

## QIRA'AH INTERPRETATION ON Q.S. AL-MAIDAH [5]:6: Shia Perspectives from Makârim Shirazî and Ṭabâṭabâ'î

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### *Abstract*

The interpretations of Q.S. al-Mâidah [5]:6 by Makârim Shirazî and Ṭabâṭabâ'î focus on the meaning and practical implication of wudu, particularly concerning the word 'arjulakum' which holds two possible meanings based on different qirâ'ah. These differences generate various understandings and be distinguishing factors among Islamic mazhabs. One of them is Shia which considers the recitation a key basis for performing five obligatory prayers. This article presents and analyzes the interpretation of Q.S. al-Mâidah [5]:6 by Makârim Shirazî and Ṭabâṭabâ'î, two prominent exegetes in Shia tradition. The study adopts a qualitative approach using descriptive-analytical methods and is conducted through library research. Data were analyzed using content analysis. The findings reveal that both exegetes center their interpretation on the word 'wa arjulakum', read either with a fathah or a kasrah. Shirazî and Ṭabâṭabâ'î, along with majority of Shia scholars, affirm and favor the qirâ'ah with kasrah (wa arjulikum), implying the command to wipe (rather than wash) the feet during wudu. This distinction is also reflected in their explanations regarding the extent of the area to be wiped. This tafsir implication shows obedience to teaching conveyed by ahl al-bayt, and strengthens the main principal in Shia that Quranic interpretation is closely intertwined with hadiths originating from

*ahl al-bayt. The article contributes to a broader discourse on interpretive framework within Islamic traditions, highlighting Shia interpretations of qirâ'ah and narration which shape ritual practice. It also provides a detailed case study of how linguistic variation affects Islamic legal thought.*

**Keywords:** Makârim Shirazî; qirâ'ah, Shia; Ṭabâṭabâ'î; wudu

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## Introduction

*Mazhab* (Islamic schools of thought) differences often become the influential factors in the procedure of *wudu* (ablution) practice, both within Sunni and Shia communities (Rohmansyah 2018). One of the fundamental differences in *wudu* practice between the two groups is whether the feet must be washed or only wiped (Tangngareng et al. 2024). Although this difference may look insignificant, it has implication in *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence) and reflects variety of tafsirs/interpretations and Islamic legal methodology that has developed across various Muslim communities. In social context, this seemingly minor distinction can trigger dispute and tension, both in everyday interactions and in academic discourse, especially in areas dominated by certain *mazhab* (Bunyan 2018). Moreover, in the modern era, issues such as water scarcity, long-distance travel condition, and evolving contemporary *fiqh*, also impact how society comprehend the procedures and rulings of *wudu*.

Discussion of Q.S. al-Mâidah [5]:6 has attracted scholars' attention from the classical period to the present. Several classical tafsirs/exegeses such as al-Ṭabarî and al-Qurṭubî are frequently cited in Sunni's discussion. Al-Qurṭubî explains that this verse offers concessions (*rukhsah*) for individuals who are ill, traveling, or unable to find water, allowing them to perform *tayammum* (dry ablution). He also discussed the linguistic aspects of the verse, stating that it is not obligatory to wash the entire face evenly, partial washing of the visible part is sufficient, according to the statement of Imam Izzuddîn ibn Abdissalâm. Al-Qurṭubî emphasizes that the verse intends to give ease and purity for Muslims in performing worship (Zaini & Wahid 2025, 141). Meanwhile, Shia exegeses such as Tafsir al-Mizân by Ṭabâṭabâ'î and Tafsir al-Amtsâl by Makârim Shirazî are widely cited within Shia community. Both are different in interpretive

style-Makârim Shirazî tends to adopt *adab ijtimâ'i*, while Ṭabâṭabâ'î is more philosophical.

A review of previous studies on the interpretation of Q.S. al-Mâidah [5]:6 reveals three major trends. First is the legal analysis of *wudu* in *mazhab*'s perspective, as seen in Ladiya Majid's work. The study shows that Imam Abû Ḥanîfah interprets the letter *wâw*, serving as a conjunction, in the aforesaid verse as *wâw lil mutlaqil jam'i* (a *wâw* that denotes general inclusion rather than sequential order), while Imam Syafi'i views it as *wâw li al-tartib*, indicating required order, that one's ablution is invalid if not performed in sequence (Majid 2023).

The second trend involves linguistic review on the interpretation of the preposition (*harf jar*) *bi* in the phrase "*bi ru'ûsikum*" (your heads) in Q.S. al-Mâidah [5]:6, regarding the extent of the obligatory wiping of the head in *wudu*. This analysis is written in Samsuri Ahmad's work focusing on Tafsir al-Munir by Wahbah Az-Zuhaili. Wahbah argues that preposition *bi* in this context serves as *ba li al-tab'idh*, meaning 'partiality'. This argument is in accordance with *mazhabs* of Syafi'i and Hanafi who interpret it to explain that wiping part of the head is sufficient (Ahmad 2024). Similar reviews were also conducted by Mirsan and Andi Abdul Hamzah (Mirsan & Hamzah, 2022) and Nur Asdaliah's team (Asdaliah et al. 2022).

