim and others it is said: «God has not listened to anything as He has listened to a Prophet of beautiful voice reciting the Qur'ān aloud with melody» (al-Tabrīzī, 1985:I/495; Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, 2004:XX/145). It is transmitted from Abū Mūsā al-Ashʿarī that the Prophet said to him: «O Abū Mūsā, you have been given one of the reed-pipes of the family of David!» (al-Bukhārī, 2011:VI/195; Muslim, 1999:I/546). In this report the Messenger of God likened Abū Mūsā to a reed-pipe in a figurative sense, because the melody of his voice was pleasing; and by «the reed-pipe of the family of David» are meant the melodies of the voice of David when he recited the Psalms (al-Zabīdī, 2006:II/262). David was the possessor of a very beautiful voice, and it is related that when he recited the Psalms all the living creatures of the land and of the sea gave ear to his recitation (Quran.uz, n.d.).

Abū Mūsā al-Ashʿarī further relates: «The Messenger of God listened to my recitation in the night. When morning came he said: ‘O Abū Mūsā, I gave ear to your recitation last night. You have been given one of the reed-pipes of the family of David.’ I said: ‘O Messenger of God, had I known of your presence I would have adorned it still more for you’» (Ibn Ḥibbān, 1993:XVI/169). This was transmitted by al-Ḥākim, Ibn Ḥibbān and al-Bayhaqī, and its chain is sound; Imām al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī emphasized that although al-Bukhārī and Muslim did not transmit this ḥadīth, its chain is sound (al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī, 1990:III/529). According to the report that Abū Yaʿlā gives in his «Musnad», our mother ʿĀʾisha was with the Messenger of God on that occasion; as the two were going along they heard Abū Mūsā reciting the Qur'ān in his house and stood a while, and afterwards continued on their way (Quran.uz, n.d.).

Abū ʿUthmān al-Nahdī relates: «I prayed behind Abū Mūsā al-Ashʿarī, and I have never heard the sound of the cymbal, of the lute or of the reed-pipe more beautiful than his voice» (Abū ʿAwāna, 1996:II/486; Ibn Kathīr, 1990:162). The *ṣanj* is a musical instrument made of copper of which one part is struck against the other; the *barbaṭ* is an instrument resembling the lute; and the reed-pipe is an instrument known to all (Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, 2004:XX/145). Muʿāwiya b. Qurra relates: «I heard ʿAbd Allāh b. Mughaffal say: In the year of the conquest, as the Messenger of God was travelling upon his mount, he recited the chapter of the Victory with melody.» Muʿāwiya says: «Had I



not disliked that the people should gather about us, I would have recited his recitation for you» (al-Bukhārī, 2011:VI/135; Muslim, 1999:II/194).

The possessors of this position further adduce as proof that reciting the Qur'ān melodiously draws a person to itself and urges him to listen attentively to the Qur'ān, and that this of itself greatly increases its effect upon the spirit and the heart of the hearer (al-Istanbūlī, n.d.:I/257). The confirmation of this may indeed be seen in the lives of the Companions, for they loved to listen to the recitation of those Companions who were distinguished among them by a beautiful voice. 'Abd Allāh b. 'Abbās loved the recitation of 'Alqama al-Aswad, whose voice was pleasing, and 'Alqama used to recite the Qur'ān to him; and whenever he finished the recitation he would say to him: «May my father and my mother be your ransom! Continue further» (al-Ṣābūnī, 2011:584). Imām al-Ṭabarī transmits concerning 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb: «When 'Umar said to Abū Mūsā al-Ash'arī, 'Remind us of our Lord', Abū Mūsā would recite the Qur'ān with melody; and 'Umar used to say, 'Whoever is able to recite the Qur'ān with melody as Abū Mūsā does, let him do so'» (Ibn Kathīr, 1990:114).

Shaykh Muḥammad 'Alī al-Ṣābūnī, after setting forth in his work «Rawā'ī 'al-bayān fī tafsīr āyāt al-aḥkām min al-Qur'ān» the rulings and the proofs of both parties, says by way of conclusion: «If you reflect more deeply, you will see that the disagreement among the jurists is not substantial but formal. For the jurists are agreed that it is forbidden to read the Qur'ān with melodies that damage the rules of intonation. Examples of this are the following: lengthening what is to be read short, shortening what is to be lengthened, reading with attenuation what is to be read with emphasis, reading with emphasis what is to be read with attenuation, and reading with clear enunciation where assimilation is required, or with concealment where clear enunciation is required, and so forth. As to reciting while making it one's principal aim to astonish others and to display the beauty of one's voice to them, without regard for the rulings of the Qur'ān and the proprieties of recitation, no one doubts the forbidden character of this act» (al-Ṣābūnī, 2011:586).

