



THE EMERGENCE OF THE TERM «TAJWĪD»

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Abstract. *The article analyses, from a scholarly and historical point of view, the emergence of the science of tajwīd, the process of its historical formation and the stages of its development as an independent science. It examines the lexical and the technical meanings of the term tajwīd, the concepts employed in the earliest period of Islam in regard to the recitation of the Qur'an, and the reflection of the rules of tajwīd in the written sources. In particular it sets out the contribution made to the development of the science of tajwīd by Ibn Mujāhid, Abū Muzāhim al-Khāqānī, Abū al-Ḥasan al-Sa'īdī, Makkī b. Abī Ṭālib and Abū 'Amr al-Dānī. It likewise analyses, by comparative-historical and source-critical methods, the content and the methodological features of the earliest works of tajwīd created in the fourth and fifth centuries of the Hijra and their place in the science of Qur'anic recitation. As a result of the research it is established that the rules of tajwīd were at first preserved through oral tradition and were only afterwards systematized as a distinct scholarly direction.*

Keywords: *science of tajwīd, recitation of the Qur'an, points of articulation, properties of the letters, tartīl, Ibn Mujāhid, the Khāqāniyya ode, Makkī b. Abī Ṭālib, Abū 'Amr al-Dānī.*

INTRODUCTION

The term tajwīd, in the sense of the science that studies the points of articulation of the letters, their properties and the rulings that arise when they are pronounced in connected speech, became known only in the fourth century of the Hijra; nor are any books written upon this subject before that century known. The reason for this is that the science of tajwīd appeared as an independent science two centuries later than the sciences of the Qur'an and of the Arabic language (Ghānim Qaddūrī Ḥamad, 2003).

In certain later sources it is stated that the Companion 'Abd Allāh b. Mas'ūd, may God be pleased with him, said: «jawwidū al-Qur'ān...». Relying upon this report, some recent researchers say that the origin of the science of tajwīd goes back to the age of the Companions, and they say further: «We do not possess sources that would describe for us completely the path traversed by the science of tajwīd until it reached the level

of an independent science.» What is known of its earliest stage is that the first to use a word close to the meaning of tajwīd was this Companion, Ibn Mas‘ūd, who, counselling the Muslims, said: «Recite the Qur’an well and adorn it with a beautiful voice...». It appears from this that the origin of the science of tajwīd came about in accordance with the summons of Ibn Mas‘ūd and through the subsequent effort to establish norms for the rules of recitation (Ghānim Qaddūrī Ḥamad, 2003).

When this report is sought in the early sources, however, it is found unfit to serve as proof. In them, in the place of the wāw in «jawwidū» there occurs a rā’, giving «jarridū». In my view the report was altered in the sources of the later periods, since the chain of transmission of the text goes back to the chain of the early sources, while the text itself differs by a single letter; and in the original copy the report comes in the sense of «strip the Qur’an of the fives, the tens, the names of the sūras and the like» (Ghānim Qaddūrī Ḥamad, 2003).

MAIN PART

It is known that no word from the root j-w-d describing recitation occurs in the Noble Qur’an. Nor does anything occur in this regard in the dictionary «al-Mu‘jam al-mufahras li-alfāz al-ḥadīth al-nabawī», which is founded upon the nine celebrated books of ḥadīth (Wensinck, 1936-1988). These and the proofs that follow may serve to indicate that the word tajwīd was not employed in the age of prophethood.

In the age of prophethood there were several words used in the sense of the word tajwīd, such as tartīl, taḥsīn, tazyīn and taḥbīr. These words were used to describe a recitation in which, together with a purely Arabic pronunciation, full attention was given to a beautiful voice and delivery. Of these four words only tartīl is used in the Qur’an (Qur’ān 25:32; 73:4).

This does not mean that words of the root j-w-d were not used among the Arabs of that age. There were many words in common use derived from this root: for example al-jayyid, «good», the opposite of «bad»; jāda al-shay’ jūdatan wa-jawdatan, that is «it became good»; ajāda atā bi-l-jayyid min al-qawl wa-l-fi‘l, that is «he said a good word» or «he did a good deed»; wa-rajul jawwād sakhiyy, that is «a generous man»; and jāda al-faras fa-huwa jawwād, «the horse became a good runner» (Ibn Manẓūr, n.d.), and so forth. «Tajwīd» is the verbal noun of jawwadtu al-shay’.

In the sources that I have examined, the earliest information concerning the use of the word *tajwīd* in a sense close to its technical meaning belongs to Ibn Mujāhid (d. 324 AH), the author of the book «*al-Sab‘a fī al-qirā’āt*» (Ibn Mujāhid, n.d.). Al-Dānī (d. 444 AH) says: «Ḥusayn b. Shākir Mismār said: Aḥmad b. Naṣr told me: I heard Ibn Mujāhid say: ‘Error in the Qur’an is of two kinds, open and hidden. The open is in the inflection; the hidden is the failure to render the letters their due in bringing out the wordings with *tajwīd*’» (al-Dānī, n.d.). Aḥmad b. Abī ‘Amr (d. 500 AH) transmits it as follows: «...the hidden is the failure to give the letters their due in bringing out the wordings with *tajwīd*, without excess and without deficiency» (Ghānim Qaddūrī Ḥamad, 2003).

