

**DIALECTICAL DIFFERENCES IN ARABIC NOUNS IN EBÛ MANSÛR  
MUHAMMED AL-EZHERÎ'S KITÂBÜ ME'ÂNÎ'L-QIRÂ'ÂT: "EXAMPLES OF  
MU'ARRAB AND TRILITERAL VERBAL NOUNS" 1\***

*DIFERENÇAS DIALETIAIS NOS SUBSTANTIVOS ÁRABES NO KITÂBÜ  
ME'ÂNÎ'L-QIRÂ'ÂT DE EBÛ MANSÛR MUHAMMED AL-EZHERÎ: "EXEMPLOS  
DE MU'ARRAB E SUBSTANTIVOS VERBAIS TRILITERAIS"*

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**ABSTRACT**

Ezheri's Kitâb Ma'ânî al-Qirâ'ât is a significant work that examines the impact of dialectal variations among Arab tribes on Qur'anic readings (qirâ'ât). The linguistic diversity observed in the Qur'anic recitations is analyzed in relation to the dialects of Arab tribes. Within this framework, the influence of pronunciation and semantic differences, shaped by the variations among tribes and regions, on the qirâ'ât is explored. Ezheri highlights how these linguistic variations play a critical role in the interpretation and understanding of the Qur'an. The analyses presented in the work reflect the richness of Arabic dialects and demonstrate that the variations in qirâ'ât are rooted in the historical and geographical diversity of the language. Ezheri argues that the differences in qirâ'ât arise not only from phonetic or lexical variations but also from the cultural and historical diversity of Arab societies. In addition to being a significant resource for the study of the science of qirâ'ât, this work provides valuable insights into understanding the dialectal richness of the Arabic language.

**Keywords:** dialect, sarf, nahiv, muarrab.

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## RESUMO

O **Kitāb Ma‘ānī al-Qirā’āt** de Ezheri é uma obra significativa que examina o impacto das variações dialetais entre as tribos árabes nas leituras do Alcorão (qirā’āt). A diversidade linguística observada nas recitações corânicas é analisada em relação aos dialetos das tribos árabes. Nesse contexto, explora-se a influência das diferenças de pronúncia e significado, moldadas pelas variações entre tribos e regiões, nas qirā’āt. Ezheri destaca como essas variações linguísticas desempenham um papel crucial na interpretação e compreensão do Alcorão. As análises apresentadas na obra refletem a riqueza dos dialetos árabes e demonstram que as variações nas qirā’āt têm suas raízes na diversidade histórica e geográfica da língua. Ezheri argumenta que as diferenças nas qirā’āt decorrem não apenas de variações fonéticas ou lexicais, mas também da diversidade cultural e histórica das sociedades árabes. Além de ser um recurso significativo para o estudo da ciência das qirā’āt, essa obra oferece percepções valiosas para a compreensão da riqueza dialetal da língua árabe.

**Palavras-chave:** dialeto, sarf, nahiv, muarrab.

## Introduction

The variations in the recitation (qirā’āt) of the Qur’anic text hold profound significance within the Islamic tradition. These differences reflect not only the phonetic diversity in the reading of the text but also subtle nuances concerning the meanings of certain words. Works dedicated to the study of qirā’āt have been regarded as a distinguished field of knowledge in the Islamic world, inspiring the composition of numerous texts in this domain. Abū Muḥammad Ibn Ezheri’s *Kitāb Ma‘ānī al-Qirā’āt* emerges as a pivotal resource for analyzing and comprehending these variations in recitation. (Ibn Mujāhid, 1400; Ma‘mer b. al-Muṣennā, 1381/1961; Shātībī, 2005)

Ezheri’s work addresses the semantic dimension of qirā’āt variations, paying particular attention to the lexical and phonetic diversity arising from dialectal differences. With the expansion of the Arab world and the spread of Islam, variations in the pronunciation and meanings of words emerged among Muslim communities in different regions. This diversity was shaped by the distinctive features of Arabic dialects, directly influencing some of the qirā’āt variations. In *Kitāb Ma‘ānī al-Qirā’āt*, Ezheri provides a detailed examination of how these dialectal differences originated and which recitation leaders (imams of qirā’āt) adopted them. (al-Suyūṭī, 1973; Ibn ‘Aṭīyya, 1422; E.-H. Sh. Ibn al-Jazari, 2014; Zehebī, 1413)