Among the Ḥanafī scholars, Shaykh Riḍwān Allāh 'Alī al-Hamadānī says in his article entitled «al-Tajwīd wa-l-tagħannī fī tilāwat al-Qur'ān al-Karīm»: «If we study deeply the proofs of both parties in the question of melody in recitation, we see that the proofs of those who reckon it permissible are the stronger. For these reports, having been transmitted from a very great number of persons, are at the level of mass transmission



in respect of their meaning, whereas the proofs adduced by the second party, who do not reckon melodious recitation acceptable, have been transmitted with solitary and weak chains. Secondly, these reports are not directed against the melodious recitation of reciters who recite the Qur'ān with intonation, but are an argument against those who read without intonation, in imitation of the sounds of various musical instruments not belonging to the melodies of the Arabs; and we know of no scholar who has reckoned that act permissible» (al-Hamadānī, n.d.).

The diversity of approach in the matter of studying the science of the modes and of applying its rules in the recitation of the Qur'ān likewise took shape upon the basis of the views concerning melodious recitation. At the present day certain scholars, in particular the scholars of the countries in which the Mālikī and the Ḥanbalī schools are widespread, have in accordance with their schools not approved reciting the Noble Qur'ān upon the basis of the rules of the modes. The majority of scholars, however, have reckoned recitation upon the basis of the rules of the modes permissible, and those who have reckoned it permissible indeed constitute the majority; this may be explained by the fact that the Muslims of the Ḥanafī and the Shāfi'ī schools constitute the majority. In confirmation of this one may adduce the exceedingly great number of famous reciters who have deeply mastered the Qur'ānic modes, and the fact that their recitations are universally acknowledged.

It is particularly fitting to say that reciting upon the basis of the rules of the modes is known to be a matter of disagreement among the scholars, whereas all the scholars are agreed that it is forbidden to damage the rules of intonation through observance of the rules of the modes. Here a question arises: reciting the Noble Qur'ān with melody was said to be permissible in the view of Imām Abū Ḥanīfa and Imām al-Shāfi'ī; what then is their opinion concerning recitation upon the basis of the rules of the modes, and did recitation upon that basis exist in their own time? In answer to this we adduce the words of 'Alī 'Abd Allāh in his book «al-Ta'bīr al-dirāmī wa-l-tanghīm fī tartīl al-Qur'ān al-Karīm»: «There is no disagreement among the scholars concerning the adornment of the voice in the recitation of the Qur'ān. As to what lies above that measure, namely reciting with the voice adorned by means of melodies and their rules, Imām Abū Ḥanīfa, Imām al-Shāfi'ī and their companions have called this act permissible» ('Alī 'Abd Allāh, 2012:10).



From these words it follows that reciting with melody upon the basis of the rules of the modes is permissible in the view of Abū Ḥanīfa and al-Shāfi‘ī. For if reciting the Noble Qur’ān with melody existed in the time of the Prophet, recitation upon the basis of the rules of the modes began from the period of the Umayyads; and Abū Ḥanīfa lived in the Umayyad period and at the beginning of the ‘Abbāsīd period. Proceeding from this it may be said that recitation upon the basis of melodic standards existed in the time of Abū Ḥanīfa, and that he gave permission for precisely this.

Certain articles of the ruling published by the scientific council of the international «Taḥfīz al-Qur’ān» organization of Saudi Arabia bring still further clarity into the question raised. The council states that in every case the reciter of the Noble Qur’ān is bound to produce the letters with intonation and to perform the pauses in a beautiful manner; that making the voice beautiful in the recitation of the Qur’ān is recommended and beloved in the revealed law, but only upon condition that this be upon the basis of the innate nature and disposition of the person; that melody, tune and the musical modes are a science pertaining to the voice which arose among the non-Arabs and which the Persians employed in tunes and songs, and which possesses standards of its own that in certain cases run counter to the rules of the letters, of lengthening and of shortening of the Qur’ān; that if the reciter recites while observing at one and the same time the rules both of intonation and of the modes, and gives precedence to the rules of intonation when the two conflict, his recitation is nevertheless reprehensible in the words of many imāms, because such recitation is an innovation in recitation, because it distracts its possessor from the contemplation and the admonition that are the principal aim of the recitation of the Qur’ān, and because it often leads him to learn that science from those who occupy themselves with it, namely singers and instrumentalists; that if the reciter gives precedence to the rule of melody over the ruling of intonation by lengthening where there is no lengthening or by prolonging a lengthening beyond its measure, this act is forbidden by the agreement of the scholars of recitation and of jurisprudence; and that if the reciter goes to excess in the modes in order to delight and to astonish his hearers, deviating from the point of articulation of the letters and ruining the pauses, this act exceeds the former in its forbidden character, and in that case both the reciter and the hearer who is pleased with his act become sinners (Taḥfīz al-Qur’ān, 2010).