The third trend discusses *qirâ'ah* (variant Quranic recitations) aspect in verses related to *taharah* (purification), including Q.S. al-Mâidah [5]:6, as studied by Ahmad Hakim. In his work, discussions on *qirâ'ah* and tafsir are distinguished, though his main focus is on al-Qurṭubî's version of *qirâ'ah*. Al-Qurṭubî cites several *qirâ'ah* variants along with the views of the *Sahaba* (the Companions of the Prophet). Differences in *qirâ'ah* in verses regarding *taharah*, particularly concerning the word *wa arjulakum* in Q.S. al-Mâ'idah [5]:6, influence the process of *istinbat* (legal deduction), leading to distinct interpretations among scholars (Hakim 2021).

Despite various preceding studies, there remains a gap in the literature regarding the *qirâ'ah* interpreted by Shia scholars. Particularly, no elaborate discussion has yet been conducted on how Shia scholars construct their fiqh arguments based on their interpretation of Q.S. al-Mâidah [5]:6. Hence, in attempt to reach comprehensive understanding, the current study fills the gap by exploring and analyzing the *qirâ'ah* adopted by the two leading Shia scholars, Makârim Shirazî and Ṭabâṭabâ'î, in their interpretation of *wudu*. This study explains how the *qirâ'ah* of the

said verse is understood from the perspective of both figures and its implications for fiqh within the Shia tradition. Therefore, this article contributes not only to comprehend the interpretation, but also enriches the academic discourse on *qirâ'ah* of the verse. Broadly, the study of Shia scholars' interpretation of *qirâ'ah* in Q.S. al-Mâidah [5]:6 reveals that the differences in Quranic recitation contributes to the diversity of Islamic legal.

### Research Method

This study employs a qualitative approach using descriptive-analytical methods to review and present Shia scholars' interpretations of Q.S. al-Mâidah [5]:6. The authors describe and analyze Makârim Shirazî and Ṭabâtabâ'î's interpretations regarding *wudu*, as written in their explanation of the Quranic verse. This is a library-based study with primary sources consisting of the *qirâ'ah* and exegetical works of Makârim Shirazî and Ṭabâtabâ'î related to Q.S. al-Mâidah [5]:6. To support the primary analysis, the study also refers to other relevant literatures, including other Shia exegeses, fiqh texts, academic articles, and other supporting sources to provide more focused and comprehensive analysis. The collected data is analyzed using content analysis methodology, involving some stages: a general explanation of *qirâ'ah* and its existence within Shia community, categorization of interpretations covering *qirâ'ah* explanations of Makârim Shirazî and Ṭabâtabâ'î, and an elaboration of how these interpretations impact *wudu* rulings within the Shia *mazhab*.

### Results and Discussion

#### Definition and Perspectives of Shia Exegetes on Qirâ'ah

In Quranic terminology, *qirâ'ah* means the method of reciting and articulating the verses of the Quran (Ramadhan et al. 2023). Zarkasyi defines *qirâ'ah* as variation in pronouncing the Quranic *lafaz* (words), including differences in letters and enunciation such as *takhfif* (lightening), *tasqîl* (intensifying), and others (Zarkasyi 2006). Al-Zarqani adds that *qirâ'ah* means one of *mazhab* of articulation (vocabulary) of the Quran adopted by one of *imam qirâ'ah*, which differs from other *mazhabs*, whose transmission (*riwayat*) and methodology are either accepted or agreed upon. The differences involve letters' pronunciation and lexical variations (Al-Zarqani 2001). *Qirâ'ah* is related to the concept of *sab'ah*

*ahruf* (The Seven Forms) of the Quran. From the beginning to the end, the Quran exhibits variation of the seven forms: (1) differences in *isim* (noun forms); (2) *fi'il* (verb forms); (3) *i'rab* (grammatical inflection); (4) the addition or omission of letters; (5) variation in the arrangement of words, whether *taqdîm* (advanced) or *ta'khîr* (delayed); (6) variation in the interpretation of letters or words; and (7) variation in dialect.

There are many definitions of *qirâ'ah* expressed in varying wordings, but in essence, they share the same meaning. For example, even though there are multiple ways to recite the Quran, they all originate from a single source, namely the Prophet Muhammad (Wathoni 2021). Essentially, *qirâ'ah* is related to two forms: first, variations in reciting the Quran as practiced by different *imams*; second, recitation of verses in the Quran based on *mutawâtir* (mass-transmitted) narrations from the Prophet.

Shia exegetes (*mufasir*) have varied perspectives regarding *qirâ'ah*, particularly in relation to diversity among the leaders of schools of the Quran reciters (*imam* of *qirâ'ah*). However, majority of Shia exegetes regards these differences as normal and not significantly problematic. Some of them argue that the *qirâ'ah* preserved today are not *mutawâtir*. Those who hold this standpoint believe that only the *qirâ'ah* transmitted by Imam Hafs meets the criteria of reliable transmission, while other *qirâ'ah* do not. This opinion contradicts with the Sunni stance, affirming that the seven *qirâ'ah* (*qirâ'ah al-sab'ah*) are all *mutawâtir* (Sumin 2015). More controversially, some Shia scholars have claimed that the Quran currently available to Muslims is not the original version. They argue that it has undergone alteration, including alleged distortions done by the Prophet's Companions (Zahabi 2008).

Over time, some Shia exegetes have acknowledged and accepted the existence of *qirâ'ah* in their works. *Qirâ'ah* is often used as a tool to help them interpret the Quran. One of exegetes states in his work that the Shia *Imams* allow reciting the well-known *qirâ'ah* from reputable *qurra'* (professional class of reciters). These differences in opinion are because of the diversity of thought and view among Shia exegetes and are considered as a natural phenomenon. Zahabi also mentions that *qirâ'ah* transmitted through the line of al-Sulâmî is from Imam Alî ra. Hafs ibn Sulaiman reported from Aşim, "The *qirâ'ah* I have taught you is the one I received from Abi Abdurrahman al-Sulâmî, from Alî ra" (Ma'rifat n.d.).