Research in the field of Qira'at shows that the differences in Qira'at are not limited to phonetics or reading styles, but also reflect social and regional dialectal differences. In his work 'Kitāb al-Ma'ānī al-Ḳirāāāt', al-Azharī, while explaining the effects of these dialectal differences on qira'āt, examines which regional or dialectal features each qira'āt bears. In this framework, he addresses the questions of how the differences in qira'āt are influenced by the diversity of Arabic dialects and how these influences permeate the meaning of the Qur'anic text. (al-Jāhiz, 1423; Abū Ubaydah, 1961; al-Azharī, 2001)

This study will discuss the place and significance of the dialectal variations addressed in Ezheri's work within the science of qirā'āt. In this context, the role of Arabic dialects in shaping the variations of qirā'āt will be evaluated based on Ezheri's observations and analyses. Consequently, a detailed examination will be presented on how regional dialects influenced Qur'anic recitations and how these were adopted within the Islamic world.

## Results and Discussion

### *The Rites Related to Dialect Differences*

The Holy Qur'an is the basic text of Islam and is accepted by Muslims as a divine guide. The fact that the Qur'an was revealed in Arabic has led to important debates in linguistic and Qiraat sciences. The emergence of different qiraats in the recitation of these verses has been discussed since the early periods of Islam, and the dialectal differences between the qiraats have been at the centre of these discussions. Here, we will examine the historical origins, linguistic dimensions and the place of these differences in Islamic sciences. (E. M. 'Abd al-Malik b. H. al-Ḥimari Ibn Hishām, 1375)

In order to understand the historical origins of dialect differences, it is necessary to consider the linguistic situation in the Arabian peninsula in the early period of Islam. There are various tribes in the Arabian peninsula and different dialects are used. Although there are distinct differences between these dialects, it is accepted that the Qur'an was revealed in Mecca and Medina, i.e. in areas where

the dialect of the Quraysh tribe was dominant. (Ibn Manzūr, 2004) However, the fact that the Qur'an was addressed to a wide Arab geography has led to the Qur'an being revealed in dialects of different tribes. The dialectal differences in the Qur'an are closely related to the linguistic diversity of the Arabian peninsula in the early period of Islam. (Al-Jazari, 2002) These differences can also be interpreted as a divine convenience for the Qur'an to appeal to various audiences. (Ibn Khaldun, 2016) The place of qiraats in Islamic sciences is of great importance not only as a linguistic difference, but also for the deepening and expansion of Islamic thought. In this context, the dialectal differences between the qiraats should be considered as a reflection of the richness of Islamic sciences. (Brockett, 1986; Es-Suyuti, 2006; Jeffery, 1938)

One of the methods used in the differences of qiraat is dialect differences. For this reason, al-Azharī, the author of *Kitābū Me'ānī al-Ḳirā'āt*, sometimes mentioned their connection with Arabic dialects while narrating the differences of qira'ah. In addition to this, he sometimes explicitly mentioned the names of the tribes, and sometimes, without mentioning the names of the tribes, he merely stated that the reading he dealt with was a dialectal difference or that it was used in this way in the Arabic language. In addition, he sometimes mentioned the number of different recitations of the word he quoted and pointed out its usage in dialects.

Dialectal differences in qiraats are generally seen in the issues of *usul*, *sarf* and *nahiv* in qiraats. In the second part of our thesis, we tried to explain the explanations about the procedural issues under the headings of *tahfifi*, *tahqiqi*, *imalah*, *ibdal*, *idḡam*, *beyne* and *teshil*. For this reason, we will try to examine the dialectal differences in terms of *sarf* and *nahiv*.

### ***Historical Origin of Dialect Differences***

In order to understand the historical origin of dialectal differences, it is necessary to consider the linguistic situation in the Arabian peninsula in the early period of Islam. In the Arabian peninsula, there were various tribes using different dialects. While there are significant differences between these dialects, it is accepted that the Qur'an was revealed in Mecca and Medina, i.e. in areas where the dialect of

the Quraysh tribe was dominant. (E. M. 'Abd al-Malik b. H. al-Ḥimari Ibn Hishām, 1375) However, the fact that the Qur'an was addressed to a wide Arab geography caused it to be revealed in a way to include the dialects of different tribes. This situation is seen as the source of dialect differences in the Qur'an. (Ibn Manzūr, 1414/1993)