In support of this ruling the council adduces the words of God Most High: «A blessed Book that We have revealed to you, that they may ponder its verses and that those of



understanding may take admonition» (Qur'ān 38:29; Mansur, 2012:455), observing that a person's mind cannot encompass two things at one and the same time, as God Most High says: «God has not made for any man two hearts within his breast» (Qur'ān 33:4; Mansur, 2012:418), and the words spoken upon the tongue of the Prophet: «... and I am not of those who feign» (Qur'ān 38:86; Mansur, 2012:455; Muhammad Sadiq Muhammad Yusuf, 2007:VI/189).

The scholars who reckon recitation upon the basis of the rules of the modes permissible reply to the several articles of this ruling. To the words of the second article, «upon condition that this be upon the basis of the innate nature and disposition of the person», the specialists in the science of the modes answer: «The modes exist within the nature and the innate disposition of the human being, in the sense that they are not an invention produced by man; for even though a person may not know the rules of the modes, he recites naturally in one mode or another» ('Alī 'Abd Allāh, 2012:9).

To the words adduced in the third article Sayyid Muḥammad Riḍā Muḥammadī expresses the following opinion: «We wish to offer a clarification for those who fear a doubt concerning the modes and the melodies before entering upon the science of the modes, and who believe that it arose from the people of song and of diversion. Such conceptions concerning the science of the modes are not correct. The truth is that the modes are melodies that became famous in various cities and lands. Every city and region became famous for its own particular melodies, and as a result those melodies were ascribed to them. By way of example, the ḥijāz mode became widespread among the people of the land of the Ḥijāz, and the melody of their Qur'ānic recitations is likewise this very mode. Another example: the bayāt mode is widespread in Iraq, and that land is famous for this very melody, since this melody is ascribed to a tribe of that place called the Bayātī. The people of this tribe exist to this day and take pride in the ascription of this mode to themselves. The nahāwand mode, for its part, is ascribed to the city of Nahāwand in Iran. From these examples it may be said that melodies became known through their ascription to certain lands, cities and tribes; and accordingly, in reciting the Noble Qur'ān also, they made use of the melodies widespread among themselves. These modes existed in other lands as well, but they were ascribed to those regions in which they attained their widest development. In establishing the rules of the Qur'ānic modes, the melody of recitation of the reciters of those regions was taken as the basis» (Muḥammadī, 2008:46).



As to the fourth article, in which it was stated that if the reciter gives precedence to the rules of intonation when these conflict with the rules of the modes his act is nevertheless reprehensible, the scholars who reckon recitation upon the basis of the rules of the modes permissible emphasize that the proofs adduced do not in their entirety indicate reprehensibility. In the first place, recitation upon the basis of the rules of the modes is not an innovation, for it has become clear from the above ḥadīths that performing the recitation melodiously existed in the time of the Messenger of God and that he himself urged this act; and the science of the Qur'ānic modes is the form into which the melodies applied in recitation have been brought according to a certain rule, these rules assisting the easy mastery of the melody and the skilful performance of the recitation. «To recite the Noble Qur'ān by a scholarly method founded upon definite rules is not contrary to the spiritual condition that the Qur'ān embodies within itself. Some may say: 'This Qur'ān is the speech of God Most High. If we take certain rules as its basis, a deviation will arise from the spiritual content that is its principal aim.' These words are not correct. For example, a person occupied with the art of calligraphy who wishes to write the Qur'ān cannot say: 'This is the speech of God Most High, and in writing it I shall not observe the rules.' For we know that the calligraphers who observe definite rules in writing are reckoned the most skilful calligraphers in the writing of the noble codex, and this is not contrary to the sanctity of the Qur'ān; for knowledge is always bound up with faith, and should we attempt to separate the two we shall meet with problems and difficulties» (Najaf, 2009:3).

In the second place, it was said that recitation upon the basis of the rules of the modes distracts a person from the contemplation and reflection that are the principal aim of the recitation of the Noble Qur'ān; whereas the principal aim pursued in applying the rules of the modes in recitation is precisely the contemplation and the reflection of the Qur'ān. For a reciter who has well mastered the melodies of the modes first contemplates the meaning of the verses he intends to recite, and then chooses the melody that corresponds to the content of those verses. He recites the verses that indicate punishment and the Fire in the melody suited to them, the verses concerning the names and attributes of God in the melody suited to them, and the verses that indicate Paradise and its favours in the melody suited to them; the melody serves to convey the meaning intended. In this connection Aḥmad Najaf says: «Another benefit of studying the science of the modes

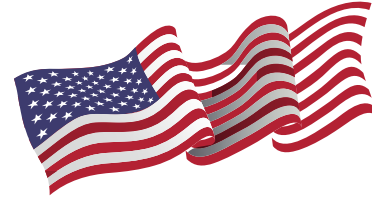


is that this science assists in performing the recitation of the Noble Qur'ān in a manner corresponding to the meaning of the noble verses. If we have studied a given melody and the sentiments present within it, we are able to apply this melody to verses of that very content. In this way the study of the science of the modes assists us in recitation. Moreover, it preserves us from straying into modes and melodies that are not proper to the recitation of the Qur'ān, whereas ignorance of this may with the passage of time become a cause of passing unknowingly into melodies not proper to the Qur'ān» (Najaf, 2009:48).

