



Imam Makkī ibn Abī Ṭālib:

The Life and Works of a Fourth Century
Scholar of the Qur'ānic and Arabic Sciences

by Basil Farooq

Recite with Love

Imam Makkī ibn Abī Ṭālib ﷺ

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Introduction

As Muslims, we owe a great deal of gratitude and *du‘ā*’s to the great masters of the Qur’ānic Sciences. In particular, those of us who are involved in learning, researching or teaching the Qur’ān in any capacity owe a great sense of appreciation to these pious predecessors. These are the people who spent their entire lives traveling across the globe, seeking knowledge, processing the knowledge into trailblazing works, and then passing these on to the next generations, until they reach us today in 2023. All students of the Qur’ān realize the importance of our connected legacy, our *isnād*, back to the Prophet ﷺ. An area that is under-researched and under-studied in the English-speaking world is the biographies of some of these luminaries within our *isnāds*.¹ This short work is meant to be an encouragement for myself and others to spend time learning the biographies of these scholars and discussing their lives within our study circles. If we do not know the people who delivered the Qur’ānic Sciences to us, it will be quite difficult for us to truly appreciate and understand the Qur’ān.

In an attempt to begin our forays into the lives and times of some of the Qur’ān chosen by Allah ﷻ to be the stalwarts of His book, I have written the following short, contextualized biography of a scholar who left a momentous legacy in the sciences of the Qur’ān, Tafsīr and Arabic. This is an Imam, with whose writing I became familiar during the process of writing *Within Its Depths*. After realizing that there was no existent biography on Imam Makkī b. Abī Ṭālib رحمه الله in English, I sought the guidance of my teacher Ustādha Saaima and began working on a short article that attempts to bring the life of this paragon of knowledge to the English language. In this work, I have attempted to collect all the historical and biographical information I could find about Imam Makkī رحمه الله. Additionally, I have provided some contextual information to help us place this esteemed scholar into reality. Oftentimes we read about the lives of people of the past in an abstract void. We imagine they were living in a pristine environment, safe from the outside world. This is often due to the chroniclers and historians of the past having as their primary focus the compilation of all important pieces of

¹ The one notable exception to this is the exceptional work being done by Tanzil Institute in South Africa. See <https://al-tanzil.co.za>.

information. A diligent reader was expected to read other sources or already have a sense of the correspondence between years and sociopolitical climates and what each region of the Muslim world was facing in that period. An unfortunate reality for us today is that most of us have not read much history, so the years and dates become meaningless signposts. Historians providing us with a few dates, were providing us with the keys to the full picture. This article attempts to color in some of those details, so that we can get a slightly better sense of the life of Imam Makkī رحمہ اللہ. Further details on the research methodology can be found at the end of the article.

Summary of Imam Makkī's ﷺ Life

Classical biographical works begin each individual's entry with a headline summary that introduces the person by providing their patronym (*laqab*), their given name, and their father and grandfathers' names as far as their lineage is known. When this person traces their lineage to a notable figure, there is effort to present the lineage all the way to that notable individual. This is then followed by any tribal or geographic affiliations.

The patronym is a common way to address people in Arabic. Using given names may be considered offensive unless the person speaking is older or has higher social status. We find that our esteemed Imam's patronym is Abū Muḥammad.

His given name is Makkī, and his father's name is Abū Ṭālib Ḥammūsh,² the son of Muḥammad, the son of Mukhtār.³

His tribal affiliation is al-Qaysī. This makes him a descendant of the Arab tribal confederation of Qays 'Aylān (one of the major branches of the Muḍar group).⁴ His birth was in the city of Kairouan (*Qayrawān*) in modern-day Tunisia. Later in his life he moved to Andalusia, where he settled in Córdoba (*Qurtubah*) in modern-day Spain.

He was a master of the Quranic and Arabic sciences. His depth in the Qur'anic Sciences was such that he became one of its experts (*rāsikhīn*).

Imam Makkī's ﷺ life can be roughly split into two phases. The first phase was spent between Egypt, Makkah and his hometown: Kairouan. In this phase much of his focus was spent on acquiring knowledge, while beginning to teach towards

² Dr. Muḥammad al-Disūqī Kaḥīlah, the author of the contemporary work *al-Imām Makkī b. Abī Ṭālib al-Qaysī wa juhūduhū fī khidmat al-qur'ān al-karīm*, mentions in a footnote that Ḥammūsh was a nickname used in the Maghreb (Islamic West: North Africa and Andalusia) for people with the name Muḥammad. This is similar to how many Arab cultures use “Ḥammūd” or “Ḥammūdī” today. The author of *Muḥjam al-udabā'* also affirms that Abū Ṭālib's name was indeed Muḥammad. See Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī, *Muḥjam al-udabā'*, 2712.

³ The version of *Wafayāt al-a'yān* that I referenced mentions Imam Makkī's father was named Abū Ṭālib and Ḥammūsh was the name of his father (i.e., there is an extra “ibn” between the two names), but this seems like a printing error. And Allah ﷻ knows best. See Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-a'yān wa anbā' abnā' al-zamān*, 5:274.

⁴ See Ibn Khaldūn, *al-Tārīkh*, 6:125.

the end. The second phase was his time in Córdoba, Andalusia, where he spent significant time teaching and spreading knowledge.⁵

⁵ See Kaḥīlah, *Makkī wa juhūduhū*, 150.

Imam Makkī's ﷺ Life Events⁶

Imam Makkī was born in Kairouan around sunrise, on the 23rd of Sha‘bān, 355 AH.⁷ This is the year transmitted by most of the biographical works. Imam Abū ‘Amr al-Dānī ﷺ (d. 444 AH) mentions that Imam Makkī was born in the year 354 AH.⁸

Imam Makkī grew up in Kairouan before traveling to Egypt at the age of thirteen, for the pursuit of knowledge. There, he spent some time learning with the masters of arithmetic (*ḥisāb*) and other fields of study before returning to his hometown.

After returning to Kairouan, he completed the memorization of the Quran in the year 374 AH.⁹ He then completed his study of the canonical recitals (*qirā’āt*) in the year 377 AH.

Thereafter, he decided to return to Egypt for a second stay, but not before taking a detour to perform his obligatory *Ḥajj*. After completing his rites, he arrived in Egypt in 378 AH¹⁰ and began reciting the *qirā’āt* to the great master reciter, Abū al-Ṭayyib b. Ghalabūn ﷺ.¹¹ He continued reciting to him for the remainder of that year and a part of the following year, before returning to his hometown once again, with some of the *qirā’āt* still remaining.

He then returned to Egypt for a third stay in the year 382 AH, where he completed his recital of the *qirā’āt*, returning to Kairouan in 383 AH. At this point he began to teach the *qirā’āt* in his hometown for the next four years.

⁶ In recounting the life events of Imam Makkī, I omit the placement of “ﷺ” for brevity. The reader is encouraged to pray for the Imam’s mercy and forgiveness at every mention of his name.

⁷ This was 966 CE. See Khayr al-Dīn al-Ziriklī, *al-A‘lām*, 2324.

⁸ This is also the date of his birth mentioned by Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī in *Mu‘jam al-udabā’*.

⁹ Some sources mention that he memorized the Qur’ān in Egypt before returning to Kairouan. See Ibn al-Jazarī, *Ghāyat al-nihāyah*, 3:751.