The dialectal differences in the Qiraat are closely related to the linguistic diversity of the Arabian peninsula in the early periods of Islam. The different dialects used among the Arab tribes led to the emergence of differences in qiraat. These differences can also be interpreted as a divine convenience for the Qur'an to appeal to various audiences. (Al-Jazāirī 2002) According to narrations based on Ibn 'Abbas, this diversity of dialects enabled the Qur'an to be understood by a wider Arabic audience. (-Ṭabarī, 1420/2000)

The place of qiraats in Islamic sciences is of great importance not only as a linguistic difference, but also in terms of the deepening and expansion of Islamic thought. (Dānī, 1404/1984) The Qira'ahs gave depth to sciences such as tafsir, fiqh and hadith and left a rich heritage to these fields. (Dānī, 1404/1984)

### ***The Place of Dialect Differences in Islamic Sciences***

Dialectal differences in Qiraat have played an important role in the development of Islamic sciences. These differences have been effective not only in the reading and understanding of the Qur'an, but also in Islamic sciences such as tafsir, fiqh and theology. Qiraats have contributed to the development of Islamic thought and paved the way for the emergence of different forms of interpretation and understanding. (al-Jazāirī, 2002)

The Imams of Qiraat have carefully examined the different types of Qiraat recited in different dialects of the Arabic language and explained how these differences should be evaluated in terms of linguistics and meaning. In particular, phonetic changes in the language, i.e. differences in the pronunciation of letters, were discussed within the framework of the rules of sarf and nahiv, and the effects of these differences on Islamic sciences were discussed in depth. (Dānī, 1404/1984)

Therefore, qiraats not only reflected the different ways of using Arabic, but also contributed to the development of a deep understanding of Islamic thought. In particular, the influence of qiraats on tafsir has provided versatile perspectives on the meaning of verses, and in this respect, qiraats have left a rich heritage in Islamic sciences. (Tabari, 1987) The reflections of dialectal differences in Qiraat in fields such as tafsir, fiqh and theology have contributed to the diversification and development of Islamic thought. (Ibn Qutayba, 1419)

### ***Dialectal Differences Related to Sarf***

Sarf means 'to turn, rotate, change' in the lexicon. As a term, it is divided into two parts as 'practical' and 'theoretical'. (Ibn Manẓūr, 1414/1993) Practical sarf is to convert the masdar or māzi words, which are accepted as the basis in Arabic, into different verb phrases for their meaning. In other words, it is to turn it into one of the emsile-i muhtelif moulds. The science that analyses the position of the word other than I'rab and binâ is called theoretical sarf. (Aybakan, 'Sarf', 2009)

Sarf is a branch of science that analyses the structures and conjugations of words in Arabic language. Dialect differences are also evident in the field of sarf. In Arabic, sarf involves the formation of various verb and noun patterns based on the root letters of the word. Dialectal differences lead to various changes in the application of these patterns and the pronunciation of the letters. (Aybakan, 'Sarf', 2009)

In al-Tasrīf by Abū 'Uthman al-Māzinī (d. 249/863), one of the modern period's independent works of sarf, the principal and subordinate letters that form the noun and verb forms are mentioned in a mixed manner. (Ibn Jinnī, 1373/1954; 'Abd al-kāhir al-Jurjānī, 1407/1987) Al-Māzinī explained this issue under the titles of ibdāl (It refers to replacing a letter with another letter close to it in terms of its mawrah or adjective in order to provide ease of pronunciation and fluency in the word. See TDV Ibdal article), i'lāl (It refers to words that undergo change in the Arabic language. Lisān al-'Arab, Ila'l md.), kalb (In the dictionary, it means 'to turn something inside out, to turn it upside down, to turn it upside down, to turn one thing into something else, and to change it'. See Lisān al-'Arab, 'klb' md.), taz'īf (To



weaken, to make double. Lisān al-‘Arab, ‘daf’ md.), and the change and transformation of the letter mentioned. (Ibn Jinnī, 1373/1954; ‘Abd al-kāhīr al-Jurjānī, 1407/1987) However, in the later works of sarf, these were tried to be analysed under a separate title. The subject of the science of Sarf is words. For this reason, it examines the structure of the word and their principles. In Arabic, words are divided into three as noun, verb and letter. Therefore, sarf examines the structure of these words. (Haldun, 2016)

Under this heading, there are many topics related to isms maxur, pronouns, isms memdud, infinitives, imperfects and verb forms. However, we will try to explain the dialectal differences in nouns and verbs in relation to dialectal differences. (Ṭabari, 1420/2000) The author included dialectal differences in his work Kitāb al-Maān al-Kirāāāt, which is the subject of our thesis. We will examine the dialect differences under two headings in nouns and verbs.