The ruling further mentioned that the mind of a person cannot encompass two things at one and the same time, which expresses the sense that the mind of one who recites the Qur'ān upon the basis of the rules of the modes, being occupied with the modes, cannot at the same time encompass the contemplation of the meanings of the Qur'ān. In reality, however, as was said above, melodies exist within the nature of the human being and there is no need to reflect upon them separately; accordingly the melodies of the modes also become settled in the nature of a reciter who has mastered them upon a scholarly basis, and in the course of recitation there is no need to conceive of them apart (Muḥammadī, 2008:56).

In the third place, the scholars who have reckoned the application of the rules of the modes in recitation permissible likewise sharply condemn learning this science from singers, instrumentalists and the like, and say that this act is absolutely impermissible. «In studying this science two paths lie before the student. The first path consists in first learning the musical rules and then applying these rules upon a musical instrument; this path is not permissible, since the use of musical instruments is not lawful in the revealed law. For this reason those who study the science of the modes prefer the second path, which is that the student of knowledge listens again and again to the recitations of famous reciters in the various modes, and in this manner masters each mode separately» (Muḥammadī, 2008:59). Concerning the fifth and the sixth articles the opinion of both parties is the same, and in this there is no disagreement.

Accordingly it may be said that reciting the Noble Qur'ān upon the basis of the rules of the modes while observing the rulings of intonation is not contrary to the revealed law in the view of the greater part of the scholars. Studying the science of the modes directly by means of musical instruments raises doubt in the minds of many scholars; for



this reason the most acceptable path in studying the science of the modes is to receive instruction from reciters who are versed in it and to imitate their recitations, so that the rules of the modes are learned by means of the voice, while learning by means of a musical instrument is absolutely impermissible. The natural voice that God Most High has bestowed upon us is the best instrument for producing melody (‘Alī ‘Abd Allāh, 2012:10).

It must be emphasized at this point that even today there exist various opinions among scholars concerning the modes. Among the scholars of our age there are those who do not permit the use of the modes in Qur’ānic recitation and who even condemn this act altogether, and they have adduced a number of proofs for their words. The most celebrated of them is the excellent shaykh and scholar of recitation Dr Ayman Rushdī Suwayd, who has taken part as chairman of the panel of judges in many international Qur’ān competitions held in Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Qatar; considering that it is very difficult to guard against errors of intonation while reading the Qur’ān with the modes, and that only very few reciters are able to recite without errors of intonation while making use of the modes, he has not permitted the reading of the Qur’ān with the modes (Suwayd, n.d.).

Sayyida Rābi‘a bint ‘Āmir al-Miṣriyya, instructress of the school of recitation for women and girls in Cairo, writes in her book «al-Alḥān wa-l-tanghīm fī tilāwat Kitāb Allāh al-Karīm»: «The reader of the Qur’ān must first of all feel Whose Book he is reciting, must perform the recitation seeking only the good pleasure of God, must understand and contemplate every ruling, every narrative, in short every meaning and content of which it gives tidings, must cause the hearers also to contemplate, and must strictly observe the rules of recitation and of intonation. It is not right that he should put the Qur’ān into various impermissible tunes in search of the applause and the praise of men» (al-Miṣriyya, 2008:75). Likewise our compatriot Shaykh Alijon Qori, the teacher of many students of Qur’ānic recitation in Egypt, has reckoned recitation with the modes impermissible, holding that it is reprehensible even if the rules of intonation are given precedence over the rules of the modes; among the causes he adduces are that the musical modes are an innovation that did not exist in the recitations of the reciters either in the time of the Messenger of God or in the time of the pious predecessors and that has not been mentioned in any book of recitation or of jurisprudence to this day; that in seeking



to observe the rules of the modes in the course of recitation the reciter departs from the rules of intonation; that instead of contemplating the meanings, which is the principal aim of recitation, he occupies his thought with the standards of the music of the modes; that those who learn and teach this science are not in reality people who love the Qur'ān, since they learn these musics from singers and instrumentalists; and that the hearers, upon hearing a recitation performed with the methods of the modes, become hearers not of the Qur'ān but of the tunes of those who set it to melody (al-Bayhaqī, 2003:II/540; al-Zāminī, n.d.).

