



AN ANALYSIS OF SOURCES ON QURANIC SCIENCES

**Aziza Abdunabiyeva**

*Student at the International Islamic Academy of Uzbekistan*

*Phone number: +998 93 565 12 28*

**Academic Advisor: D.M. Muratov**

*Candidate of Historical Sciences,*

*Associate Professor at the ICESCO Department of Islamic Studies and Islamic  
Civilization*

**Abstract:** *This article provides a chronological overview of classical sources related to Quranic studies, taking into account the historical periods in which they were composed. It analyzes the structure and scholarly significance of these works, highlighting their gradual development from oral traditions to written compilations. The study also explores the emergence of Quranic sciences as an independent academic discipline, emphasizing the contributions of prominent scholars and key texts in fields such as tafsir, qira'at, and asbab al-nuzul. Additionally, the article discusses the systematic codification of Quranic sciences during the later classical period and notes the decline in new scholarly works after the 15th century. This research serves as a valuable resource for understanding the evolution, organization, and intellectual heritage of Quranic sciences within Islamic scholarship.*

**Keywords:** *Tadwin, qira'at, tafsir, collection, maqbul, shadh, mutawatir.*

In the early stages of Islamic intellectual development, most sciences existed in fragmented form and were primarily preserved through oral transmission. The written materials that did exist lacked systematic organization. This state of affairs continued into the era of the Tabi'un (successors of the Companions). It was not until the second and third centuries of the Hijri calendar (8th–9th centuries CE) that the codification (tadwin) of ḥadith - i.e., their documentation in written form -



began in earnest. This development opened new possibilities for deeper engagement with the Quran.

Initially, ḥadīths were compiled into collections, and within these collections, the earliest chapters dedicated to tafsir began to appear. Among the major contributors from the Central Asian region were eminent ḥadīth scholars such as Imam al-Bukhari, Imam at-Tirmidhi, and Imam al-Darimi. Their compilations include chapters such as “al-Tafsir”, “Faḍa’il al-Quran” (“The Virtues of the Quran”), “Kitab al-Qira’at” (“The Book of Recitations”), and “Kitab tafsir al-Quran” (“The Book of Quranic Exegesis”). These chapters contain interpretations and merits of specific surahs based on ḥadīths attributed to the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). In addition to prophetic traditions, these works also include the exegetical opinions of Companions and their successors. Some surahs are accompanied by a large number of interpretive traditions, while others have fewer. A significant portion of these ḥadīths concern the occasions and circumstances of revelation (asbab al-nuzul). Moreover, distinguished ḥadīth scholars such as Yazid ibn Harun Sulami, Shu’bah ibn Ḥajjaj, Waki ibn Jarraḥ and Sufyan ibn Uyaynah made important contributions to the development of Quranic sciences, especially in the field of tafsir.

During this period, Quranic exegesis (tafsir) gradually separated from the field of ḥadīth and evolved into an independent scholarly discipline. Some of the most influential early works include “Majaz al-Quran” by Abu Ubayda (d. 824), which explores metaphorical language in the Quran, “al-Nasikh wal-Mansukh and qira’at” by Abu Ubayd Qasim ibn Sallam (d. 839), which address abrogation and Quranic recitations: “Asbab an-nuzul” by Ali ibn Madini on the reasons behind revelation, “Fahm al-Quran” by Muhasibi (d. 857) and “Mushkil al-Quran” by Ibn Qutayba (d. 889), which deals with problematic or difficult verses. By the 10th century, the term “Ulum al-Quran” appeared for the first time in a work titled “al-Hawi fi ulum al-Quran” by Muhammad ibn Khalaf ibn Marzuban. Before this, no comprehensive terminology existed to describe the various fields of Quranic study. This development was followed by other foundational texts, such as “Ulum al-



Quran” by Abu Bakr Anbori and “al-Istighna fi ulum al-Quran” by Muhammad ibn Ali Adfawi. Over time, more specialized works appeared, focusing on particular areas within Quranic studies. Among the significant contributions are: “Ijaz al-Quran” by Baqillani, “I’rab al-Quran” by Hawafi, “Amthal al-Quran” by Mawardi, “Majaz al-Quran” by Izz ibn Abdusalam and “Ilm al-Qira’at” by Sakhawi. Several scholars from Central Asia also made major contributions. Among them were Abu Mansur Maturidi (870–944), who wrote “Ta’wilat ahl as-sunna”, Abu Lays Samarqandi (911–1003), author of “Bahr al-Ulum” and Mahmud Zamakhshari (1075–1144), known for his linguistic tafsir, “al-Kashshaf”.