### ***Dialect Differences in Names***

In some of the books of Qiraat, dialects are mentioned under a separate heading, in some where the word is mentioned, and in others not mentioned. The dialect in Qur'anic Qiraat deals with the discussions on Arabic language and literature. (Ibn Qutaybah, 1419) These discussions have been tried to be explained through the differences of some words, grammatical rules and poetic usages. Now, regarding the dialectal differences in nouns, firstly, by giving examples of muarrab words, explanations will be made for a better understanding of the subject.

### ***Muarrabs***

It is stated that the Arabic language, like other languages, exchanged words from foreign languages with which it came into contact for various reasons and that these foreign words adapted to the characteristics of Arabic over time. These words of foreign origin, which the Arabs borrowed and penetrated into the tribal dialects over time, were included in the expressions of the Qur'an with the process of revelation. “میکال” and “الیسع”, “الیاس”, “ثمود”, “عزیر”, “آزر”, “زبور”, “زکریا”, “إبراهیم”, “جربیل” are given as examples of these words, which are called “Muarrab” (Arabised) and

pronounced differently in Qur'anic recitation in the context of dialects. (Ibn Durayd, 1408/1987; Ibn al-Jawzī, 1408/1987; 'Ukbari, 1406/1986)

The first examples of different pronunciation of nouns based on dialectal differences will be related to the pronunciation of muarrab words. As in every language, there are words of foreign origin in Arabic. The concept of 'dahīl' (الدخيل) is used for words that enter Arabic from foreign languages. Dahīl defines words taken from foreign languages to express concepts that are unknown to Arabs and do not exist in Arabic. These words are categorised in three different ways in Arabic: dahīl, muarrab and muwelled. In this context, muarrab words, which were introduced and used later in Arabic, are also found in the Qur'an and are read in different ways by the imams of Qiraat. (Ferra, 1978)

Example 1:

﴿وَوَسَّمَعِيلَ وَالْيَسَعَ وَيُونُسَ وَلُوطًا وَكُلًّا فَضَلْنَا عَلَى الْعَالَمِينَ﴾

'And (We guided) Ismâ'il, Elyesa', Yûnus and Lot. And We made them all superior to the worlds.' (Surah al-An'am 6/86)

﴿قرأ حمزة والكسائي والليث بلامين في السورتين (١٣٨)، وقرأ الباقون بلام واحدة في الموضعين﴾

The word 'وَالْيَسَعَ' in the above verse is read in two different ways among the Qiraat imams. Hamza and Qisâ'i read the word with two 'lām' letters, i.e. 'وَاللَّيْسَعُ'. The other Qiraat imams read it as 'وَالْيَسَعُ' with a single letter 'lam'. These different ways of recitation provide an in-depth nuance of meaning regarding the use of language. The author then points out that this difference is present in the Arabic language, but that this word has entered the language from other languages. He explained this view by bringing evidence from some linguists who are authorities in the field of language. (Ahfesh, 1990; al-Azharī, 1412/1991; Tabari, 1420)

Al-Azharī, in his Kitābū Me'ānī al-Ḳirāāāt, includes al-Farra's explanation of this issue as follows: Ferrā stated that the reading with two 'lām' letters is closer to a common reading in names of foreign origin. In Arabic proper names, the suffix 'elif-lām' is not usually used; however, in some special contexts such as poetry, Arabs may add this suffix to names, albeit rarely. Ferrā gave a couplet from Arabic poetry as an example to explain this situation. (al-Azharī, 1412/1991; Vâhidî, 1415/1994).

﴿مُوجِدْنَا الْوَلِيدَ بْنَ الْيَزِيدِ مُبَارَكًا شَدِيدًا بِأَخْنَاءِ الْخِلَافَةِ كَاهِلَهُ﴾



'We found Walid ibn Yazid as a blessed and mighty man who shouldered the burden of the caliphate.' (Bayḍāwī, 1418)

In this couplet, the word 'يَزِيد' is used in the form of 'الْيَزِيد' with the addition of 'elif-lâm'. This usage is used among Arabs to emphasise names in the context of praise. While explaining the reading with two 'lam' letters, al-Farā emphasised that such a usage is an addition in foreign names or for the purpose of praise. On the other hand, he states that the form 'وَالْيَسَع' read with a single 'lam' letter is more in accordance with the general rules of Arabic. (Al-Azharī, 1412/1991)