The time at which *tajwīd* became known in its present technical meaning is the time at which an independent book was written upon the science of *tajwīd*. Writing the biography of Abū Muzāḥim Mūsā b. ‘Abd Allāh b. Yaḥyā al-Khāqānī al-Baghdādī (d. 325 AH), Ibn al-Jazarī says: «So far as I know, he wrote the first work upon the science of *tajwīd*. His remarkable ode is celebrated, and it was commented upon by al-Ḥāfiẓ Abū ‘Amr» (Ibn al-Jazarī, n.d.). Ibn al-Jazarī here indicates that the first work composed upon *tajwīd* is the work of Abū Muzāḥim al-Khāqānī celebrated under the name of the *Khāqāniyya* ode, which is also known as the *Rā’iyya* ode, so named because its verses end with the letter *rā’*. In its introduction the following is given:

أَقُولُ مَقَالًا مُعْجَبًا لِأُولِي الْجَبْرِ وَلَا فَخْرَ، إِنَّ الْفَخْرَ يَدْعُو إِلَى الْكِبْرِ

«I utter a wondrous saying for those possessed of understanding; and it is not for boasting, for boasting leads to pride» (al-Khāqānī, n.d.).

The number of its verses is fifty-one, and in it a part of the subjects of *tajwīd* is mentioned. Although the *Khāqāniyya* ode is the first independent work written upon the science of *tajwīd*, Abū Muzāḥim did not use in it the word *tajwīd*, nor any word derived from its root; in its place he used the word *al-ḥusn* and the words derived from it. At the beginning of the fifth verse he says:

أَيَا قَارِئَ الْقُرْآنِ أَحْسِنْ أَدَاءَهُ

«O reciter of the Qur’an, make its delivery beautiful» (al-Khāqānī, n.d.).

And at the beginning of the seventeenth verse:

فَقَدْ قُلْتُ فِي حُسْنِ الْأَدَاءِ قَصِيدَةً

«I have composed an ode upon beauty of delivery» (al-Khāqānī, n.d.).

That Abū Muzāḥim did not use the word *tajwīd* in his ode indicates that, although the term had come into being in that age, it was not in origin widely known. As has been

said, however, Ibn Mujāhid, one of his contemporaries, did use it (Ghānim Qaddūrī Ḥamad, 2003).

The first after Ibn Mujāhid to use the term tajwīd was Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. Ja‘far al-Sa‘īdī (d. 410 AH), who says in his first book «al-Tanbīh ‘alā al-laḥn al-jalī wa-l-laḥn al-khafī»: «They asked me to write a piece upon the tajwīd of the wordings of the Qur’an»; and in another place: «The reciter must observe the tajwīd of the ḍād in al-ḍāllīn and in the other places where it occurs» (al-Sa‘īdī, n.d.). The use of the term tajwīd spread on a wide scale after the time of al-Sa‘īdī.

If we accept the view of Ibn al-Jazarī that the Khāqāniyya ode is the first work written upon the science of tajwīd, then the time at which that book became known is close to the time at which al-Sa‘īdī’s «al-Tanbīh ‘alā al-laḥn al-jalī wa-l-laḥn al-khafī» became known. Al-Sa‘īdī’s book is distinguished at the present day as the earliest work written upon the science of tajwīd after the Khāqāniyya ode, and it is the beginning of independent composition in the science of tajwīd (Ghānim Qaddūrī Ḥamad, 2003).

When we turn to the «Fihrist» of Ibn al-Nadīm (d. 385 AH), no book mentioned under the name of tajwīd is to be found, nor indeed any book written upon the subject of tajwīd, although in the third chapter of the first part of the book he adduces the names of hundreds of books written upon the sciences of the Qur’an (Ibn al-Nadīm, n.d.:27-42). This circumstance serves as a proof that the science of tajwīd took its first steps in the fourth century of the Hijra and that at the time when Ibn al-Nadīm was writing his book, in the year 377 AH, books upon this subject were not well known.

If we move forward a little and enter the fifth century of the Hijra, we may find works written upon the science of tajwīd; indeed we observe that it was in this century that a great number of books upon tajwīd began to appear. After al-Sa‘īdī’s «al-Tanbīh ‘alā al-laḥn al-jalī wa-l-laḥn al-khafī», which appeared at the end of the fourth century of the Hijra, or in the first years of the fifth century, we see the appearance in al-Andalus of two great books upon the science of tajwīd. These are «al-Ri‘āya» of Makkī b. Abī Ṭālib al-Qaysī (d. 437 AH) and «al-Taḥdīd» of Abū ‘Amr b. Sa‘īd al-Dānī (d. 444 AH). After these two books there appeared, in the same century, the book «al-Mawḍiḥ» of ‘Abd al-Wahhāb al-Qurṭubī (d. 465 AH), who was a contemporary of Makkī and of al-Dānī (Ghānim Qaddūrī Ḥamad, 2003).