Alijon Qori adds further: «Reciting the Qur'ān melodiously is permissible and even preferable according to many ḥadīths transmitted from the Messenger of God. But this melodiousness must be not with the modes but with the natural disposition of the person. The melodies and the methods of the modes applied by the reciters are another thing that arose later; the Persians employed them in their own tunes and songs. These modes consist of musical notes, and the names of the modes, such as *sīkā* and *'ajam*, are likewise taken from the languages of non-Arab peoples. The Qur'ān is the speech of God Most High, and it is not permissible to set it to such musics.» Dr Anas al-Ḥibrī, the teacher of the reciters of Syria, addressing the reciters of the world, says: «O you who set the Speech of God to musical melodies! Keep always in mind that you are not a singer performing upon a stage to admirers a song written by men. You are a standard-bearer conveying to men the Speech of God Most High, pure of all fault and deficiency, of boundless power, ever seeing and ever hearing, that they may take example and benefit from this Speech in the affairs of this world and the next» (al-Ḥibrī, n.d.). Dr Rajā' Maḥmūd, Shaykh 'Abd Allāh Kāmil al-Miṣrī and Shaykh Rashīd Afrād al-Maghribī have likewise not permitted this act (al-Ḥibrī, n.d.).

Nevertheless the scholars who reckon it permissible to study the science of the modes and to apply it in recitation constitute the majority, and they have given a sufficient answer to the objections above. The most celebrated of them is the excellent shaykh Dr Shērzād 'Abd al-Raḥmān Ṭāhir, the most eminent reciter of the city of Dubai, who has taken part as chairman of the panel of judges in many international Qur'ān competitions held in Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar and Jordan. In the television programme «Ma'a al-Qur'ān» he conducted a discussion with a number of scholars of recitation, Dr Ayman Rushdī Suwayd among them, and at the close of the discussion the



following points were agreed upon: that reciting with modes suited to the meanings of the verses, without damaging the rules of intonation and producing the letters from their points of articulation, is permissible and recommended in the revealed law; that one must recite without losing contemplation and reflection, in order to convey the spirit of the Qur'ān to the hearts of men; that the aim of recitation must not be to gain repute and fame in this world but to attain felicity in the hereafter; and that the science of the modes must be learned only from famous reciters, directly or by way of imitation, and that it is not right to learn it by means of various musical instruments from persons who are not of the people of the Qur'ān (Ma'a al-Qur'ān, 2014).

The Libyan shaykh Ibrāhīm Muḥammad Kushaydān, who has acted as judge in many international Qur'ān competitions held in Kuwait, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates, writes in his books: «Reciting with the modes is not an innovation that has arisen only in our own age; it was known also in the time of the pious predecessors and was a question noticeable in the debates of the people of learning. In that period also there were scholars who called it permissible, and famous reciters who had studied this science deeply and applied it skilfully in their recitations. Although it was not employed under the name of 'the science of the modes' as it is today, by such names as 'ordered melodies' and 'regulated melodies' precisely the modes that we know were intended» (Kushaydān, 2009:45). Dr Shaykh Ṭāhā Muḥammad Kilāb al-Mawrītānī, rector of the «Taḥfīz al-Qur'ān» university in Mauritania, answered a question put to him in the studio concerning the science of the modes as follows: «These modes are the ordered form of the melodies existing in human nature, and a reciter who has studied them is not bound to turn his attention to them in the course of recitation to the distraction of his thought from the contemplation of the meanings of the Qur'ān. In reality those who have no knowledge of the science of the modes often become preoccupied with all manner of impermissible melodies instead of contemplating while reading the Qur'ān; and for this very reason these modes, which accord with the melodies of the Arabs, were selected for recitation» (Ma'a al-Qur'ān, 2014).

The excellent shaykh Fathī al-Malījī says in his book «'Ilm al-taghniya wa-l-maqāmāt»: «In reality these modes existed both in the Arab lands and in the other Muslim countries; but each mode was ascribed to the region in which it attained its widest flourishing» (al-Malījī, 2013:34). The greater part of the scholars say that it is not



reprehensible for a reciter who reads the Noble Qur'ān at one and the same time with the rules of intonation and of the modes to give the first place to the rule of intonation when the two conflict, and they ground this as follows. Shaykh Dr 'Abd al-Fattāḥ al-Ṭārūtī, who teaches recitation and the science of the modes to students in Iran and has been a member of the panel of judges in several international Qur'ān competitions, says: «If the reader of the Qur'ān chooses intonation when the rules of intonation and of the modes conflict in the course of recitation, this act is itself permissible, and this is precisely the rule of reciting with the modes. All the scholars who have called recitation with the modes permissible have had this recitation in view; for turning away from intonation when the rules of the modes conflict with the rules of intonation is forbidden in the view of all» (al-Ṭārūtī, n.d.).