In this context, the difference in meaning between the two pronunciations is also striking. When it is read with double 'lām', the name is read with a more formal and foreign emphasis and is almost praised. As a result, according to Ferrā, the reading of Hamza and Kisā'i (وَالْيَسَع) is more suitable for the structure of foreign nouns, while the reading of the other Qiraat imams (وَالْيَسَع) is more suitable for the more common usage in the Arabic language.' (Al-Azharī, 1412/1991; Ibn 'Aṭiyya, 1422; Ibn al-Jawzī, 1422/2001)

After making this explanation, the author brought an example in another poem. However, his purpose here is to express the inclusion of this word in Arabic and how difficult this explanation is. (E. M. A. Ibn Hisham, 1971; Ibn Manzūr, 2004) He explained this situation with the couplet he mentioned. (Al-Azharī, 1412/1991)

Here, the author, after al-Farā's explanation, gave the couplets and stated that alif-lam is used in some proper names in Arabic. He brought names such as Yazid and Ya'mer as examples. (E. M. A. Ibn Hisham, 1971; Ibn Manzūr, 2004). However, he stated that in literary forms such as poetry, elif-lam is used out of necessity. (E. M. A. Ibn Hisham, 1971; Ibn Manzūr, 2004)

The language used here has a style specific to classical Arabic poetry. Al-Azharī tried to explain this issue by giving examples from poetry. However, studies in the field of tafsir, qiraat and language have gone to such an explanation. The evidence of the scholars who made the explanation is clear. (Al-Azharī, 1412/1991) However, al-Azharī did not mention the name of the poet who said this in the first couplet he brought as an example. This may not constitute a correct example in terms of the use of evidence.

As a result, as a result of our research, it can be understood that this word is a dialect. Because the researchers who are skilful in language and exegesis have defined this word as ajem. (Ezherî, 1412/1991) It has already been mentioned among the muarrab words, which is the title of our subject. (Ezherî, 1412/1991)

Example 2:

وَقَالَتِ الْيَهُودُ عُزَيْرٌ ابْنُ اللَّهِ وَقَالَتِ النَّصَارَى الْمَسِيحُ ابْنُ اللَّهِ ذَلِكَ قَوْلُهُمْ بِأَفْوَاهِهِمْ يُضَاهَوْنَ قَوْلَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا ﴿١٠٠﴾  
هَمِنْ قَبْلُ قَاتَلَهُمُ اللَّهُ أَنَّى يُؤْفَكُونَ

*“The Jews said, ‘Uzair is the son of Allah,’ and the Christians said, ‘Jesus is the son of Allah. These are the words of their mouths similar to the words of the disbelievers before. God damn them, how they turn away (from the truth)!” (Surat al-Tawbah 9/30)*

Asim, al-Qisā’î, and Ya‘qub al-Hadramî read the above verse, ‘The Jews said, ‘Uzeyir is the son of Allah,’” as ‘Uzayrun ibn Allāh’ with a tenvin (i.e., ابْنُ اللَّهِ عُزَيْرٌ. ‘Uzayr is the son of Allah’). Likewise, ‘Abd al-Wāris mentions that he narrated it from Abū ‘Amr. The other Qiraat imams read the word without tenvins. (Al-Azharî, 1412/1991)

The author mentions in his book that al-Farra gave the following explanation about this qiraat wajib. ‘The reading preference with tenvin is more appropriate, because he stated that the narration is incomplete in this sentence. He states that this situation arises from the omission of a part of the news in the above composition. He supported this view with the following statement; For example, as in the expression ‘He is the son of a righteous man’, he declares that in such cases, tenvin can be used in both complete sentences and incomplete sentences. Some of the expressions in which tenvin is commonly used can easily fall. Because in such sentences, the use is appropriate. When a person mentions his surname or his father's name a lot, for example, when it is said, ‘so-and-so's son so-and-so’, the tenvin is not used in such cases. However, sometimes, even if the word is incomplete, the tenvin may be dropped because the ‘b’ of the word ‘ibn’ is inactive. In this case, it is preferable to drop the tenth (tenvin), because the meeting of a calm letter with another calm letter creates a situation that is difficult to read. For this reason, the tenvin was dropped before it was made movable. As a matter of fact, this is how the

scholars of Qiraat read it in the expression ‘Wa bil-kināti mud‘asan makran’ (in the Shātibiyya ode). (Al-Azharī, 1412/1991)