¹⁰ Imams al-Dhahabī and Ibn al-Jazarī mention that Imam Makkī began reading the *Qirā’āt* in 376 AH. They also mention that the year Imam Makkī performed his first *Ḥajj* was 382 AH. See al-Dhahabī, *Ma‘rifat al-qurrā’ al-kibār*, 1:395.

¹¹ His full name is Abū al-Ṭayyib ‘Abd al-Mun‘im b. ‘Ubayd Allāh b. Ghalabūn al-Ḥalabī al-Muqri’ Nazīl Miṣr. Imam Abū al-Ṭayyib was not a native of Egypt but resided there as indicated by the attribution “Nazīl Miṣr”. He is originally from Aleppo (Ḥalab). He passed away in 389 AH.

He then set out for Makkah in 387 AH and took the Holy Sanctuary as his abode,¹² performing *Hajj* for four years in succession until the year 390 AH. In 391 AH, he left for Egypt before continuing onto Kairouan, finally arriving back in his hometown in 392 AH. Then he set out from his hometown one last time, toward Andalusia, not returning to Kairouan again. For some historical context, this period of Imam Makkī's life coincided with Fatimid control, known for their disdain for Sunnī scholars, over North Africa (including Kairouan).¹³

Imam Makkī arrived in Córdoba in Andalusia (modern-day Spain) in Rajab of 393 AH. When he first entered the city-state of Córdoba, he arrived at Masjid al-Nukhaylah (lit: the Masjid of the Little Date Palm),¹⁴ in the district of al-Raqqāqīn.¹⁵ Córdoba, like most medieval cities, had gates through which one had to go in order to enter the city. Córdoba had seven gates.¹⁶ This masjid was located near the Seville Gate, which was on the southwest side of the city near the Guadalquivir River.¹⁷ Here he taught for some time, before Ibn Dhakwān Al-Qādī, at the behest of the ruler al-Muẓaffar 'Abd al-Malik b. Abī 'Āmir, transitioned him to the Central Mosque of Madīnat al-Zāhirah (lit: the flourishing city), a palace-city constructed by al-Muẓaffar's father as a center for administration.¹⁸ Imam

¹² He became a *mujāwir* by engaging in *jiwār* (taking the holy sanctuary as his abode). This is a common expression used in biographical works to indicate that a person dedicated some years to living in the Holy City of Makkah.

¹³ See the Encyclopedia Britannica entry on "Fatimid dynasty."

¹⁴ Some sources mention that the name of the Masjid was Masjid al-Nakhiliyyah (lit: The Masjid of Date Palms).

¹⁵ Some sources mention that this neighborhood is called "al-Zaqqāqīn", while others mention "al-Rawwāqīn." Although these are likely scribal error due to the similarity of these three words in orthography. Based on the historical descriptions, this district seems to be close to the modern-day Barrio del Alcázar Viejo (or San Basilio) as these are the districts located near the Seville Gate today. See <https://www.artencordoba.com/en/almodovar-gate-cordoba/>; and https://owaytours.com/en/blog/walls-and-gates-of-cordoba/#Seville_Gate.

¹⁶ See al-Muqrī al-Tilimsānī, *Nafḥ al-ṭīb min ghuṣn Andalus al-raṭīb*, 1:465.

¹⁷ The Seville Gate (*Bāb Ishbīliyyā*) is also referred to as the Perfumers' Gate (*Bāb al-ʿAṭṭārīn*), presumably because the gate had some historical connection with Perfumers. The Seville gate (Puerta de Sevilla) is located on the Southwest side of the old city, in the direction of the city of Seville. See al-Tilimsānī, *Nafḥ al-ṭīb*, 1:465.

Also see map (<https://goo.gl/maps/YzLpA1KzQMwDDUU6>).

¹⁸ Córdoba was split into three administrative regions: Córdoba, Madīnat al-Zāhirah (Medina Alzahira), and Madīnat al-Zahrā' (Medina Azahara). See al-Tilimsānī, *Nafḥ al-ṭīb*, 1:455. Madīnat al-

Makkī taught at this mosque until the Amirid government (*Dawlat Āl ‘Āmir*) collapsed in 1009 CE.¹⁹ For historical context, this was the beginning of the period of civil war in Andalusia known as the Great Trial (the *Fitnah*) of Andalusia. After the collapse of the Amirid dynasty, Muḥammad II of Córdoba²⁰ transferred Imam Makkī to the Grand Mosque²¹ of Córdoba.²² Here he taught for the entire duration of the *Fitnah*.²³

Thereafter, with the declaration of the new Taifa, the Republic of Córdoba (*Ṭāʾifat Qurṭubah*), the new Emir, Abū al-Ḥazm²⁴ Ibn Jahwar²⁵ b. Muḥammad—a prominent Córdoba²⁶ from the Banū Jahwar clan—gave Imam Makkī the responsibilities of leading the prayer and delivering the Friday sermon at the Grand Mosque of Córdoba. He took over this position permanently after the death of al-Qāḍī²⁷ Yūnus b. ‘Abd Allāh. Previously, Imam Makkī would substitute for Qāḍī Yūnus in giving the Friday sermon. He continued as the *khaṭīb* of Córdoba until his passing. At the Grand Mosque of Córdoba a large number of people benefitted from Imam Makkī, and many perfected their *tajwīd* with him. His recognition spread far and wide during his lifetime and after.

Imam Makkī passed away on Saturday, at the time of Fajr prayer, and was buried on Sunday at mid-morning (*ḍaḥwah*), with two nights remaining of the month of Muḥarram (*laylatayni khalatā min Muḥarram*) in 437 AH²⁸ in Córdoba. He was close to eighty at this time. He was buried in al-Rabaḍ.²⁹ His son Abū Ṭālib Muḥammad

Zāhirah was constructed by al-Muẓaffar’s father, al-Manṣūr. See ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ‘Alī al-Ḥajjī, *al-Tārīkh al-Andalusī: min al-fath al-Islāmī ḥattā suqūṭ Gharnāṭah*, 303-304.

¹⁹ See al-Ḥajjī, *al-Tārīkh al-Andalusī*, 297-320.

²⁰ His full name was Muḥammad b. Hishām al-Mahdī.

²¹ Today this is known as the “Mosque-Cathedral of Córdoba” (Mezquita-Catedral).

²² Some sources mention that he was transferred to al-Masjid al-Khārij of Córdoba (lit: the Mosque of the Outskirts). See Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-aʿyān*, 5:275.

²³ The *Fitnah* lasted for around 22 years, from 1009 to 1031 CE. See al-Ḥajjī, *al-Tārīkh al-Andalusī*, 321-323.

²⁴ The editor of *Muḥjam al-udabāʾ* mentions that one manuscript of that text mentioned his name as “Ḥasan” in it. See al-Ḥamawī, *Muḥjam al-udabāʾ*, 2713.

²⁵ Some sources incorrectly cite this name as “Jawhar.”

²⁶ The sources mention him being a “shaykh” which could either mean a scholar or a notable.

²⁷ His title due to being a judge.

²⁸ This was 1045 CE. See al-Ziriklī, *al-Aʿlām*, 2324.

²⁹ A suburb of Córdoba.

led his funeral prayer, and a very large number of people were present to perform his funeral prayer.³⁰

May Allah ﷻ have mercy on him.