Upon this subject Qori Hasanxon Yahyo Abdulmajid has expressed the following opinions: «The statement that everyone must recite the Qur'ān with his own disposition and natural voice is correct if it is said with reference to the Arabs. But if we say that this applies to non-Arabs also – if, for example, the Uzbeks recite in their own melody, the English in theirs and the Chinese in theirs – where then do the order and the rules of recitation and the aims pursued in recitation remain? In order to prevent the non-Arabs also from reading the Qur'ān with their own melodies, these ten modes, which accord with the melodies of the Arabs, were set apart. Further, the scholars liken reading the Qur'ān with the rules of the modes to the calligraphers' writing of the Qur'ān in the codex upon the basis of the rules of calligraphy: as the calligraphers adorn the writing with rules, so the reciters who read with the modes adorn their recitation with the rules of the modes» (Hasanxon Yahyo Abdulmajid, 2017).

The Egyptian scholar Dr Aḥmad Muḥammad Ḥassān, who has taken part as chairman and as member of the panel of judges in many international Qur'ān competitions, says of recitation upon the basis of the rules of the modes: «Reciting upon the basis of the rules of the modes does not distract a person from the contemplation and the reflection that are the principal aim of the recitation of the Noble Qur'ān; on the contrary, it urges him to know the meanings and contents of the verses being recited. For each mode possesses its own particular sentiment and is used in reciting verses whose content corresponds to that melody. The ḥijāz mode, for example, is a melody expressing sorrow, remorse and fear, and it is in accordance with the purpose to employ it in verses that give tidings of



the torments of this world and the next, of the pitiable state of the unbelievers and of the terror of the Resurrection. The ṣabā mode likewise resembles the ḥijāz mode. The ‘ajam mode expresses exaltation, delight and gladness, and it may be employed in verses in which the names and attributes of God Most High are praised and in which the glad tidings of Paradise are given to the believers. The rāst mode is a melody expressing zeal and courage, and it is used in reciting verses that urge to the performance of good deeds and that relate the beautiful narratives that occurred in the lives of the righteous. This in its turn requires of the reciter that he know, at least in general, the meanings of the verses of the Qur’ān; for it is not possible to read verses in melodies that do not correspond to their content» (Ḥassān, n.d.).

Dr Bashshār ‘Awwād Ma’rūf says: «Two paths lie before the student in the study of the science of the modes. According to the first path the musical rules are first learned and then applied upon a musical instrument; this path is impermissible, since the use of musical instruments is not lawful in the revealed law. For this reason those who study the science of the modes prefer the second path, in which the student of knowledge listens again and again to the recitations of famous reciters in the various modes and in this manner masters each mode separately» (Bashshār ‘Awwād Ma’rūf, 2001:8). Among the Ḥanafī reciters, the excellent shaykh Riḍwān Allāh ‘Alī al-Hamadānī writes in his article: «It is known that to this day there have lived in the various cities of the world mighty reciters who read the Qur’ān with the modes. Each of them, by his skill and his beautiful voice, has been able to convey the meanings and the spirit of the Qur’ān to the hearts of the hearers, even though those hearers knew neither the Arabic language nor the science of exegesis» (al-Hamadānī, n.d.).

CONCLUSION

From the opinions and the proofs of the founders of the schools concerning the melodious recitation of the Noble Qur’ān set out above it may be concluded that Abū Ḥanīfa and his followers, together with the scholars of the Shāfi‘ī school, reckoned melodious recitation permissible, whereas the scholars of the Mālikī and the Ḥanbalī schools reckoned it reprehensible. If the proofs of both parties are examined attentively, it may be seen that the proofs adduced by the scholars of the Ḥanafī and the Shāfi‘ī schools are the stronger, since they have adduced a great many sound ḥadīths in proof of their opinion, the outward sense of which affirms that melodious recitation is permissible



and is supported by other ḥadīths as well (al-Bukhārī, 2011:VI/195; Muslim, 1999:I/546; al-Ṣābūnī, 2011:586).

As to reciting the Noble Qur'ān upon the basis of the rules of the science of the modes, the scholars adduce these very same proofs as argument for its permissibility, since melodious recitation is reckoned the subject matter of the science of the modes, and that science gathers together the rules that ensure the easy mastery of the melodies applied in recitation. Proceeding from this it may be said that reciting the Noble Qur'ān upon the basis of the rules of the modes is permissible, as many scholars have said; but in this a number of conditions must be observed, the principal of which are enumerated below.