Therefore, it is unsurprising that in the book *Tasis al-Shiah lil Ulûm al-Islâm*, Âşim is considered as someone inclined toward Shia and is also recognized as one of the seven most prominent *qurra'* in Islamic history. This is closely related to his scholarly background, as he was a student of the eminent scholar Abû abdurrahmân al-Sulamî, who has close connection with Alî ibn Abî Tâlib, a figure widely acknowledged for his Shia affiliation (Sofiudin 2018).

### **The Authority of Scholars and Imams in the Shia Qirâ'ah Tradition**

The authority of scholars and *imams*, in the Shia tradition, plays a vital role in preserving, interpreting, and transmitting the recitation of Quranic verses within their communities. Shia adherents see *qirâ'ah* not merely as variant recitations, but as deeply intertwined with the knowledge legitimacy and spiritual authority of the *imams*, who are believed to inherit the knowledge from the Prophet Muhammad. This is unlike the Sunni approach, which emphasizes *mutawâtir qirâ'ah* based on scholars' consensus and the selection of the seven *imams* of *qirâ'ah* conducted on the basis of scholars' agreed-upon criteria, expertise in *qirâ'ah* science, and textual consistency (Mustopa 2014). In contrast, Shia places greater emphasis on *qirâ'ah* considered *sahih* (authentic), especially those sourced from Imam Alî ibn Abî Tâlib and *ahl al-bayt* (Adelia 2020).

Some Shia exegetes have distinct perspectives in responding to the development of various *qirâ'ah* within the Islamic tradition. Some argue that the existing *qirâ'ah* does not reach the degree of *mutawâtir*, thus raising questions about their authenticity and reliability (Abidin 2018). They explain that most of the current *qirâ'ah* have been altered, except the *qirâ'ah* of Hafz which, they believe, has a clear and reliable chain of transmission, maintains a more solid continuity, and is better aligned with principles ingrained in their spiritual and intellectual tradition to secure the originality of the Quran (Adelia 2020). Meanwhile, other exegetes continue to accept the existing *qirâ'ah* variation and allow reciting from the *qirâ'ah sab'ah*, even though they are not considered *mutawâtir* (Ramadhan et al. 2023). This distinction in perspectives highlights the broad spectrum of thought within Shia scholarly tradition, particularly concerning the understanding of *qirâ'ah* authority.

One of prominent figures in Shia *qirâ'ah* tradition is Âşim, a renowned *imam* and *qari* (a proficient reciter of the Quran) whose chain of transmission (*sanad*) is connected to Imam Alî ibn Abî Tâlib through

al-Sulamî. In Shia perspective, this chain is significant because Imam Ali is considered as a primary source in religious knowledge after the Prophet Muhammad, including in the field of *qirâ'ah*. Therefore, Âsim's *qirâ'ah* is often associated with the intellectual heritage of the *ahl al-bayt* which, in Shia's view, has prioritized and unique position as the inheritors of Islamic religious authority. It is worth noting that the *riwayah* (transmission) of Hafs from Âsim has become the dominant standard of Quranic recitation throughout the Muslim world today and is used by the majority of Muslim globally (Ramadhan et al. 2023).

In addition to Hafs, Âsim also had a student, Syu'bah, whose transmission chain connects through Zirr ibn Hubaish, who narrated from Abdullah ibn Mas'ûd. Both were principal disciples of Âsim. However, due to difference in transmission methods, variations surfaced in the recitation of certain verses, including Q.S. al-Mâidah [5]:6 which is the focus of this current study. Accordingly, the roles of scholars and *imams* in Shia tradition are beyond safeguarding the authenticity of Quranic recitation, it also signifies the broader affirmation of religious authority. The *imams* are considered as transmitters, but also as authoritative interpreters in comprehending and transmitting the Quran.

Beyond the authoritative figures or *imams*, the validity of recitation of Quranic verses also depends on meeting a particular set of criteria established by scholars. If these conditions are not met, the *qirâ'ah* is categorized in *shâdzdzah* (irregular or exceptional). In his work *al-Tamhîd fî Ulûm al-Qurân*, Hadi Ma'rifah outlines three main conditions for a *qirâ'ah* to be deemed valid and permissible for practice in Islamic worship. First, the recitation must be in agreement with the consensus of the early Muslim community regarding the wording, script, and main discussion of the Quran. Second, the recitation must comply with the most eloquent form of Arabic and be verifiable according to the established rules of classical Arabic (*fusha*). Third, the recitation must not contradict definitive (*qat'i*) evidences, whether based on reason, *mutawâtir* Sunnah, or authentic (*sahih*) *riwayah* accepted by the *imams*. If these three conditions are fulfilled, the *qirâ'ah* cannot be classified as *shâdzdzah* (Ramadhan et al. 2023).