³⁰ See Ibn Bashkuwāl, *al-Ṣilah*, 2:597; al-Dhahabī, *Maʿrifat al-qurrāʾ*, 221.

The Character of Imam Makkī ﷺ

Several biographical works mention the good character of Imam Makkī ﷺ. He is reported to be a good (*khayr*), erudite (*fāḍil*), humble (*mutawāḍiʿ*), religious (*mutadayyin*) individual. Additionally, he was known for the acceptance of his *duʿāʾ*. There are some specific narrations regarding this last trait. One particular story narrated by many biographers demonstrating this is the following.

Abū ʿAbd Allāh al-Ṭarafī³¹ narrated (*ḥakā*) that: in Córdoba we had a man who was hasty (*kāna lahū ḥiddah*), who held some authority over Abū Muḥammad (Imam Makkī). He would sit close to Imam Makkī during the *khuṭbah*, taunting him by, making gestures at him with his eyes. He would count (*yuhṣi*) his *saqaṭāt* (slips of tongue). This was at a time when the shaykh would stammer (*yatalaʿthamu*) and pause frequently. One Friday, this man attended part of the sermon. As per his habit, he began to get visibly agitated (*yaḥuddu al-nazar*) with the shaykh and began to make gestures with his eyes to express this (*yaghmizuhū*). When Imam Makkī exited with us (al-Ṭarafī and other students) later, and we reached the place where he taught Quran, he said to us: "say *āmīn* to my *duʿāʾ*s." Then he raised his hands and said: "O Allah, suffice me of him (i.e., that man)" two or three times.³² Then we all said "*āmīn*". After that, the man became crippled (*aqʿada dhālika al-rajul*) and he was never seen in the Central Mosque again.

³¹ His full name was Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Muṭarrif al-Kinānī al-Qurṭubī. He was known as "al-Ṭarafī" because he was the *imām* in the Central Mosque of Ṭarafah in Córdoba, See Ibn al-Jazarī, *Ghāyat al-nihāyah*, 3:212-213.

³² The manuscripts differ on whether he made this *duʿāʾ* two or three times.

His Main Teachers

His Teachers in Kairouan

- 1) **Abū Muḥammad ‘Abd Allāh b. Abī Zayd ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Nafazī al-Qayrawānī al-Mālikī**: He is one of the most famous scholars of fiqh in the Mālikī Madhhab, referred to as “Mālik Jr.” (*Mālik al-ṣaghīr*). He is said to have summarized the entire madhhab and spread its teachings over the world. Imam Makkī studied *fiqh* with him (*tafaqqaha ‘anhu*). He passed away in 386 AH at the age of 76 and is buried in Kairouan.³³
- 2) **Abū Al-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. Muḥammad b. Khalaf al-Mu‘āfirī Al-Qābisī**: He was born in 324 AH. It is related that he taught Qur’ān for a long time and then stopped when he found out that the ruler (*sulṭān*) had requested from one of his students to recite in his gathering, and that student recited. After this point Abū al-Ḥasan busied himself in *ḥadīth* and *fiqh* studies, becoming an expert in those. He passed away in Kairouan in 403 AH.³⁴

His Teachers in Egypt

- 1) **Abū al-Ṭayyib ‘Abd al-Mun‘im b. ‘Ubayd Allāh b. Ghalabūn al-Ḥalabī, al-Muqri’**: He was born in Aleppo in 309 AH and later moved to Egypt. He wrote “*al-Irshād fī al-qirā’āt al-sab‘*” on seven reading traditions. Imam Makkī heard from him in Makkah and Egypt and he recited the *qirā’āt* to him.³⁵ He passed away in 389 AH.³⁶
- 2) **Abū al-Ḥasan Tāhir b. ‘Abd al-Mun‘im b. ‘Ubayd Allāh b. Ghalabūn b. al-Mubārak al-Ḥalabī**: He was born in Aleppo and later resided in Egypt. Imam Makkī recited the *qirā’āt* to him. He was also one of the primary teachers of Imam Abū ‘Amr al-Dānī. He wrote “*al-Tadhkirah fī al-qirā’āt al-thamān*” a book on eight reading traditions. He studied with his father Abū al-Ṭayyib b.

³³ See al-Dhahabī, *Siyar A‘lām al-nubalā’*, 19:514-515; Muḥammad b. Muḥammad Makhḷūf, *Shajarat al-nūr al-zakiyyah fī ṭabaqāt al-Mālikiyyah*, 1:143-144.

³⁴ See Ibn al-Jazari, *Ghāyat al-nihāyah*, 2:781-782.

³⁵ See Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī, *Bughyat al-wu‘āt*, 298.

³⁶ See Ibn al-Jazari, *Ghāyat al-nihāyah*, 2:555-556.

Ghalabūn, among others, before traveling to Baṣra, Iraq and studying with many teachers there. He passed away in Egypt in 399 AH.³⁷

- 3) **Abū ‘Adī ‘Abd al-‘Azīz b. ‘Alī b. Muḥammad b. Ishāq b. al-Faraj al-Miṣrī (also known as: Ibn al-Imām):** He resided in Egypt and was one of its senior *qurrā’*. His chain to Warsh is the shortest one found in the book “*al-Tajrīd*.” Imam Makkī recited in the reading tradition of Warsh to him. He passed away in 381 AH.³⁸
- 4) **Abū Bakr Muhammad b. Ali b. Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Udfuwī³⁹ al-Miṣrī:** Edfu (*Udfū*) is a town near Aswan in Egypt, where he lived. He was born in 304 AH. He was a lumber merchant (*khashshāb*) by trade. Imam al-Dānī mentions that he only read in the reading tradition of Warsh from Nāfi‘ while leading prayers his whole life, despite having a vast knowledge of the *qirā’āt*. He also authored a large Tafsīr work called “*al-Istighnā fī ‘ulūm al-Qur’ān*.” Imam Makkī heard from him (i.e., attended his class). He passed away in 388 AH. His grave is located in The City of the Dead (*al-Qarāfah*) in Cairo, Egypt.⁴⁰

His Teachers in Makkah

- 1) **Abū al-Ḥasan Ahmad b. Ibrāhīm b. Aḥmad b. ‘Alī b. Firās al-‘Abqasī:** He passed away in 403 AH in Makkah.⁴¹
- 2) **Abū Al-Qāsim ‘Ubayd Allāh b. Muhammad b. Aḥmad b. Ja‘far al-Saqatī:⁴²** He was originally from Baghdad. He then took the Holy Sanctuary as his abode for 40 years. It is reported that while he was in Baghdad he made *du‘ā’* to Allah to allow him to be in Makkah for four years. Before his passing, he heard in a dream someone said to him “O Abū al-Qāsim, you asked for four

³⁷ See Ibn al-Jazarī, *Ghāyat al-nihāyah*, 2:219-220.

³⁸ There is some disagreement about his exact year of death, with some sources reporting 379 AH, and others reporting 380 AH. Ibn al-Jazarī chooses 381 AH as the most accurate date. See Ibn al-Jazarī, *Ghāyat al-nihāyah*, 2:365-366.

³⁹ Imam Ibn al-Jazarī mentions this as “Udhfuwī” and the name of the city as “Udhfū.” The editor of *Ghāyat al-nihāyah* points out that other sources correctly specify it as “Udfuwī” from “Udfū.” See footnote 2 in Ibn al-Jazarī, *Ghāyat al-nihāyah*, 3:494.