Before studying the science of the modes it is obligatory to master perfectly the rulings of intonation and the correct pronunciation of the letters and the words, since the study of the science of intonation takes precedence over the study of the science of the modes; the melodiousness of the recitation must not damage the rules of intonation; the reciter must not, in yielding to the melody, be distracted from the contemplation of the verses, which is the principal aim, since the chief purpose of the melody is to give form to the meaning of the verses and to assist their deep contemplation; the science of the modes must be studied from reciters who have soundly mastered it, and it is not permissible to study it from singers and instrumentalists who are not of the people of the Qur'ān; and the reciter who wishes to study the science of the modes must make use not of a musical instrument but of his own natural voice, since the voice that God Most High has bestowed upon us is the best instrument for producing melody (Muḥammadī, 2008:59; 'Alī 'Abd Allāh, 2012:10).

REFERENCES

1. Abū 'Awāna, Ya'qūb b. Ibrāhīm. (1996). Musnad Abī 'Awāna. Vol. II. Beirut: Dār al-Ma'rifa.
2. Abū Dāwūd, Sulaymān b. al-Ash'ath al-Sijistānī. (2001). Sunan Abī Dāwūd. Vol. I. Beirut: Dār al-Ma'rifa.
3. Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal. (1999). Musnad al-Imām Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal. Vol. VII. Beirut: Mu'assasat al-Risāla.
4. Alī 'Abd Allāh. (2012). al-Ta'bīr al-dirāmī wa-l-tanghīm fī tartīl al-Qur'ān al-Karīm. Amman: Maktabat al-'Ilm. 208 p.
5. Bashshār 'Awwād Ma'rūf. (2001). al-Bayān fī ḥukm al-tagħannī bi-l-Qur'ān: dirāsa fī ḍarūrat taḥsīn al-ṣawt wa-l-targhīb fī al-qirā'a. Baghdad: Maktabat Shabakat al-tafsīr wa-l-dirāsāt al-qur'āniyya. 278 p.
6. al-Bayhaqī, Abū Bakr Aḥmad b. al-Ḥusayn. (1998). al-Sunan al-kubrā. Vol. II. Beirut.
7. al-Bayhaqī, Abū Bakr Aḥmad b. al-Ḥusayn. (2003). Shu'ab al-īmān. Vol. II. Riyadh: Maktabat al-Rushd.