In the introduction to Makkī’s «al-Ri‘āya» we find an indication that the fifth century is the true date of the appearance of the books composed upon the science of

tajwīd. Makkī says: «I do not know that any of the earlier scholars composed anything like this book of mine. I do not know that anything was collected before me concerning the properties of the letters and their appellations, which I have collected. I investigated every letter in the wordings of the Book of God, I gave attention to the tajwīd of its wordings, and I laid stress upon observing it in recitation. In the year 390 I conceived in my mind the writing and the arrangement of this book, and I wrote down at that very time the things that came into my mind. Thereafter I laid it aside for a time, because I could not find an author who had written a book upon this science before me that might assist me. After some time had passed, God strengthened my intention and sharpened the eye of my heart, and I resolved to complete this book; and I completed it in thirty years» (Makkī b. Abī Ṭālib, n.d.).

In the introduction to al-Dānī's «al-Taḥdīd» there is likewise an indication, understood also from the words of Makkī, that in their time there was no book upon the science of tajwīd. Al-Dānī says: «That the reciters of our age treat the matter lightly, that the teachers of recitation of our time are inattentive to tajwīd in recitation and to precision in reading, and that, abandoning what God Most High has made clear, they are negligent of the deliberateness and the measured pace in reciting the Qur'an to which the Messenger of God, may God bless him and grant him peace, urged his community – all this moved me to write a book of small compass and light to carry. In it I intended to describe the character of the science of precision and of tajwīd and the manner of deliberateness and of exactitude according to the path followed by our earlier shaykhs and by our later imāms, and I set about expounding this with diligence. In it I expended all my strength and attained a single purpose. In order that the benefit of this book might be great, I set out both the hidden and the open among its rules, both the manifest and the concealed. I adduced the sunna and the reports according to the path of our past reciters, our imāms and the scholars who took part in their transmission to us» (al-Dānī, n.d.).

Thus the appearance of the science of tajwīd in the form of an independent science came considerably later than that of the other sciences. The sciences of the Qur'an and the sciences of the Arabic language appeared much earlier than the science of tajwīd, and the efforts of the scholars of the Arabic language and of grammar, and of the scholars of recitation, fulfilled at that time the office that the science of tajwīd afterwards fulfilled: for example the fundamental rules of correct speech and the

guarding against various corruptions in the pronunciation of the sounds of the Arabic language. We cannot, however, call the books written upon recitation and upon the description of the recitations of the Qur'an books written upon the science of tajwīd; for although the science of recitation and the science of tajwīd are both bound up with the wordings of the Qur'an, they differ in their subject as they do in their method (Ghānim Qaddūrī Ḥamad, 2003).

That the science of tajwīd did not at first appear in the form of an independent science does not mean that the reciters recited without observing the science of tajwīd; for although the rules of the science of tajwīd had not been written down, they existed in origin in the language of the Arabs. The writing of books upon the science of tajwīd has continued without interruption from the first book of the fourth century of the Hijra down to our own time, and this shows the degree to which the Muslims are bound to the Qur'an, their eagerness to recite its letters with tajwīd, and their effort to pronounce its wordings in a perfect manner (Ghānim Qaddūrī Ḥamad, 2003).

«To enumerate the names of the books written upon the science of tajwīd is, so far as I know, the first effort made in this path», says Doctor Ghānim. Such a list will of course not be free of defect and deficiency. In compiling the list I have adduced in brief what I myself knew from the contents of manuscripts, for example from the «Kashf al-zunūn» of Ḥājjī Khalīfa (Ḥājjī Khalīfa, n.d.) and from several biographical books, such as «Ghāyat al-nihāya fī ṭabaqāt al-qurrā'» of Ibn al-Jazarī (d. 833 AH), in which Ibn al-Jazarī adduced the names of all the books connected with the science of recitation and of tajwīd, arranged according to the year of death of their authors (Ibn al-Jazarī, n.d.).

CONCLUSION

The study of the sources shows that the term tajwīd in its technical sense was not in use in the age of prophethood, that its place was then occupied by such terms as tartīl, taḥsīn, tazyīn and taḥbīr, and that the report attributed to Ibn Mas'ūd upon which the attribution of the term to the age of the Companions rests does not withstand examination in the early sources. The term first appears in a sense close to the technical one with Ibn Mujāhid in the fourth century of the Hijra; the first independent work, the Khāqāniyya ode of Abū Muzāḥim al-Khāqānī, does not yet employ the word itself; and it is with al-Sa'īdī, at the turn of the fourth and fifth centuries, that the term enters general use.

The absence of any book upon tajwīd in the «Fihrist» of Ibn al-Nadīm and the testimony of Makkī b. Abī Ṭālib and of al-Dānī in the introductions to their own works confirm that independent composition upon this science began only at the end of the fourth and in the course of the fifth century of the Hijra. The rules themselves, however, existed from the beginning in the living language of the Arabs and in the practice of the reciters, and were preserved by oral transmission before they were systematized in writing. The science of tajwīd is therefore late in its written form but early in its substance, and the uninterrupted composition of works upon it from the fourth century to the present day testifies to the attachment of the Muslims to the perfect pronunciation of the wordings of the Qur'an (Ghānim Qaddūrī Ḥamad, 2003).

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