Furthermore, in the standpoint of Shia *Ithnâ Ashariyah* (The Twelvers), the authority of *qirâ'ah* is also determined by the concept of *imamah*. The *Imam* is not merely a spiritual leader, but also the guardian



of Islam's purity. An *imam* is the leader of the *ummah* (community) who is appointed divinely and has full authority in interpreting and establishing religious laws. As a result, the understanding of Quranic *qirâ'ah* in Shia tradition is not only based on strong *sanad* (chains of transmission), but also on the guidance of the *imams*, who are considered to have '*ilm laduni* (divinely inspired knowledge) and profound comprehension of the meanings of Quranic verses. The *imams* have a special role as intermediaries between the *ummah* and divine revelation because their statements hold legal authority equivalent to *nash syara'* (authoritative legal texts). Every ruling, *fatwa*, or interpretation conveyed by *imams* is a part of Sharia, and must be adhered to by their followers (Fithrotin 2022).

### The Differences Between Mutawâtir and Shâdzdzah Qirâ'ah from Shia Perspective

The differences between *mutawâtir* and *shâdzdzah qirâ'ah* is a fundamental aspect in the study of *qirâ'ah*, as a basis for determining the validity of a Quranic recitation. Sunni and Shia hold dissimilar point of view on the issue, particularly regarding the status of the *qirâ'ah sab'ah* which is widely accepted within Sunni scholarly tradition (Mulyono 2015). In contrast, within Shia scholarly discourse, the concept of *mutawâtir qirâ'ah* is often related to the authority of the *ahl al-bayt*. Shia scholars maintain that a *mutawâtir* recitation must be strongly supported by *sanad* acknowledged by the *imams* of *ahl al-bayt*, who are deemed to have authority in conveying religious knowledge, including *qirâ'ah*. In Shia perspective, the difference between *mutawâtir* and *shâdzdzah qirâ'ah* can be approached from several point of views.

First, a *mutawâtir qirâ'ah* is the one narrated through numerous chains of transmission (*sanad*) that reach the Prophet Muhammad. According to the tradition or customary standards, it is impossible for scholars to agree on fabrication. This case includes the *qirâ'ah sab'ah*, attributed to the seven *imams* of *qirâ'ah*: Nâfi', Ibn Katsîr, Abû 'Amr, Ibn 'Amr, Âsim, Hamzah and al-Kisâ'i (Jamal & Putra 2020). Nevertheless, Shia scholars differ in their response to the *mutawâtir* status of the *qirâ'ah sab'ah*. Some scholars reject its classification as *mutawâtir*, regarding it instead as the result of *ijtihad* (independent reasoning) by the *qurra'* and argue that it only holds the status of *ahad* (falling short of *mutawâtir* standards) (Adelia 2020).



Second, *shâdzdzah qirâ’ah* is defined as any recitation that does not meet the conditions of a valid *qirâ’ah*, such as incompatibility with Arabic grammar or the absence of a compelling *sanad*. In other words, this *qirâ’ah* is deemed unauthentic (Jamal & Putra 2020). If any of the conditions of valid *qirâ’ah* are not met, the recitation is classified as *shâdzdzah* and is not permissible to be implemented in recitation (Adelia 2020). Table 1 presents the brief explanation of the key differences between *mutawâtir* and *shâdzdzah qirâ’ah*.

Table 1  
Differences Between *Mutawâtir* and *Shâdzdzah Qirâ’ah*

Aspects	Mutawâtir	Shâdzdzah
Sanad	Transmitted through a continuous <i>sanad</i> that reaches the Prophet Muhammad.	The <i>sanad</i> does not reach the Prophet Muhammad (unqualified as <i>mutawâtir</i> )
Number of Transmitters	Narrated by numerous transmitters who are mostly impossible to form a consensus to deceive (in accordance with the conditions set by an authoritative <i>Imam</i> )	Narrated by limited number of transmitters or certain individuals.
Implementation in Worship	Valid for use in prayer and other acts of worship.	Unable to use in prayer and other acts of worship, unless for academic discussion.
Conformity with The Uthmani Codex	In accordance with the Uthmani Codex.	Not aligned with the Uthmani Codex.

Table 1 clarifies that the differences between *mutawâtir* and *shâdzdzah qirâ’ah* are not limited to the number of transmitters. It also involves the standards of codification and the recognized religious authority within an Islamic tradition. From a Shia perspective, the religious authority in question refers to the authority of transmissions originating from *ahl al-bayt* (Baharun 2007). *Qirâ’ah* transmitted through *ahl al-bayt* is considered as more authentic than the *ijtihad* of *Imam Qurra’*.

Therefore, although the *qirâ'ah sab'ah* is widely accepted within the Sunni's scholarly tradition as *mutawâtir*, its status remains contested within Shia perspective as it does not fully trace back to the *ahl al-bayt*.

### **Brief Biographies of Makârim Shîrâzî and Ṭabaṭabâ'î**

Makârim Shîrâzî is a prominent scholar and a leading figure in the Twelver Shia (*Ithnâ Ashariyah*) tradition, known by the title *Ayatullâh 'Uzmâ*. His father named him Naṣîr ibn Makârim ibn Muhammad Karîm ibn Muhammad Bâqir when he was born in 1345 AH/1926 CE in the city of Shîrâzî. He is commonly referred to as Naṣîr Makârim Shîrâzî. He came from a devout, esteemed, and well-educated family that is loyal to the *mazhab* of *ahl al-bayt*. Makârim Shîrâzî received his primary and secondary education in his hometown (Putri 2024). In Rajab 1361 AH/August 1942 CE, he shifted his academic focus from general to Islamic religious sciences. At the age of 16, he enrolled in the *Hawzah Ilmiyyah* (seminary) of Agha Baba Khan, where he began studying religious sciences and Arabic disciplines, such as *Fiqh*, *Ushul Fiqh*, Logic, *Ma'ânî*, *Bayân*, *Badî*, *Nahw*, and *Sarf*, under distinguished scholars including *Abû al-Qâsim al-Khû'i* (d. 1984 CE) and *Abd al-Hâdi al-Shîrâzî* (d. 1962 CE).