⁴⁰ See Ibn al-Jazarī, *Ghāyat al-nihāyah*, 3:494-495.

⁴¹ See al-Dhahabī, *Siyar a‘lām al-nubalā’*, 17:181-183.

⁴² *Ghāyat al-nihāyah* has a typo with this name being called ‘Abd Allāh mistakenly. See editor’s note no. 1 in al-Dhahabī, *Ma‘rifat al-qurrā’ al-kibār*, 395.

(years) and we gave you forty, because a good deed is (met) with ten times its like.” He passed away that year, 406 AH, in Makkah.⁴³

His Teachers in Córdoba

- 1) **Abū al-Muṭarrif ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. ‘Uthmān b. ‘Affān al-Qushayrī:** He was born in Córdoba. Imams Abū ‘Amr al-Dānī, Makkī and others narrated (*ḥadīth*) from him. He was born in 324 AH and passed away in 395 or 396 AH.⁴⁴
- 2) **Abū ‘Uthmān Sa‘īd b. Rashīq al-Zāhid:** He was born in Córdoba. Imam Makkī narrates from him in some of his works. He had a lot of knowledge and a vast transmission, but he disliked large classes. The only students he would teach were those who singularly approached him after he had vetted them for a correct purpose behind their study with him. He passed away in 410 AH.⁴⁵
- 3) **Al-Qāḍī Abū al-Walīd Yūnus b. Muḥammad b. Mughīth: al-Qāḍī Abū al-Walīd Yūnus b. Muḥammad b. Mughīth al-Qurṭubī (also known as: Ibn al-Ṣaffār):** He narrates from (among others) Ibn Jahwar, the ruler in Córdoba. Among his students are Abū al-Walīd al-Bājī, Ibn ‘Attāb, Makkī b. Abī Ṭālib and others. He passed away in 429 AH having crossed 90 years of age.⁴⁶

⁴³ See Ibn al-Najjār, *Dhayl Tārīkh Baghdād*, 2:111-114.

⁴⁴ See Ibn Bashkuwāl, *al-Ṣilah*, 462.

⁴⁵ See Ibn Bashkuwāl, *al-Ṣilah*, 336-337.

⁴⁶ See Makhlūf, *Shajarat al-nūr al-zakiyyah fī ṭabaqāt al-Mālikiyyah*, 1:168-169.

His Main Students⁴⁷

- 1) **Abū ‘Umar Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Khālīd b. Aḥmad b. Mahdī al-Kalā‘ī al-Qurṭubī**: He was born in 394 AH in Córdoba. He read the *qirā’āt* to Imam Makkī and is one of the main sources of the biographical information we have on Imam Makkī’s life. He was the *imām* of the Alexandrian (*al-Iskandarānī*) Mosque. He passed away in 432 AH. Imam Makkī lead the funeral prayer over him.⁴⁸
- 2) **Abū al-Qāsim Khalaf b. Marwān al-Tamīmī al-Qurṭubī al-Warrāq al-Daqqāq Nazīl Ishbīliyah**: He was from Córdoba, studied in Egypt and eventually resided in Sevilla. He lived 86 years and passed away around 440 AH.⁴⁹
- 3) **Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Muṭarrif al-Kinānī⁵⁰ al-Qurṭubī (also known as: al-Ṭarafī)**: He was known as al-Ṭarafī due to him being the *imām* of the Central Mosque in Ṭarafah in Córdoba. He had an astounding knowledge of *qirā’āt* (*kāna ‘ajaban fī-l-qirā’āt*). He was someone who enjoyed being lighthearted and joking frequently (*wa-waṣafūhu bi-l-ma‘rifah wa-l-jalālah wa-kathrat al-mizāḥ wa-l-du‘ābah*). He narrated the incident about Imam Makkī’s accepted *du‘ā* mentioned above.⁵¹ He was born in 387 AH and passed away in 454 AH.⁵²
- 4) **Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Sa‘īd al-Mu‘āfirī al-Andalusī al-Jayyānī⁵³ (known as: Ibn al-Farrā’)**: He read the *qirā’āt* to Imam Makkī. He performed *Ḥajj* at the end of his life and took the Sanctuary as his abode. He passed away in Makkah in 469 AH.⁵⁴
- 5) **Abū Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. ‘Abbās b. Shu‘ayb al-Qurṭubī**: He was born in 391 or 392 AH. He was an

⁴⁷ Imam Makkī’s students have been ordered based on their death dates.

⁴⁸ See main text and footnote on Ibn al-Jazarī, *Ghāyat al-nihāyah*, 1:378.

⁴⁹ See Ibn al-Jazarī, *Ghāyat al-nihāyah*, 2:15.

⁵⁰ Some sources cite this as “al-Kittānī,” which the editor of *Ghāyat al-nihāyah* says is a printing error. See footnote 1 in Ibn al-Jazarī, *Ghāyat al-nihāyah*, 3:213.

⁵¹ See the section titled “The Character of Imam Makkī.”

⁵² See Ibn al-Jazarī, *Ghāyat al-nihāyah*, 3:212-213.

⁵³ This is an attribution to a fortress (*ḥiṣn*) in Andalusia. See footnote 2 on Ibn al-Jazarī, *Ghāyat al-nihāyah*, 3:159.

⁵⁴ See Ibn al-Jazarī, *Ghāyat al-nihāyah*, 3:159.

expert reciter who read the *qirāʾāt* to Imam Makkī multiple times in 422 AH. He passed away in 472 AH at close to 80 years of age.⁵⁵

- 6) **Abū al-Walīd Sulaymān b. Khalaf b. Saʿd b. Ayyūb b. Wārith al-Tujaybī al-Andalusī al-Qurṭubī al-Bājī al-Dhahabī:** He was born in 403 AH in the small town of Beja, Andalusia (modern-day Portugal). Imam Makkī was one of his main teachers. He traveled for thirteen years acquiring knowledge in Makkah, Damascus, Baghdad and Mosul. He eventually became the judge (*qāḍī*) over multiple municipalities. Before he became famous and could survive off his earnings from teaching and judgeship, he worked hard to make a living. In Baghdad he worked as a watchman (*ḥāris*) to guard a mountain pass (*darb*). Later when he was back in Andalusia, he used to work as a goldsmith (*dhahabī*) hammering blocks of gold into thin chains. His students said that Abū al-Walīd would come to class with marks on his hands from hammering all day. Later in life he became quite wealthy. He passed away in Mariyyah in 474 AH.⁵⁶
- 7) **Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. Aṣḥab al-Azdī al-Qurṭubī:** He read the *riwāyāt* to Imam Makkī. He passed away in 477 AH.⁵⁷
- 8) **Abū Muḥammad ʿAbd Allāh b. Sahl b. Yūsuf al-Anṣārī al-Andalusī al-Mursī:** The great *qirāʾāt* transmitter of al-Andalus (*Muqriʾ al-Andalus*). He was a student of both Imam Makkī and Imam Abū ʿAmr al-Dānī among others. He spent 18 years in the company of Imam Abū ʿAmr al-Dānī. He ended up having a misunderstanding with his teacher, Imam Abū ʿAmr, due to which he was exiled from his town (*laḥẓat-hu al-bilād*). He passed away in Rundah in 480 AH.⁵⁸
- 9) **Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. Bashīr al-Maʿāfirī al-Qurṭubī al-Ṣayrafī:** He studied the *qirāʾāt* with Imam Makkī. He passed away in 481 AH.⁵⁹
- 10) **Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm b. Ilyās al-Lakhmī al-Andalusī (known as: Ibn Shuʿayb):** The Shuʿayb mentioned is his maternal grandfather. He studied the *qirāʾāt* with Imams Makkī, al-Mahdawī and Abū

⁵⁵ See Ibn al-Jazarī, *Ghāyat al-nihāyah*, 2:320.