Accordingly, if the word *ibn* is required in the sentence, the use of *tanwīn* is permissible. However, if the word *ibn* is no longer needed, then *tanwīn* is not applied. This rule is relevant in cases where the name or patronymic (*kunya*) of the person’s father is explicitly mentioned. If the word *ibn* is implied in a hidden sense, such as in expressions like "your son," "his son," or "the man’s son," then *tanwīn* is omitted. For example, the phrase referring to ‘Uzayr as "the son of Allah" is read without *tanwīn*. The author provides the following verse as an example: (Al-Azharī, 1412/1991)

لَتَجِدَنِي بِالْأَمِيرِ بَرًّا ... وَبِالْقَنَاةِ مَدْعَسًا مَكْرًا

“You will find me in good relations with the leader...

One who stands firm with a spear, advancing boldly in battle.”

As the author’s explanation suggests, the use of this word with *tanwīn* depends on certain dialects and contextual meanings. This name, in fact, is also used among other tribes and among people of different religions. In his commentary, al-Nasafī notes that this word entered the Arabic language from another tongue. (Nesefī, 1419/1998) Since such words are *mu‘arrab* (Arabized), it is more appropriate to discuss this *qirā’a* aspect under this specific heading.

### ***Dialectal Variations in Triliteral Verb Nouns (Maṣādir Thulāthiyya)***

One type of recitational variation (*qirā’āt*) arising from the usage of Arabic dialects is observed in the pronunciation of triliteral verb nouns (*maṣādir thulāthiyya*). These verb nouns, which are entirely based on auditory transmission (*samā’ī*) rather than analogical reasoning (*qiyās*), may belong to the first form (*bāb*) in one dialect, while in another dialect, they are used in the sixth form. The preferences of Arab tribes for the usage of specific words underlie these differences. (Manzoor, 1414/1993; Kocabıyık, 2022)

The *qirā’a* leaders transmitted the triliteral verb nouns found in the Qur’an in a manner that reflects the characteristic features of the respective dialects. A notable feature of such dialectal triliteral verb nouns is their potential to influence

meaning. Ezheri also occasionally addressed these verb nouns in the context of the dialect-recitation relationship, evaluating them in terms of their emphasis on meaning.

Example 1:

﴿قَالُوا يَا ذَا الْقَرْنَيْنِ إِنَّ يَأْجُوجَ وَمَأْجُوجَ مُفْسِدُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَهَلْ نَجْعَلُ لَكَ خَرْجًا عَلَىٰ أَنْ تَجْعَلَ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَهُمْ بَرْزَخًا سَدًا﴾

*"They said, 'O Dhul-Qarnayn! Indeed, Gog and Magog are spreading corruption in this land. Shall we offer you a tribute so that you might build a barrier between us and them?'" (Surat al-Kahf 18/ 94)*

﴿أَمْ تَسْأَلُهُمْ خَرْجًا فَقَرْجًا رَبِّكَ خَيْرٌ وَهُوَ خَيْرُ الرَّازِقِينَ﴾

*"Do you ask them for a tribute (kharjan)? (Certainly not, for) your Lord's reward is better; He is the best of providers." (Surat al-Mu'minoon 23/72.)*

The author explains the variations in the recitation of the word kharjan (خَرْجًا) in the following manner:

Hamza and Kisā'ī recite the term in all instances as "خَرَاَجًا" (khirāj) with an alif. (Al-Azharī, 1412/1991b, 2/124) Ibn 'Āmir reads the term without an alif as "خَرْجًا" (kharj) in all instances. Other scholars of recitation differentiate between the usages: they recite "خَرْجًا" (kharj) without an alif in the phrase "خَرْجًا" (tribute), but include the alif in the phrase "فَخَرْجًا رَبِّكَ" (Your Lord's reward), reading it as "خَرْجًا". (Al-Azharī, 1412/1991b, 2/124) The grammarian Abū Ishāq explains that if the word is read as "خَرْجًا" (kharj, without an alif), it signifies fay' (spoils or plunder). However, when read as "خَرَاَجًا" (khirāj, with an alif), it refers to a specific type of tax or an obligatory payment, akin to a debt owed. According to grammarians, "خَرَاَجًا" (khirāj) specifically denotes taxes collected from goods and serves as a noun derived from the verb root "خرج".