Sayyid Muhammad Husain Ṭabaṭabâ'î, whose full name is 'Allamâh Sayyid Muhammad Husain ibn al-Sayyid Muhammad Husain ibn al-Mizan 'Ali Asghar Shaikh al-Islam al-Tabataba'i al-Tabrizi al-Qâdi, was born in the city of Tabriz, on 29 Zulhijjah 1321 AH/1892 CE. He was a descendant of al-Hasan Canister 'Ali (Attamimi & Nurhayati 2023). In 1903 CE, he moved to Najf City where he resided for ten years and studied various disciplines of Islamic sciences, including Islamic Philosophy. He learned from the eminent teacher Mirza 'Alî al-Qâdî until he reached the level of *ma'rifah* (gnosis) and *kashf* (spiritual unveiling) (Anshori 2022, 80). Ṭabaṭabâ'î passed away in Aban, in the city of Qum, on 18 Muharram 1412 AH (November 15, 1991 CE), after a long illness. In recognition of his contributions, one of the universities in Iran was named after him.

### **Analysis of the Qirâ'ah of Makârim Shirazî and Ṭabaṭabâ'î on Q.S. al-Ma'idah [5]:6**

This section presents exegetical approaches and *qirâ'ah* adopted by two leading Shia scholars, Makârim Shîrâzî and Ṭabaṭabâ'î, on Q.S. al-

Mâ'idah [5]:6. This verse serves as an essential reference in Shia jurisprudence concerning *wudu* (ablution).

*Exegetical Approach of Q.S. al-Mâ'idah [5]:6 in the Thought of Makârim Shirazî*

This part explores Makârim Shirazî's interpretation and *qirâ'ah* of Q.S. al-Mâ'idah [5]:6. It highlights how *qirâ'ah* and interpretations contribute to the broader development of Islamic legal and ritual practice. Allah addresses the ritual acts of purification in Q.S. al-Mâ'idah [5]:6,

"O you who have believed, when you rise to (perform) prayer, wash your faces and your forearms to the elbows and wipe over your heads and your feet to the ankles. And if you are in a state of *janabah*, then purify yourselves. But if you are ill or on a journey or one of you comes from the place of relieving himself or you have contacted women and do not find water, then seek clean earth and wipe over your faces and hands with it. Allah does not intend to make difficult for you, but He intends to purify you and complete His favor upon you that you may be grateful."

Differences in interpretation among scholars regarding the verse have led to variations in purification rituals, which consists of three points: performing *wudu*, taking a ritual bath (*ghusl*) for *janabah*, and practicing *tayammum* (dry ablution). Makârim Shirazî categorizes the verse within subthemes, such as the purification of body and soul, the philosophy of *wudu* and *tayammum*, and the philosophy of bathing. The variant of *qirâ'ah* in this verse centers on the word "*wa arjulakum*" (and your feet), which can be read with a *fathah* (*wa arjulakum*) or a *kasrah* (*wa arjulikum*). Those who recite it with a *fathah* interpret the word as the object (*maf'ul*) of the imperative verb "*faghsilû*" (wash), thus implying that the feet must be washed during *wudu*. Meanwhile, those who recite it with a *kasrah* understand the word as modified by the preceding preposition "*bi*" from the phrase "*bi ru'ûsikum*". As a result, it implies that the feet are to be wiped rather than washed (Shirazî 2013).

In his interpretation, Shirazî elaborates on the procedure of *wudu* according to Shia jurisprudence, grounded in evidence transmitted from *ahl al-bayt*. First, he states that Q.S. al-Mâ'idah [5]:6 does not explicitly explain the boundaries of the face. The vertical extent is from the hairline on the forehead to the tip of the chin, while the horizontal extent spans from the thumb to the middle finger. Second, the verse mentions that the arms must be washed to the elbows. It does not mean to command people

to begin washing arms from the fingertips up to the elbows, as usually done by people, but rather clarifies the extent. A hadith from the *ahl al-bayt* (though not cited directly in his elaboration) illustrates that the correct method begins from the elbows down to the fingertips.

Third, Shirazî discusses the preposition “bi” in the phrase “*bi ru’ûsikum*” (wipe over your heads), noting that while the classical linguists interpret it to indicate partiality, the *fiqh* of *ahl al-bayt* defines it as wiping a quarter of the head. This contrasts with the Sunni position, which requires wiping the entire head, including the ears. Fourth, the word “*arjulikum*” is treated as a genitive coordinate (*ma’tûf majrûr*) of “*bi ru’ûsikum*”, not as an accusative coordinate (*ma’tûf mansûb*) of “*wujûhikum*” (your faces). Fifth, the word “*ka’b*” (ankle) in Arabic bears multiple meanings, including the joint connecting the leg to the foot, the back of the foot, or the ankle. From these five points, Shirazî conveys a coherent view of *wudu* practices according to Shia *mazhab*, grounded in the recitation of the verse and its interpretation. His argument affirms the legitimacy of performing *wudu* in a manner which is different with Sunni practice and shows how variations in *qirâ’ah* and interpretation contribute to the diversity of Islamic ritual laws.