It is important to note that most of these works did not aim to cover all aspects of Quranic sciences, but focused on specific topics. According to researchers, the first comprehensive attempt to systematize the entire body of Quranic sciences was made by the Egyptian scholar Ali ibn Ibrahim Hawafi (d. 1038) in his 30-volume work “al-Burhan fi ulum al-Quran”, of which only 15 volumes have survived. The manuscript is preserved in Egyptian libraries.

In the 12th century, Ibn Jawzi (d. 1200) wrote “Funun al-afnan fi aja’ib ulum al-Quran” and “al-Mujtaba fi ulum tata’allaq bil-Quran”. In the 14th century, Badriddin Zarkashi produced the influential “al-Burhan fi ulum al-Quran”, while Jalalidin Balqini authored “Mawaqi al-ulum min mawaqi an-nujum”. From the Central Asian region, Abul Barakat Nasafi (1232–1310), born in the ancient city of Nasaf, wrote “Tafsir an-Nasafi”, which became widely known in the Islamic world. In the 15th century, the great scholar Jalaliddin Suyuti completed his monumental work “al-Itqan fi ulum al-Quran”, which is considered one of the most important encyclopedic texts on the subject. Also in this period, two prominent scholars from the Naqshbandi tradition in Transoxiana - Mawlana Yaqub Charkhi (1363–1447), author of “Tafsir Charkhi” and Mawlana Husayn Va’iz Kashifi (1442–1505), who wrote “Tafsir Husayni” - made lasting contributions to the interpretation of the Quran.

In the 15th century (9th century AH / 16th century CE), scholars such as Jalaliddin Balqini (d. 824 AH / 1421 CE), with his work “*Mawaqi al-ulum min*





*mawaqi an-nujum*” and Muhammad ibn Sulayman Kafiya (d. 879 AH / 1474 CE), author of “*Taysir fi qawa'id at-tafsir*”, made significant contributions to specific fields within Quranic sciences, enriching them with their own scholarly perspectives.

Regarding Quranic recitation (qira'at), one of the most pivotal works was “*Sab' fil-qira'at*” by Ibn Mujahid (d. 324 AH / 935 CE). In this text, he was the first to systematically distinguish seven modes of recitation (qira'at) that were considered mutawatir - transmitted through reliable and multiple chains. Ibn Mujahid analyzed the various recitations that were in circulation across the Muslim world in his time and worked to establish clarity and consistency. His classification - separating the seven authentic recitations from others that were considered well-known (mashhur) or irregular (shadh) - formed the basis for later scholarly standards in the science of qira'at.

Ali ibn Ibrahim ibn Sa'id Hawfi's monumental work “*Burhan fi ulum al-Quran*” further reflects the acceptance and standardization of the term “Quranic sciences” in scholarly discourse. Although primarily a tafsir (exegesis), the work - originally comprising 30 volumes - integrates discussions of various Quranic sciences throughout its commentary. Parts of this manuscript are currently preserved in manuscript collections in Egypt. Hawafi's method is characteristic of that era. Rather than organizing Quranic sciences as separate thematic chapters or theoretical discussions, he presents them practically within the context of tafsir - applying them directly to the interpretation of specific verses. His approach is integrative, offering real examples as part of the exegetical process rather than abstract classifications. This distinguishes his work from later systematic treatises. It is worth noting that Badriddin Zarkashi later utilized Hawafi's work to produce a more concise and categorized presentation of Quranic sciences in his own writings.