⁵⁶ See al-Dhahabī, *Siyar Aʿlām al-nubalāʾ*, 18:336-337; Makhlūf, *Shajarat al-nūr al-zakiyyah*, 1:177.

⁵⁷ See Ibn al-Jazarī, *Ghāyat al-nihāyah*, 3:588.

⁵⁸ See Ibn al-Jazarī, *Ghāyat al-nihāyah*, 2:436-437.

⁵⁹ See Ibn al-Jazarī, *Ghāyat al-nihāyah*, 3:590-591.

‘Amr al-Dānī. He taught Qur’ān, Arabic and *Ādāb* in the Central Mosque of Mariyya. The last known transmission (*samāʿ*) from him is reported in 481 AH. Thus, he most likely passed away after that.⁶⁰

- 11) **Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. ‘Abd Allāh b. Farah al-Judhāmī al-Ṭulayṭulī (known as: Ibn al-Ilbīrī):** He was an expert and reliable teacher. He was born in 410 AH. He studied the qirāʾāt through recitation and listening combined (*‘arḍan wa samāʿan*) with Imam Makkī and others. He taught for a long time. He passed away in 483 AH.⁶¹
- 12) **Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. ‘Īsā b. Faraj⁶² al-Tujībī al-Maghāmī al-Ṭulayṭilī:** He was born in 422 AH and was an expert reciter who was one of Imam Abū ‘Amr al-Dānī’s main students. He also read to Imam Makkī among others. He was known for his excellent tajwīd and his knowledge of the meanings of the qirāʾāt (*tawjīh al-qirāʾāt*). He passed away in Sevilla in 485 AH.⁶³
- 13) **Abū ‘Imrān Mūsā b. Sulaymān al-Lakhmī:** He resided in Mariyyah and passed away in 494 AH.⁶⁴
- 14) **Abū Bakr Muḥammad b. al-Mufarrij b. Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad al-Baṭālyawsī (also known as: al-Rabawyaluh):** He was a student of both Imam Makkī and Imam Abū ‘Amr al-Dānī among others. There are some questions raised about his strength of narration. He passed away in Mariyyah in 494 AH.⁶⁵
- 15) **Abū al-Ḥusayn Yahyā b. Ibrāhīm b. Abī Zayd al-Lawātī al-Mursī (also known as: Ibn al-Bayyāz):** He was a great scholar (*Imām Kabīr*). He read to Imam Abū ‘Amr al-Dānī, Imam Makkī and many others. He lived a long life (*‘ummira dahrān*). Towards the end of his life, he began to experience weak memory (*ikhtalaṭa fī ākhiri ‘umrih*), and some sources have said that he would

⁶⁰ See Ibn al-Jazarī, *Ghāyat al-nihāyah*, 3:120.

⁶¹ See Ibn al-Jazarī, *Ghāyat al-nihāyah*, 2:751.

⁶² Some sources cite this part of his name as “Ibn Farah.” See footnote 2 in Ibn al-Jazari, *Ghāyat al-nihāyah*, 3:555.

⁶³ See Ibn al-Jazarī, *Ghāyat al-nihāyah*, 3:555.

⁶⁴ See Ibn al-Jazarī, *Ghāyat al-nihāyah*, 3:780.

⁶⁵ See Ibn al-Jazarī, *Ghāyat al-nihāyah*, 3:640-641.

claim to narrate from those he did not meet nor receive authorization (*ijāzah*) from. He passed away in Mursiyyah in 496 AH at the age of 90.⁶⁶

- 16) **Abū Bakr Khāzim b. Muḥammad b. Khāzim al-Shaykh al-Makhzūmī al-Qurṭubī**: He was born in 410 AH. He studied with Imam Makkī, Yūnus b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Qāḍī and others. He had a long life of teaching, however, there is some discussion about his reliability. He passed away in 496 AH.⁶⁷
- 17) **Abū ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Mu‘āwiyah b. Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Mu‘ārik al-Uqaylī al-Qurṭubī**: He was a *ḥāfiẓ* of the Qur’ān and would recite it frequently. He was the assigned *imām* for the obligatory prayers at the Central Mosque of Córdoba, occasionally giving the Friday sermon as a substitute. He read to Imam Makkī. He passed away in 499 AH.⁶⁸
- 18) **Abū Muḥammad ‘Abd Allāh b. Sa‘īd b. Ḥakam al-Zāhid al-Qurṭubī**: He studied the qirā’āt with Imam Makkī and was the last to read to him. He was of the ascetics (*al-zuhhād*) and friends of Allāh (*al-awliyā’*), whose *du‘ā*’s were sought (*al-mutabarrak bi-du‘ā’ihim*). He passed away in 502 AH.⁶⁹
- 19) **Abū Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. al-Muḥaddith Muḥammad b. ‘Attāb b. Muḥsin al-Qurṭubī**: He was born in 433 AH. He recited the Seven to ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad b. Shu‘āyb al-Muqrī, and he received authorization (*ijāzah*) to transmit them from Imam Makkī among others. He is said to be the last of the generation of great scholars of Andalusia (*al-shuyūkh al-jullāh al-akābir*) who had very short chains (*‘uluww al-isnād*) from a vast number of sources (*sa‘at al-riwāyah*). He was also a scholar of Arabic and *Fiqh*. He was born in 433 AH and passed away in 520 AH.⁷⁰

⁶⁶ See main text and footnote in Ibn al-Jazarī, *Ghāyat al-nihāyah*, 4:90-91. Imam al-Dhahabī considers him weak.

⁶⁷ See Ibn al-Jazarī, *Ghāyat al-nihāyah*, 2:4.

⁶⁸ See main text and footnote in Ibn al-Jazarī, *Ghāyat al-nihāyah*, 3:737.

⁶⁹ See Ibn al-Jazarī, *Ghāyat al-nihāyah*, 2:431.

⁷⁰ See al-Dhahabī, *Siyar A‘lām al-nubalā’*, 19:514-515; footnote 4 in Ibn al-Jazarī, *Ghāyat al-nihāyah*, 2:319-320.