#### *Exegetical Approach of Q.S. al-Mâ'idah [5]:6 in the Thought of Ṭabāṭabā'î*

Sayyid Muhammad Husain Ṭabāṭabā'î is another prominent scholar within Shia community. His work, *Tafsir Al-Mizan*, is considered comprehensive and has a deep analytical exegetical contribution. Ṭabāṭabā'î's exegetical approach is characterized by a philosophical method that systematically explores intertextual relationships between Quranic verses. In his interpretation of Q.S. al-Mâ'idah [5]:6, he draws a direct connection to Q.S. al-Nisa' [4]:43, arguing that both verses in the Quran contain legal provisions that serve as proofs (*hujjah*) for the Muslim community in deriving rulings. The Q.S. al-Nisa' [4]:43 means,

“O you who have believed, do not approach prayer while you are intoxicated until you know what you are saying or in a state of *janabah*, except those passing through (a place of prayer), until you have washed (your whole body). And if you are ill or on a journey or one of you comes from the place of relieving himself or you have contacted women and find no water, then seek clean earth and wipe over your faces and your hands (with it). Indeed, Allah is ever Pardoning and Forgiving.”

In *Tafsir al-Mizân fî Tafsîr al-Qurân*, when linking and interpreting both verses, Ṭabaṭabâ'î explains that the word “*ila*” in the phrase “*idza qumtum ila al-sholati*” indicates intent or direction, namely the act of proceeding to perform prayer. The term “*wujûhakum*” refers to the face, and the area to be washed extends from the hairline on the forehead to the chin. For people with beards, the beard must also be washed, as it is included as part of the facial area. In the phrase “*wa aydikum ilâ al-marâfiq*”, the word “*yad*” (hand) describes the entire arm from the fingertips to the elbows. The preposition “*ila*” shows the range of washing by indicating both the beginning and end points of the area. In the phrase “*wamsaḥû biruûsikum wa arjulakum*”, Ṭabaṭabâ'î explains that “*arjulakum*” (your feet) should be syntactically linked to the verb “*faghsilû*” (wash). Unlike other interpretations that divide the term “*arjulakum*” into two grammatical readings, Ṭabaṭabâ'î states that it can be read either with *faṭḥah* (indicating washing) or *kasrah* (indicating wiping). Nonetheless, he maintains that the *qirâ'ah* with *kasrah* implies that the correct legal practice is to wipe the feet, not to wash them (At Ṭabaṭabâ'î 1983, 220).

The first verse contains regulations on the three forms of *taharah* (purification), covering *wudu*, *ghusl* (ritual/mandatory bathing), and *tayammum*. The word “*ghasl*” denotes the act of cleansing something using water and is commonly employed to remove impurities. The word “*al-wajh*” (literal: face or front) refers to the front part of human's head, covering eyes, nose, and mouth—the features visible when someone faces you. Transmitters from the *imams* of *ahl al-bayt* interpret this as the vertical area extending from hairlines on the forehead to the tip of the chin; and the horizontal area spanning the width covered by thumb, middle finger, and index finger. There are many other definitions stated by exegetes and jurists.

The word “*al-aydi*” (plural form of *al-yad*) refers to the organ used for folding and unfolding, catching and releasing, striking/attacking, and other actions. Anatomically, it extends from one's shoulder to fingertips. Since most of the actions (such as catching and releasing) are done using the lower part—from the elbow to the fingers—that part is often referred to as “the hand”. For this similar reason, the segment from one's wrist to the fingertips is also part of a hand. Thus, the word can denote both the whole limb and its parts depending on context (At Ṭabaṭabâ'î 1983).

This is the reason why Allah added the phrase “to the elbows” to describe that the area of the hand to be washed extends until the elbows—thereby including the entire area down to the fingertips. Tradition also supports this interpretation. The preposition “*ilā*” (meaning: to or up to) shows the boundary of the action and contains a connotation of continuity of movement. However, this preposition does not clarify whether the elbows are included in the act of washing. The obligation to wash the elbows is derived from transmitted traditions (hadith), not from the preposition.

Furthermore, the preposition “*ilā*” in this verse can also mean “along with” as written in a part of Q.S. an-Nisa [4]:2 “... *wa lā ta’kulū amwālahum ilā amwālikum...*” which means, “do not consume their (orphans) properties by mixing their wealth along with your own”. The word “*al-akl*” (to consume/eat) implies addition and combination, which is why it is followed by “*ilā*”. However, it does not mean that the word inherently denotes union.

This discussion explains that the clause “to the elbows” clarifies the term “your hands”. This clause does not explicitly indicate the direction of the act—where to begin or end washing. The clause give chance to open interpretations that one might start washing from the elbow down to the fingertips (this is a common way of hand-washing outside *wudu* context), or from the fingertips up to the elbows.

The phrase “*wamsaḥū biru’usikum*” (wipe over your heads) means to let the hand or another part of the body pass over something. When the verb (*masaḥa*) is used without a preposition, it means wiping over the entire object. When used with the preposition “*bi*”, as written in this verse, it signifies wiping only part of the head—although the verse does not clearly explain which part to be wiped. This is based on the common practice, which involves wiping over the front part of the head.