Al-Farrā' states that the recitation with an alif (khirāj) represents a noun, while the recitation without an alif (kharj) functions as a verbal noun (maṣḍar). He explains that the meaning of kharj relates to specifying a particular quantity or amount, akin to "a determined measure." Other linguists note that the recitation with an alif (khirāj) conveys a broader and more general meaning, while the

recitation without an alif (*kharj*) implies a narrower and more specific sense. (al-Nasafi, 1419/1998; Kocabıyık, 2022) This analysis showcases the nuanced relationship between phonetic differences in Qur'anic recitation and their semantic implications, reflecting both the linguistic richness of Arabic and the dialectal diversity among Arab tribes. In his *Madārik* commentary, Nasafī highlights that the aforementioned variations in recitation align with dialects specific to regions such as Ḥijāz, Baṣra, Kūfa, and Shām. He also draws attention to the semantic distinction between "خُرْج" (*kharj*) and "خِرَاج" (*khirāj*). According to Nasafī: "خِرَاج" (*khirāj*) refers to taxes or payments given to the state or a ruler, such as land taxes or the wages of a laborer. "خُرْج" (*kharj*), on the other hand, carries a more specific meaning. For instance, while the tax collected from a village might be termed *khirāj*, a specific tax imposed on a city might be referred to as *kharj*. Thus, *kharj* denotes a smaller or more specialized payment or obligation. (al-Nasafi, 1419/1998)

Nasafī explains that the broader usage of "خِرَاج" (*khirāj*) is reflected in its longer form as a word, while the shorter, more focused meaning of "خُرْج" (*kharj*) aligns with its concise expression. In this context, the first recitation, *kharj* (خُرْج), better fits the verse's meaning. The verse can thus be interpreted as follows: (al-Nasafi, 1419/1998; Kocabıyık, 2021)

*"Or do you ask them for a small payment for guiding them to the truth? Yet the great reward from your Lord is far better."*

This interpretation emphasizes that the blessings and provisions bestowed by Allah surpass any material compensation that could be demanded from people. The idea is reinforced by the concluding phrase of the verse:

"وَهُوَ خَيْرُ الرَّازِقِينَ"

*"And He is the best of providers." (Surah Saba' 34/39.)*

The author discusses the various recitation modes of the mentioned word but does not clarify which dialect these recitational differences belong to. However, some sources have stated that the recitation of the word with an *alif* represents a noun form, while the version without an *alif* is a verbal noun (*maṣḍar*). Through analysis, it has been determined that this word is associated with certain dialects or tribal linguistic variations. Commentators such as Nasafī, Ebussuud, and Ibn al-Jawzī



have provided explanations similar to those offered by the author. "(Al-Azharī, 1412/1991; Kocabıyık, 2020)

Example 2:

لَنْ خَفَّفَ اللَّهُ عَنْكُمْ وَعَلِمَ أَنَّ فِيكُمْ ضَعْفًا فَإِنْ يَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ مِائَةٌ صَابِرَةٌ يَغْلِبُوا مِائَتَيْنِ وَإِنْ يَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ أَلْفٌ يَغْلِبُوا أَلْفَيْنِ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ مَعَ الصَّابِرِينَ ﴿٦٦﴾

*"Allah knew there was a weakness within you, so He lightened your burden from now on. If there are a hundred steadfast among you, they will overcome two hundred by Allah's permission; and if there are a thousand of you, they will overcome two thousand. And Allah is with those who are patient."* (Surah Al-Anfal 8/66)

اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ ضَعْفٍ ثُمَّ جَعَلَ مِنْ بَعْدِ ضَعْفٍ قُوَّةً ثُمَّ جَعَلَ مِنْ بَعْدِ قُوَّةٍ ضَعْفًا وَشَيْبَةً يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَاءُ وَهُوَ الْعَلِيمُ الْقَدِيرُ ﴿٥٤﴾

*"It is Allah who created you in a state of weakness, then after weakness granted you strength, and after strength brought weakness again and old age. He creates whatever He wills. He is the All-Knowing, the All-Powerful."* (Surah Rum 30/54)

Ezherī explains the different qirā'āt (recitations) of the word "ضَعْفٌ" (weakness) in the aforementioned verses as follows:

Hamza and 'Aṣim recite the word "ضَعْفٌ" with a fatḥah (záf). (E.-Ḥayr Sh. b. al-J. M. Ibn al-Jazari, 1414/1994) Hafṣ prefers a fatḥah for "ضَعْفًا" in some instances, but he also reads "مِنْ ضَعْفٍ" (from weakness) with a ḍammah (zū'f). (Shāṭibī, 2005) Similarly, in the phrase "then after strength, weakness again," Hafṣ reads the word "ضَعْفًا" with a ḍammah. Other qirā'āt scholars uniformly recite these words with a ḍammah. (Dānī, 1404/1984)