8. al-Bukhārī, Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Ismā‘īl. (2011). al-Jāmi‘ al-ṣaḥīḥ. Vol. VI. Beirut: Dār al-Risāla al-‘Ālamiyya.
9. al-Dāraqutnī, ‘Alī b. ‘Umar. (2003). Sunan al-Dāraqutnī. Vol. II. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya.
10. al-Dārimī, Abū Muḥammad ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān. (1987). Sunan al-Dārimī. 2 vols. Beirut.
11. al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī, Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allāh. (1990). al-Mustadrak ‘alā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn. Vol. III. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya.
12. al-Hamadānī, Riḍwān Allāh ‘Alī. (n.d.). al-Tajwīd wa-l-tagħannī fī tilāwat al-Qur’ān al-Karīm [Article]. www.QuranTilawat.org
13. Hasanxon Yahyo Abdulmajid. (2017, May 9). Personal conversation. Tashkent.
14. Ḥassān, Aḥmad Muḥammad. (n.d.). Hayyā natana ‘allam tilāwat al-Qur’ān [Television programme]. www.Quran.com; www.mazaameer.com
15. al-Ḥibrī, Anas. (n.d.). Naṣīḥatun li-qārī’ al-Qur’ān bi-l-maqāmāt [Video]. www.Islamic.net; al-Taḥdhīr min al-maqāmāt [Video]. www.mazaameer.com
16. Ibn Hajar al-‘Asqalānī, Aḥmad b. ‘Alī. (2004). Faṭḥ al-bārī bi-sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī. Vol. XX. Cairo: Dār al-Ḥadīth.
17. Ibn Ḥibbān, Muḥammad b. Ḥibbān b. Aḥmad. (1993). Ṣaḥīḥ Ibn Ḥibbān. Vol. XVI. Beirut: Mu’assasat al-Risāla.
18. Ibn Kathīr, ‘Imād al-Dīn Ismā‘īl. (1989). Tafsīr al-Qur’ān al-‘azīm. Vol. I. Beirut: Dār al-Ma‘rifa.
19. Ibn Kathīr, ‘Imād al-Dīn Ismā‘īl. (1990). Faḍā’il al-Qur’ān. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya.
20. Ibn Māja, Muḥammad b. Yazīd al-Qazwīnī. (1998). Sunan Ibn Māja. Vol. I. Beirut: Dār al-Fikr.
21. al-Istanbūlī, Ismā‘īl b. Muṣṭafā. (n.d.). Tafsīr Rūḥ al-bayān. Vol. I. Medina: Dār Iḥyā’ al-Turāth al-‘Arabī.
22. al-Jazarī, Muḥammad b. Muḥammad. (2011). Jazariy matni [al-Muqaddima al-Jazariyya] (O. Ikramov & T. Qodirov, Trans.). Tashkent: Movarounnahr.
23. Kushaydān, Ibrāhīm Muḥammad. (2009). al-Tajwīd al-mufaṣṣal li-alsinat qurrā’inā al-asal. 2 vols. Istanbul.
24. Labīb al-Sa‘īd. (1970). al-Tagħannī bi-l-Qur’ān. Cairo: Dār al-Ḥadīth. 178 p.
25. Ma‘a al-Qur’ān. (2014, December 2). Recorded discussion. www.mazaameer.com
26. al-Malījī, Faṭḥī. (2013). ‘Ilm al-tagħniya wa-l-maqāmāt. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya. 288 p.
27. Mansur, A. (2012). Qur’oni karim ma’nolarining tarjima va tafsiri [The Translation and Commentary of the Meanings of the Noble Qur’ān]. Tashkent: Sharq.
28. al-Miṣriyya, Sayyida Rābi‘a bint ‘Āmir. (2008). al-Alḥān wa-l-tanghīm fī tilāwat Kitāb Allāh al-Karīm. Cairo: al-Azhar al-Sharīf. 182 p.
29. Muḥammadī, Sayyid Muḥammad Riḍā. (2008). Durūs fī fann al-tilāwa wa-‘ilm al-maqāmāt wa-l-naghamāt al-qur’āniyya. Jeddah: Maktabat al-‘Aṣr. 214 p.
30. Muhammad Sadiq Muhammad Yusuf. (2007). Tafsiri Hilol. Vol. VI. Tashkent: Sharq.
31. Muslim b. al-Ḥajjāj al-Qurashī. (1999). Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim. Vols. I–II. Beirut: Dār al-‘Ilm.
32. Najaf, Aḥmad. (2009). Durūs fī al-maqāmāt al-qur’āniyya: mulāḥazāt wa-tanbīhāt fī ‘ilm al-maqāmāt. Medina: Malik Fahd. 266 p.
33. al-Nasā’ī, Aḥmad b. Shu‘ayb. (2007). Sunan al-Nasā’ī. Vol. I. Beirut: Dār al-Ma‘rifa.
34. al-Qārī, ‘Alī b. Sulṭān Muḥammad. (2002). Mirqāt al-mafātīḥ sharḥ Mishkāṭ al-maṣābiḥ. Vol. VII. Beirut: Dār al-Fikr.
35. Quran.uz. (n.d.). Qiroat ilmi, article 1279. www.quran.uz/qiroat/qiroat-ilmi/1279
36. al-Ṣābūnī, Muḥammad ‘Alī. (2011). Rawā’i’ al-bayān fī tafsīr āyāt al-aḥkāṃ min al-Qur’ān. Beirut: al-Maktaba al-‘Aṣriyya.
37. al-Suyūṭī, Jalāl al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān. (1996). al-Itqān fī ‘ulūm al-Qur’ān. Vol. I. Lebanon: Dār al-Fikr.



38. Gafurova, I. M. (2020). Мавзолей Саманидов как памятник династийной архитектуры раннего средневековья. *Theoretical & Applied Science*, (1), 329–334.
39. Gafurova, I. (2020). Вақф мулкчилигининг Туркистон тарихида тутган ўрни. *Islom ziyosi*, 3(3), 66–74.
40. Gafurova, I. (2026). The study of the waqf institution in Turkestan. *The Journal of Interdisciplinary Human Studies*, 2(5).
41. Gafurova, I. (2024). Turkiston konfessiyalarga oid ilmiy tadqiqotlar. *Moturidiylik*, 4(3), 77–82.
42. Gafurova, I. M. (2024). Туркистонда православлик тарихи ва унга муносабат. *Islom tafakkuri*, 7(Special Issue 3/2), 79–82.
43. 3Suwayd, Ayman Rushdī. (n.d.). al-Itqān [Television programme]. www.Quran.com; www.mazaameer.com
44. al-Tabrīzī, Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Khaṭīb. (1985). *Mishkāṭ al-maṣābīḥ*. Vol. I. Beirut.
45. Taḥfīz al-Qur’ān. (2010, January 28). Statement of the scientific council of the international «Taḥfīz al-Qur’ān» organization of Saudi Arabia on reciting the Noble Qur’ān with the musical modes. Jeddah.
46. al-Ṭārūtī, ‘Abd al-Fattāḥ. (n.d.). *Durūs al-qirā’a bi-l-maqāmāt* [Video, 7th session]. www.QuranTilawat.org
47. al-Zābidī, Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Razzāq. (2006). *Tāj al-‘arūs min jawāhir al-qāmūs*. Vol. II. Beirut.
48. al-Zāminī, Alijon Qori. (n.d.). Qiroatda maqomlardan foydalanishning hukmi haqida [Audio lesson]. Egypt.