The phrase “*wa arjulakum*” recited in two modes, with *kasrah* and *fathah*, is further explained. First, when read with a *kasrah* (*wa arjulikum*), it clearly links grammatically to “*bi ru’usikum*”, referring to the verse: “and wipe over your heads and your feet”. The use of *kasrah* here does not indicate grammatical function, but merely follows the word change affected by the preceding word. However, this has been criticized by grammarians as a syntactical error, since following a previous grammatical form without a clear structure is considered poor grammar.

Second, reciting the phrase with *fathah* (*wa arjulakum*) is considered grammatically unproblematic. *Arjulakum* is structurally parallel to "*bi ru'ûsikum*", which explains that the verse mandates washing the face and hands, and wiping the head and feet. The phrase "and your feet" and "wash your faces" are connected at the beginning of the verse, while the sequence of wiping the head appears between the two statements. Regarding the phrase "*ila al-ka'bain*" or "*al-ka'b*", it refers to the protruding bones on the back of the foot or the joint bones between the foot and the leg. There are two such bones in the joint of each foot and leg.

In the interpretation of *wudu's* verse, *Ṭabaṭabâ'î* elaborates the procedure in accordance with Shia *mazhab* based on evidence from the transmission of *ahl al-bayt*. First, Q.S. al-Mâidah [5]:6 explains the act of washing the face (front part of human's head) with water. Vertically, the area is washed from the hairlines on the forehead to the tip of the chin, while horizontally, it is washed by the index finger and middle finger. Second, washing both hands from the fingertips to the elbows. Third, wiping the head using the bare palm. The use of the preposition '*bi*' indicates that it does not necessarily wipe the entire head, but only the crown area. Fourth, washing feet up to the ankles in *wudu* referring to the phrase "*wa arjulakum*" can be read in two ways: with a *kasrah* or a *fathah*.

Regarding the last step, variation in *qirâ'ah* across verses in the Quran is often found. The differences affect the interpretation and *istinbat* or derivation of legal rulings, as seen in this verse. Imam ibn Katsîr, Imam Hamzah and Imam Abû Amr recite "*wa arjulikum*" with a *kasrah*, justified by four reasons. First, although it is recited with a *kasrah*, grammatically it remains in the accusative case (*nasb*), aligning with the word "*aydîkum*", due to its proximity to the *kasrah*-ending word. In another example of Arabic phrase "*hadza juhru dhabbin kharibin*" (this is the ruined burrow of a lizard), the word *kharibin* describes the word *dhabbin*, read in the genitive (*jar*) case, marked by a *kasrah*. *Kharibin* serves as a *na'at* (adjective) that always follows the *man'ut* (the noun it describes), in this case *dhabbin* and matches its grammatical case. It carries a *kasrah* because it follows a word that also has a *kasrah*. This is allowed by Arabic grammarians (*Nahwu*) as long as it does not lead to ambiguity. Thus, the ruling is that washing the feet in *wudu* follows the same principles as washing the hands.

Second, the phrase "*wa arjulikum*" is syntactically linked (*ma'thûf*) to "*bi ru'ûsikum*", both in wording and meaning. Then, the command to wipe



is revoked in favor of washing, or it remains applicable in exceptional cases such as performing *wudu* by wiping over footwear (*mash al-khuffain*). Third, reciting the phrase with a *kasrah* implies wiping the feet with water to prevent excessive water usage. Fourth, the concept of an implicit preposition (*harf jar muqaddarah* or hidden preposition) is acknowledged by Abû al-Baqâ' al-'Uqburi who allows the omission of the preposition (*jar*) and governs the nouns (*ism*) in the genitive case, as exemplified by the phrase "*waf'alu biarjulikum ghaslan*".

Meanwhile, Imam Nâfi', Imam ibn Amir, Imam Hafsh from Âsim and Imam Kisâ'i recite it with a *fathah* (*wa arjulakum*), syntactically linking (*ma'tûf*) it to "*aydikum*". Consequently, the legal implication is that the feet must be washed, just like the face and hands, rather than wiped. Theological perspectives of Sunni and Shia traditions affect differences in opinion on *aqidah* (creed) and legal verses. Efforts have been made to reconcile these differing perspectives in Indonesia, and establish a common comprehension while still conforming to the same *nash*, namely the Quran and hadith (Siradj 2013).

Nevertheless, Shirazî and Ṭabaṭabâ'î give boundaries on the practice of *wudu*, outlining which parts of the body must be treated as required conditions for its validity. Both interpret the meaning and *qirâ'ah* in a way that leads to similar deduction. Shirazî explains that the width of one's face—using the hands from the tip of the thumb to the tip of the middle finger—is the limitation of washing the face. The hands are washed from the fingertips up to the elbows. The head is wiped over a quarter of its surface. The feet are washed from the joint connecting the leg to the back of the foot (ankle bone). Meanwhile, Ṭabaṭabâ'î clarifies washing the face from the hairlines on the forehead down to the tip of the chin, washing both hands from the fingertips to the elbows, wiping the front part of the head with the hand, and wiping the feet up to the ankle.