His Works

Although the number of works we see authored by Imam Makkī that have been published in modern times is quite small, the authoritative nature of each of those books is a testament to the knowledge, depth and acceptance of the great Imam. Additionally, when we look at the biographical works and catalogues, we find that the number of works Imam Makkī actually compiled was far greater. The contemporary work *al-Imām Makkī b. Abī Ṭālib al-Qaysī wa-juhūduhū* reports that over 80 works were written by Imam Makkī. Of these, there are 12 works that are published, all related to the sciences of the Qur'an. He also has 21 further works in the sciences of the Qur'an which remain unpublished. In addition to this there are 18 other named works in various other sciences like Islamic law, theology, and admonishments (wa'z) that remain unpublished.⁷¹ Overall, there is no doubt that the Imam was a very prolific writer. The named works are listed below, with publishing and manuscript information provided where possible.⁷² The number of volumes are given in parentheses.⁷³

Published Works:

- 1) ***al-Ibānah 'an ma'ānī al-qirā'ah*** (1): this work is one of the three main works of Imam Makkī related to *qirā'āt*. This one particularly deals with the meta-questions related to the canonical recitals. This includes discussions on the *ḥadīth* about the “Seven Aḥruf,” its relationship to the *qirā'āt*, the history of *qirā'āt*, and other theoretical questions about *qirā'āt*.
- 2) ***al-Tabṣīrah fī-l-qirā'āt*** (5): This is one of Imam Makkī's most famous works and is the second of the three main *qirā'āt* works he authored. This work focuses on the actual transmissions of the *qirā'āt* and what the actual

⁷¹ The list below includes additional works attributed to Imam Makkī based on the other biographical sources I consulted.

⁷² 'Alī Riḍā & Aḥmad Ṭawrān, *Mu'jam Tārīkh al-turāth al-Islāmī fī maktabāt al-ʿālam*, 3783-3784. I also referenced the following manuscript catalogues but was unable to find any of the titles mentioned as unpublished below: Fuat Sezgin, *Tārīkh al-Turāth al-ʿArabī*; Carl Brockelmann, *Tārīkh al-Adab al-ʿArabī*; *al-Fahras al-Shāmil li-l-Turāth al-ʿArabī al-Islāmī al-Makhṭūṭ* by Mu'assasat Āl al-Bayt; and al-Furqan Islamic Heritage Foundation's online catalog.

⁷³ These are not modern published volumes, but older manuscript volumes. They give us a rough sense of how long each work is.

differences are, without delving into the why. Imam Makkī mentions that he wrote this in Kairouan in 392 AH.⁷⁴

- 3) ***al-Kashf ‘an wujūh al-qirā’āt wa-‘ilalihā*** (20)⁷⁵: This is the third of the three *qirā’āt* works from Imam Makkī. This work focuses on the why. It discusses grammatical, linguistic, and other literary explanations for the various phenomena found in *qirā’āt*, as well as an explanation of the differences in meaning between various recitals. This work was written at the end of his life in 424 AH.
- 4) ***al-Īdāh li-nāsikh al-qur’ān wa-mansūkhīhī wa ma’rifat uṣūlihī wa-ikhtilāf al-nās fihi*** (3): This book deals with the topic of abrogation related to the verses of the Qur’ān. This is an important topic studied by students of *tafsīr* and Qur’anic Studies. A manuscript is located in Repository of Kairouan in Fes, Morocco.⁷⁶
- 5) ***Tafsīr al-mushkil min gharīb al-Qur’ān al-‘aẓīm*** (3): This work explains difficult vocabulary from the Qur’ān.⁷⁷ Imam Makkī mentions that he wrote this work in Makkah in 389 AH.⁷⁸
- 6) ***Tamkīn al-madd fī atā wa-āmana wa-Ādam***: Based on the title, this work focuses on ensuring the elongation of the long vowel is fully enunciated in the following words: *ātā*, *āmana*, and *Ādam*. This is likely a short article.
- 7) ***al-Ri‘āyah li-tajwīd al-qirā’ah wa-taḥqīq lafẓ al-tilāwah*** (4): this is Imam Makkī’s work on the science of *tajwīd*. It is a groundbreaking work as it is considered one of the first (if not, the first) prose work exclusively on *tajwīd*. It is also considered one of the earliest works offering a comprehensive treatment of the subject.
- 8) ***al-Waqf ‘alā kallā wa-balā fī-l-qur’ān*** (2): this is a short book that discusses a particular issue within the science of *waqf* (where do we stop while reciting the Qur’ān). In particular, it discusses rules of stopping about three special words: *kallā*, *balā*, and *na‘am*.

⁷⁴ See *Ghāyat al-nihāyah*, 3:752.

⁷⁵ Some narrate the title as “*al-Kushūf*” which is likely a typo. Some narrate it as “*al-Bayān*”. See Abū al-Barakāt al-Anbārī, *Nuzhat al-alibbā’*, 254; al-Ḥamawī, *Mu‘jam al-udabā’*, 2713; Jamāl al-Dīn b. Yūsuf al-Qiftī, *Inbāh al-ruwāt ‘alā anbā’ al-nuḥāt*, 315.

⁷⁶ Al-Ziriklī, *al-A‘lām*, 286. Manuscript 80/63.

⁷⁷ I was not able to obtain a copy of this work.

⁷⁸ See *Ghāyat al-nihāyah*, 3:752.

- 9) *Ikhtiṣār al-waqf ‘alā kallā wa balā wa na‘am* (2): This is most likely a summary of the previous work.
- 10) *Sharḥ kallā wa-balā wa-na‘am wa-l-waqf ‘alā kullī wāḥidah minhunna fī kitāb Allah ‘azza wa-jalla*: This is most likely a commentary on the main work on *waqf* mentioned above.
- 11) *Mushkil i‘rāb al-Qur’ān*: Based on the title, this is a work that discusses the grammatical analysis of difficult passages in the Qur’ān. Imam Makkī mentions that he wrote this work in Bayt al-Maqdis in 391 AH.⁷⁹
- 12) *al-Hidāyah ilā bulūgh al-nihāyah fī ‘ilm ma‘ānī al-Qur’ān wa-tafsīrihī wa aḥkāmihī wa-jumal min Funūn ‘ilmihi* (*Tafsīr*) (70): This is Imam Makkī’s massive work of tafsīr which contains discussions related to Uthmanic Orthography, *qirā’āt* and language of the Qur’ān, as well as other commentary.

Unpublished Works, Qur’anic Sciences:⁸⁰

- 1) *al-Yā’āt al-mushaddadah fī-l-qur’ān* (1): a work on the geminated (doubled) *yā’s* in the Qur’ān. One manuscript is reportedly in Damascus.⁸¹
- 2) *Muntakhab al-ḥujjah li-Abī ‘Alī al-Fārisī* (30): Selections from the work *al-Ḥujjah* by Abū ‘Alī al-Fārisī (d. 377 AH) who wrote a book explaining and defending the *qirā’āt* collected by Imam Ibn Mujāhid in his book *al-Sab‘ah*.
- 3) *al-Mūjaz fī-l-qirā’āt* (2): a summarized work on *qirā’āt*. Imam Makkī mentions in *al-Tabṣirah* that he wrote *al-Mūjaz* in 385 AH.⁸²
- 4) *al-Ma’thūr ‘an Mālik fī aḥkāṁ al-qur’ān wa-tafsīrihī* (10): A collection of transmitted commentary from Imam Mālik, the famous jurist, on the genre of *tafsīr*, *Aḥkāṁ al-Qur’ān*, which focuses on legal rulings and discussions.
- 5) *Ikhtiṣār aḥkāṁ al-qur’ān* (4): a summarized work on legal exegesis of the Qur’ān.
- 6) *al-Ījāz fī nāsikh al-qur’ān wa-mansūkhīhī* (1): a shorter work on the topic of abrogated verses.

⁷⁹ See *Ghāyat al-nihāyah*, 3:752.

⁸⁰ I have offered a brief explanation of the title of each work below.