Abū Maṣṣūr comments that "ضَعْفًا" (fatḥah) and "ضَعْفًا" (ḍammah) belong to two distinct dialects. Additionally, it is reported that the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) recited it as "ضَعْفٌ" (zū'f). (Al-Azharī, 2001) Various ḥadīth sources elaborate on these qirā'āt, and it is noted that the different readings illustrate the three stages of human life described in Sūrah al-Rūm 30:54—weakness, strength, and then weakness again. (Jamāl al-Dīn b. Hishām, 1985)

According to narrations from 'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar, the Prophet recited the word as "ضَعْفٌ" with a ḍammah. Similar recitations by other companions, including



‘Ā’ishah, are reported. Qatādah interprets the first "weakness" in the verse as referring to the embryonic stage of a person, and the second as the stage of old age. “ضَعْف” (faṭḥah) Found in the dialect of the Banū Tamīm. “ضُعْف” (ḍammah) Common in the dialect of the Quraysh in Hijaz. (Suyūṭī, n.d.,)

Halīl ibn Aḥmad notes that both forms are linguistically correct and interchangeable in Arabic. However, “ضَعْف” (faṭḥah) is often used for general expressions of weakness, whether physical or mental, while “ضُعْف” (ḍammah) is preferred in more formal structures or when the word appears as a noun. (E.-Ḥayr Sh. b. al-J. M. Ibn al-Jazari, n.d.)

Ezherī highlights that both recitations reflect valid dialectical variations. Although he does not explicitly associate them with specific tribes, other scholars identify the **faṭḥah** reading as Tamīmī and the **ḍammah** reading as Qurashī. Ezherī also notes that the Qurashī reading aligns with ḥadīth traditions and is therefore preferred. (Jamāl al-Dīn b. Hishām, 1985)

In conclusion, the variations in recitation not only reveal the linguistic richness of the Arabic dialects but also enhance the interpretive depth of the Qur’ān, underscoring its universality and adaptability across different Arab communities. (Jamāl al-Dīn b. Hishām, 1985)

## Conclusion

Ezherī’s Kitāb Ma‘ānī al-Qirā’āt is a significant resource for understanding linguistic and dialectical differences in Qur’anic recitations. The work particularly delves into dialectical variations in nouns and their impact on meaning. In this context, mu‘arrab words and trilateral verbal nouns (maṣādir) emerge as fundamental examples showcasing the diversity and richness of Arabic dialects. While explaining these elements, Ezheri provides both linguistic and recitational analyses, highlighting how variations in recitation contribute to the semantic depth of the Qur’an.

Mu‘arrab words, which are loanwords adapted into Arabic in accordance with its grammatical rules, stand out in this discussion. Ezheri offers detailed

explanations of these words' pronunciations across different dialects, their origins, and their meanings, thereby enriching the understanding of the linguistic diversity in recitations. For instance, variations in the pronunciation of a mu'arrab word in different recitations allow for interpreting the Qur'anic message from a universal perspective. Ezheri emphasizes that these variations are a result of linguistic and cultural interactions with non-Arab societies, and he thoroughly examines the role of these words within the Qur'anic text.

Trilateral verbal nouns (maṣādir) hold particular significance for understanding the grammatical structure of Arabic and the semantic variety found in Qur'anic recitations. Ezheri analyzes the relationship between these nouns and their root verbs, as well as their usage across different dialects, while examining how phonetic and structural changes in recitations enhance the semantic richness of the Qur'anic expressions. Trilateral verbal nouns demonstrate how subtle grammatical and phonetic differences in recitations contribute to a deeper understanding of meaning. Ezheri's approach elucidates the influence of linguistic nuances on Qur'anic interpretation.

In conclusion, Kitāb Ma'ānī al-Qirā'āt serves as a guide for understanding the impact of dialectical differences in nouns on Qur'anic recitations. Ezheri's detailed analyses reveal not only the linguistic richness of the Qur'an but also the historical and cultural heritage of Arabic dialects. This work not only contributes to the exploration of the semantic diversity within Qur'anic recitations but also opens the door to in-depth studies in linguistics and qirā'āt sciences. Ezheri's examination of dialectical variations in recitations provides a crucial perspective for understanding the universal message of the Qur'an within the context of linguistic and cultural diversity.

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