Following Hawafi, Ibn Jawzi (d. 597 AH / 1200 CE) authored two notable works: “*Funun al-afnan fi uyun ulum al-Quran*” and “*al-Mujtaba fi ulum al-Quran*”. These texts further contributed to the codification and teaching of



Quranic sciences. The former was later edited and prepared for publication by Hasan Ziyawiddin Atar and printed in Beirut in 1987.

In the 13th century CE (7th century AH), several significant works contributed to the study of particular areas within Quranic sciences. Among these were “*Jamal al-Qurra*” by Ali ibn Muhammad Sakhawi (d. 1245), “*Murshid al-wajiz ila ulum tata‘allaq bi-kitab al-aziz*” by Abu Shama Abdurahman ibn Ismail (d. 1266), and “*Majaz al-Quran*” by Izz ibn Abdussalam (d. 1262). These works examined specific aspects of Quranic studies and helped to expand the field.

In the 14th century (8th century AH), Ibn Qayyim (d. 1350) authored “*Aqsam al-Quran*”, a treatise focused on the oaths and forms of swearing found in the Quran. This period witnessed a growing interest in organizing Quranic sciences more systematically and producing more comprehensive works. A major milestone was achieved by Badriddin Zarkashi (d. 1391) with his encyclopedic work “*al-Burhan fi ulum al-Quran*”, in which he discussed 34 branches of Quranic sciences. Although the work did not aim to list every known subfield, it represented the first significant effort to categorize the various sciences related to the Quran into distinct topics. The book presents a more theoretical and systematic approach, enriched with definitions, explanations, and illustrative examples. Zarkashi relied on earlier sources, summarizing and integrating their insights, while also offering his own analytical interpretations. This work was later studied and prepared for publication by Muhammad Abul-Fadl.

In the 15th century (9th century AH), Jalaliddin Suyuti (d. 1505) composed the most comprehensive and influential work on the subject, “*al-Itqan fi ulum al-Quran*”. Drawing upon a wide array of earlier sources, Suyuti compiled and defined approximately 80 distinct disciplines within Quranic sciences. His work is widely regarded as the most complete and authoritative reference in the field, often described as the “crown jewel” of Quranic scholarship.

Suyuti’s work is considered to have finalized the codification of Quranic sciences. After “*al-Itqan*”, no other work of comparable scope or significance is known to have emerged. Today, “*al-Itqan*” remains a primary



reference and teaching text in the study of Quranic sciences across many Arab and Islamic institutions. Unfortunately, after Suyuti's time, the classification and authorship of new works in this discipline saw a significant decline. From the 15th to the 19th century CE, very few notable texts were produced on Quranic sciences. Consequently, many modern scholars refer to this period as a "time of stagnation" in the development of the field.

The evolution of Quranic sciences reflects the dynamic and multifaceted nature of Islamic scholarship. From scattered oral traditions to systematically categorized disciplines, the development of Quranic studies has been shaped by successive generations of scholars who contributed foundational texts and methodologies. Early efforts focused on hadith-based commentary and recitation analysis, while later periods witnessed the emergence of encyclopedic works that sought to organize and define the various branches of Quranic knowledge comprehensively. Jalaliddin Suyuti's "*al-Itqan fi ulum al-Quran*" marks a culmination of this intellectual tradition, serving as the authoritative compendium of Quranic sciences. Despite a noted period of stagnation following his work, the legacy of these classical sources continues to inform contemporary Quranic scholarship. Further research and renewed engagement with these texts are essential for deepening the understanding of the Quran's multifaceted sciences.

### **REFERENCES**

1. A.Gh.Abdullayev. *Quranic Studies: A Textbook*. - Tashkent: Tashkent Islamic University, 2011. - 191 p.
2. A.Gh.Abdullayev. *Sciences Related to the Quran*. - Tashkent: Movarounnahr, 2016. - 159 p.
3. Shaykh Muhammad Sadiq Muhammad Yusuf. *Quranic Sciences*. - Tashkent: Hilol-Nashr, 2021. - 504 p.
4. Ahmadkhon Rashidov. *Quranic Sciences (Questions and Answers)*. - Tashkent: Munir, 2024. - 288 p.