⁸¹ The wording in the manuscript collection is “*nushira fī Dimashq*.” The manuscript number is 14032/1982.

⁸² See *Ghāyat al-nihāyah*, 3:752.

- 7) *al-Zāhī fī-l-luma‘ al-dāllah ‘alā musta‘malāt al-i‘rāb* (4): a work on applied grammar.
- 8) *al-Tanbīh ‘alā uṣūl qirā’at Nāfi‘ wa-dhikr al-ikhtilāf ‘anhu* (2):⁸³ a work on the reading tradition of Imam Nāfi‘ and the varying transmissions from him. There seems to be a manuscript of this work, by the title “Risālah fī-mā khālafa fihi Qālūn Warshan fī-mā rawā ‘an Nāfi’” located in Rabat’s National Library of the Kingdom of Morocco.⁸⁴
- 9) *al-Intiṣāf: fī mā raddahū ‘alā Abī Bakr al-Udfuwī wa za‘ama annahū ghalaṭa fihi fī kitāb al-Ibānah* (3): a rejoinder to Abū Bakr al-Udfuwī’s critique of Imam Makkī’s work *al-Ibānah* (which was mentioned above).
- 10) *al-Risālah ilā aṣḥāb al-Anṭākī fī taṣḥīḥ al-madd li-Warsh* (3): a letter or work written to a group who were companions of al-Anṭākī. The topic of the work is correcting the elongation of the long vowel (*madd*) for the reading system of Warsh.
- 11) *al-Ikhtilāf fī ‘adad al-a‘shār* (1): a work addressing the differences in Qur’ānic divisions based on ten verses.
- 12) *al-Idghām al-kabīr fī-l-makhārij* (1): a work discussing the concept of *al-Idghām al-Kabīr* (assimilation of two voweled consonants).
- 13) *Dukhūl ḥurūf al-jarr ba‘dahā makāna ba‘ḍ* (1): a work discussing prepositions (*ḥurūf al-jarr*) that substitute for each other.
- 14) *al-Tadhkirah li-ikhtilāf al-qurrā’* (1): a work on the differences between the *qurrā’*.
- 15) *Tasmiyat al-aḥzāb* (1): a work on the Qur’ānic divisions known as *ḥizbs* (pl. *aḥzāb*).
- 16) *al-Ḥurūf al-mudghamah* (2): a work discussing the phenomenon of *idghām* in *tajwīd* (merged letters).
- 17) *Sharḥ al-Tamām wa-l-waqf* (4): a work on the science of *waqf*.
- 18) *Mushkil al-ma‘ānī wa-l-tafsīr* (15): a work on the difficult vocabulary of the Qur’ān.
- 19) *Hijā’ al-maṣāḥif* (2): a work on the orthography of the Qur’ān.
- 20) *Intikhāb Kitāb al-Jurjānī fī naẓm al-Qur’ān wa-iṣlāḥ ghalaṭih* (4): Selections (a summary) from al-Jurjānī’s work on the wording of the Qur’ān and Imam Makkī’s critical comments on the work.

⁸³ *Inbāh al-ruwāt* calls this “al-Tibyān.” See al-Qiftī, *Inbāh al-ruwāt*, 3:316.

⁸⁴ *Al-Khizāna al-‘āmmah bil-Rabāt*, Manuscript 283, Fol. 17.

- 21) *Al-Ikhtilāf bayn Qālūn wa-Abī ‘Amr* (1): a short work highlighting the differences between the reading systems of Qālūn and Abū ‘Amr.
- 22) *Al-Ikhtilāf bayn Qālūn wa-Ibn Kathīr* (1): a short work highlighting the differences between the reading systems of Qālūn and Ibn Kathīr.
- 23) *Al-Ikhtilāf bayn Qālūn wa-Ibn ‘Āmir* (1): a short work highlighting the differences between the reading systems of Qālūn and Ibn ‘Āmir.
- 24) *Al-Ikhtilāf bayn Qālūn wa-Ḥamza* (1): a short work highlighting the differences between the reading systems of Qālūn and Ibn ‘Āmir.
- 25) *Al-Ikhtilāf bayn Qālūn wa-al-Kisā’ī* (1): a short work highlighting the differences between the reading systems of Qālūn and al-Kisā’ī.
- 26) *Sharḥ riwāyat al-A‘shā ‘an Abī Bakr ‘an ‘Āṣim* (1): an explanation of the transmission of al-A‘shā from Shu‘bah (Abū Bakr) from ‘Āṣim.
- 27) *Ikhtisār al-alifāt* (1): A summarized discussion on the various *alifs*.
- 28) *Sharḥ al-Farq li-Ḥamzah wa-Hishām* (1): an explanation of the differences between Ḥamza and Hishām’s reading systems.⁸⁵

Unpublished Works, Other Disciplines:

- 1) *Bayān al-ṣaghā’ir wa-l-kabā’ir* (1): a work discussing major and minor sins.
- 2) *Al-Ikhtilāf fī al-dhabīḥ man huwa* (1): a work discussing who was son of Ibrāhīm AS that he sacrificed, Ismā‘īl ﷺ or Ishāq ﷺ.
- 3) *Tanzīh al-malā’ikah ‘an al-dhunūb wa faḍlihim ‘alā banī Ādam* (1): a work that absolves the angels of committing sins and explains the higher rank of the angels as compared to humans.
- 4) *Ikhtilāf al-‘ulamā’ fī-l-nafs wa-l-rūḥ* (1): a work discussing the opinions of the scholars on the concepts “Nafs” and “Rūḥ”.
- 5) *Ījāb al-jazā’ ‘alā qātil al-ṣayd fī-l-ḥaram khaṭa’an ‘alā madhhab al-Imām Mālik, wa-l-ḥujjah fī dhālik* (1): a legal work defending the Mālikī position requiring a penalty for someone who accidentally kills an animal (ṣayd) in the Ḥaram sanctuary.
- 6) *Bayān al-‘amal fī-l-ḥajj awwal al-iḥrām ilā ziyārat qabr Rasūl Allāh ﷺ* (1): a work going over the rituals of Ḥajj, beginning with the *iḥrām* and ending with visiting the grave of the Prophet ﷺ.

⁸⁵ Likely comparing their method of stopping on a word with the letter *hamzah* in it. And Allah ﷻ knows best.

- 7) *Farḍ al-ḥajj ‘alā man istaṭā‘a ilayhi sabīlan* (1): a work discussing the obligation of the Ḥajj for those who have the means to fulfill it.
- 8) *Muntakhab kitāb al-ikhwān li-Ibn Wakī‘* (2): Selections from “*al-Nuzhah fī al-ikhwān*” (A Journey with Brothers) by the writer and poet Ibn Wakī‘ al-Tannīsī (d. 393 AH).
- 9) *al-Riyāḍ* (5): “The Gardens.”
- 10) *al-Muntaqā fī-l-akhbār* (4): a chosen collection of reports.
- 11) *Fahras*: a collection of his travelogues, biographies of his teachers, and the books he wrote and transmits.

His Legacy and Impact on the Qirā'āt, in Particular on the Andalusian Tradition⁸⁶

In the *qirā'āt* there are distinct regional schools that can be seen. These regional schools are discussed to show the diversity of regions where scholars have historically paid special attention to and produced immense contributions to the Qur'anic Sciences. The importance of regional traditions of the Qirā'āt is seen in the selection process that Imam Ibn Mujāhid used to choose seven Canonical Readers.