### **Implications for the Verse's Meaning and Wudu Rulings in the Shia Mazhab**

Makârim Shirazî and Ṭabaṭabâ'î's *qirâ'ah* in their interpretation of Q.S. al-Mâidah [5]:6, as explained in this study, definitely has significant implications for understanding the procedures and legal rulings of *wudu* within the Shia *mazhab*. Shirazî emphasizes that this verse's Arabic structure aspect must be understood. The phrase that should be focused on is "*wa arjulakum*", since the *qirâ'ah* for this particular phrase is recited

in two ways, with a *fathah* and a *kasrah*. Those reciting with a *kasrah* (*wa arjulikum*) assert that the phrase is preceded by the preposition *bi* and follows a restricted noun structure indicating that washing the feet in *wudu* does not mean to completely wash them. Shirazî claims that washing only part of the feet suffices is sufficient. Meanwhile, Ṭabaṭabâ'î strengthens his position based on the *qirâ'ah* and *nahwu*. He argues that there are two syntactically parallel phrases, *arjulakum* and *ruûsikum*, indicating that the command is to wipe rather than washing.

According to tradition and as narrated by the *ahl al-bayt*, regarding the practice of *wudu*, the Prophet Muhammad and the Shia *Imams* have consistently wiped the feet rather than washed them as upheld by Sunni *mazhab* (al-Juzairi 2015). This approach explains how the *qirâ'ah* of the Quranic verse and its interpretation from Shia exegetes significantly shape their *fiqh* understanding in practicing *wudu*. Beyond linguistic and *qirâ'ah* aspects, *Imams* of Shia also relied on the method of transmission (*riwayat*) when interpreting verses. In Shia literatures, there are numbers of narrations explaining that Alî ibn Abî Ṭâlib once corrected someone who washed their feet during *wudu*, and instruct to wipe them instead. This narration serves as a foundational reference for Shia scholars or exegetes that it impacts their interpretation of the Quran. One of the examples is the interpretation of Makârim Shirazî and Ṭabaṭabâ'î on Q.S. al-Mâidah [5]:6 concerning *wudu* procedures which was applied in their daily life. Correspondingly, the understanding of the *qirâ'ah* "*arjulikum*" is also based on the narrations from the *ahl al-bayt*.

The *qirâ'ah* and interpretation of Q.S. al-Mâidah [5]:6 by Shia exegetes, particularly Shirazî and Ṭabaṭabâ'î, definitely contribute significantly to the ritual practices within Shia community. Unlike the majority of Sunni who argues that it is obliged to wash feet during *wudu*, Shia's perspective interprets the act as wiping (*mash*) (Bunyan, 2018). This interpretation of the verse regarding *wudu* reinforces the Shia principle that the Quran's exegesis is closely related to hadiths from the *ahl al-bayt*. Consequently, the legal rulings derived from such interpretation are often dominated by narrations transmitted through the Prophet Muhammad's family.

Furthermore, these implications also impact the study of *ushul fiqh* and the exegetical (*tafsir*) method of Shia *mazhab* (Rohmansyah 2018). Similar to the Sunni perspective, the *qirâ'ah* and interpretation by Shirazî

and Ṭabaṭabâ'î, along with the employed approaches, show that comprehending Islamic law requires more than reliance on the Quranic texts as a main guidance and foundation (Hamdan, 2013). It is also necessary incorporating the narrations of reliable *Imams* such as Imam Ma'sum. This strengthens the arguments in Shia *mazhab* that "wiping" in *wudu* practice represents obedience to teachings originating directly from the *ahl al-bayt*.

## Conclusion

The *qirâ'ah* of Q.S. al-Mâidah [5]:6 by Makârim Shirazî and Ṭabaṭabâ'î centers on the phrase "*wa arjulakum*", which has two ways of recitations: with a *fatḥah* (*wa arjulakum*) and with a *kasrah* (*wa arjulikum*). Shirazî tends to the *kasrah* ending since the phrase follows a grammatically restricted clause (*ma'tuf majrûr*) linked to another phrase "*bi ru'ûsikum*", not to "*wujûhikum*" as a nominative object (*ma'tuf maṣṣûb*). The *kasrah* on "*wa arjulikum*" is due to the presence of the preposition "*bi*" and its connection to the preceding restricted phrase. Hence, it implies that the feet should be wiped rather than washed in the practice of *wudu*. Similarly, Ṭabaṭabâ'î states that it is correct that when reciting the phrase as "*wa arjulikum*", it clearly relates to "*bi ru'ûsikum*". He adds that the *kasrah* here does not have a grammatical meaning but merely follows the word change from the preceding phrase. In this case, Ṭabaṭabâ'î emphasizes more on reading the expression using the *majrûr* (genitive) form, hence preferring "*wa arjulikum*".

Both scholars equally understand and affirm the *qirâ'ah* with a *kasrah*. The remaining differences lie in the detailed elaborations of the boundaries of what is to be washed, yet both, like other Shia *imams*, interpret "*wa arjulikum*" as wiping rather than washing. This opinion aligns with Syu'bah—a student of Âṣim, along with Hafs—who recites the verse as "*wa arjulikum*". Some implications within Shia community are, first, that 'wiping' in the *wudu* practice is regarded as an expression of obedience to teachings that originate directly from the *ahl al-bayt*. Second, in Shia principles, interpreting the Quranic verses is closely linked to hadiths from the *ahl al-bayt*. Therefore, Shirazî and Ṭabaṭabâ'î rely on narrations from the *ahl al-bayt*, particularly the directive of Alî ibn Abî Ṭâlib to perform wiping the feet.

Although this study offered insights into *qirâ'ah* of the two renowned *Imams* of Shia, its scope is limited to these two exegetes without comparison with other *mazhab*, which could provide a more comprehensive understanding. This current article primarily focuses on the aspects of *qirâ'ah* and linguistic. Meanwhile, the historical aspect is still underexplored, highlighting the need for deeper analysis in future studies.

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