- 1) **The Ḥijāzī School:** which was transmitted in Madīnah and Makkah: this was the original area where the Qur'an was revealed and there continued to be scholarship on the Qur'anic Sciences there throughout history. The importance of this school is found in the fact that the reading traditions of this region were canonized into the later Qirā'āt tradition. Three of the ten Canonical Reading traditions are from the Hijaz: Imams Abu Ja'far, 'Abd Allāh b. Kathīr and Nāfi'.
- 2) **The Syrian School:** as Islam spread beyond the Arabian peninsula at the time of the Companions ﷺ, one of the places where a school formed was in Syria. This was primarily influenced by the thought and reading system of Imam Ibn 'Āmir.
- 3) **The Iraqi School:** transmitted through Baṣrah and Kūfah: another region where Islam spread to at the time of the companions was Iraq. In particular, the two garrison-cities of Baṣrah and Kūfah became hubs of knowledge with the influx of a large group of scholars. Both cities eventually formed their own distinct schools of *qirā'āt* transmission, which were intertwined with the development of the grammar traditions of these two cities.
- 4) **The Egyptian School:** Egypt entered Muslim control at the hands of 'Amr b. al-ʿĀṣ and subsequently became a strong civilizational force. With the return of Imam Nāfi's student Imam Warsh after studying in Madīnah, his system of recitation became the predominant tradition of the Egyptian school.
- 5) **Western-Andalusian School:** as Islam spread further to the West into North Africa and eventually Andalusia, we see significant scholars of the Qur'an coming from this region and making unique contributions to our tradition.

⁸⁶ Summarized from Kaḥīlah, *Makkī wa juhūdūhū*, 145-155.

Despite Andalusia being a hub of knowledge from the early centuries, it did not receive the various *qirā'āt* until after the 3rd century AH. Until that point the people recited only in the reading tradition of Imam Nāfi' (ؓ) (from the transmission of Imam Warsh (ؓ)). After the entering and subsequent flourishing of the Qur'ānic sciences in Andalusia, the crowning achievement of the Western-Andalusian School was to produce three major scholars of the *Qirā'āt*: Makkī b. Abī Ṭālib al-Qaysī, Abū 'Amr al-Dānī, and Ibn Shurayḥ (ؓ). The first two are considered among the most important scholars of our tradition. An indication to the thriving academic environment in Andalusia at this time, is that Imam Makkī chose to settle there and engage in teaching and engaging the scholarly discussions there.

The Western-Andalusian School, and Imam Makkī as its jewel, had a strong emphasis on a deep learning of the language system of the Qur'ān. In this school, the concept of “the most eloquent” (*tarjih al-aḥṣaḥ*) is a guiding principle when choosing a stronger *qirā'ah*. Imam Makkī's deep understanding of the Qur'ānic and Arabic sciences lead to his recognition as one of the figureheads of this school. In subsequent generations, his students and works spread far and wide, until today when his name has become one of the most important names in the sciences of the Qur'ān.⁸⁷

⁸⁷ Summarized from Kaḥīlah, *Makkī wa-Juhūduhū*, 138-155.

Concluding Remarks

After going through this small journey through the life of Imam Makkī ؑ, I pray that the reader and I are encouraged to continue learning about the shining luminaries that helped to preserve the Qur'an throughout Islamic history. By studying and analyzing the lives of these giants who had internalized the message of the Qur'an, we can hope to gain points of reflection and wisdom that we can apply to our lives. Additionally, the names we find scattered all throughout books of *qirā'āt* and *tajwīd* will hopefully have some more meaning to them. When we see the name Imam Makkī b. Abī Ṭālib, we will remember the great travel and struggle he went through in his acquisition of knowledge. We remember how he ended up leaving his homeland permanently, and that it was a foreign land which preserved his legacy and his works. We do not know what service Allah ؑ wants to take from us in this world and where and how we will be able to partake in it. We should never stop finding opportunities to engage with and grow in our understanding of the Qur'an.

I originally finished writing a draft of this work on August 19, 2023, but Allah ؑ did not will for it to be published until a few months later. I finally was able to complete working on this on October 12, 2023. As our Palestinian brothers and sisters sit on the cusp of brutal destruction under the apartheid regime, I would like to request from every reader that they take a few moments to make a heartfelt *du'ā'* for the Palestinian people and all the oppressed Muslims across the globe. May Allah ؑ grant them ease, patience and victory. *Āmīn*.

We ask Allah ؑ to send his mercy and blessings upon Imam Makkī ؑ and to grant him forgiveness. We also pray to Allah ؑ to grant us the opportunity to one day meet the Imam in the company of our Beloved Prophet ﷺ and all of our teachers in the gardens of Jannah. *Āmīn*.

And Allah ؑ knows best.

Basil Farooq

October 12, 2023

San Jose, CA

Biographical Sources (Ordered Chronologically)

I referenced fifteen biographical works in documenting the life of Imam Makkī. The author of the earliest of these passed away in 488 AH (roughly 50 years after the passing of Imam Makkī), while the most recent work was published in 1992 (roughly 31 years ago). Further details are given in the bibliography. They are listed in chronological order as follows:

- 1) *Jadhwat al-muqtabis fī Tārīkh ‘ulāmā’ al-Andalus* – al-Ḥumaydī (d. 488 AH).
- 2) *Nuzhat al-alibbā’ fī ṭabaqāt al-udabā’* – Abū al-Barakāt Ibn al-Anbārī (d. 577 AH).
- 3) *Al-Ṣilah* – Ibn Bashkuwāl (lived 494-578 AH).
- 4) *Bughyat al-multamis fī tārīkh rijāl al-Andalus* – al-Ḍabbī (d. 599 AH).
- 5) *Inbāh al-ruwāt ‘an anbāh al-nuḥāt* – al-Qiftī (d. 624 AH)..
- 6) *Mu‘jam al-udabā’* – Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī (lived 574-626 AH).
- 7) *Wafayāt al-a‘yān* – Ibn Khallikān (lived 608-681 AH).
- 8) *Ma‘rifat al-qurrā’ al-kibār* – al-Dhahabī (673-748 AH) [authored in 716-718 AH].
- 9) *Siyar a‘lām al-nubalā’* – al-Dhahabī (lived 673-748 AH) [authored in 739 AH].
- 10) *Ghāyat al-nihāyah* – Ibn al-Jazarī (lived 751-833AH).
- 11) *Bughyat al-wu‘āt fī ṭabaqāt al-lughawīyyīn wa-l-nuḥāt* – Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī (lived 849-911 AH).
- 12) *Shajarat al-nūr al-zakiyyah fī ṭabaqāt al-Mālikiyyah* – Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. ‘Umar b. Qāsim Makhlūf (d. 1360 AH).
- 13) *Al-A‘lām* – Khayr al-Dīn al-Ziriklī (lived 1310-1396 AH).
- 14) *Mu‘jam ḥuffāz al-Qur‘ān ‘abr al-tārīkh* – Muḥammad Sālim Muḥaysin (lived 1349-1422AH).
- 15) *Makkī wa-Juhūdūhū* (a collection of short articles on Imam Makkī in Arabic by contemporary researchers written in 2016).

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