Classicized Hijazi: imposition of the *hamzah*

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6.1 Introduction

In 2020, Ahmad Al-Jallad put forward the bold hypothesis that Classical Arabic as we know it today is not a single linguistic system but rather the outcome of a complex interaction between Old Hijazi, i.e. the language of the Quran and early Islamic Arabic on the one hand and the poetic register of the Qaṣīdahs of the Maṣāddites on the other (Al-Jallad 2020b, 69 ff.). This suggestion is very much in line with what we have argued for so far in the previous chapters and previous studies (van Putten 2017a; 2017c; 2018; 2019b; van Putten and Stokes 2018).

While Quran today is read with a certain amount of linguistic variation, these reading traditions, despite their variation still agree on several central features such as the retention of the *ʔ (in most environments), and a full case inflection with final short vowels and *tanwīn* both of which appear to have been absent in the original form of Quranic Arabic as reflected by the QCT. To get from the language of the QCT to the language(s) used in recitation, this language has to have been ‘classicized’ over time. This claim will, of course, bring to mind the work of Karl Vollers (1906), who famously claimed that the Quran was composed in the Hijazi vernacular and only later reworked by the Arab grammarians towards Classical Arabic. His hypothesis was criticized by many, and few authors have taken his book particularly seriously but even fewer have seriously answered his arguments in a coherent way.

Vollers (1906, §39–43) considered the original Hijazi vernacular—and by extension the language of the Quran—to have lacked all forms of case inflection. This is not in keeping with the primary source material. First of all, the QCT very likely reached closure during the reign of ʿUtmān, around 650 CE (Sidky

2021; Sinai 2014a; 2014b; van Putten 2019c). This is clearly before the development of grammatical theory, and reworking of the text by Arab grammarians towards a literary standard which gets established by the Arab grammarians over a century later is chronologically no longer defensible. Much of his argumentation requires us to assume that the consonantal text was changed in the decades after 650 CE. With this new material evidence, this part of his argumentation has lost most of its explanatory power. Likewise, evidence adduced from canonical and non-canonical readings alike only tells us something about the linguistic variation that was considered acceptable as part of the *ʿarabiyyah*, and nothing about the language of the Quran itself as it is reflected in the QCT. The only argument that relies on the rhyme of the Quran is his argument for the absence of the indefinite accusative (§ 42). He suggests that the indefinite accusative ending was invisible to rhyme, but this is clearly not the case and the presence of this vowel is in fact essential for the choice between certain otherwise identical formulae (e.g. *ان الله كان عليما حكيما* versus *ان الله علم حكيم*, see van Putten and Stokes 2018, 145 f.). Any expression of case that is explicitly present in the QCT is certainly part of the language that the QCT was written down in, and likely (and sometimes demonstrably so) present in the language of the original composition as evidenced by the rhyme.

However, those arguing against Vollers have frequently taken the argument to the opposite extreme: any sign of any case at all must mean that Quranic Arabic had full case inflection exactly how the Arab grammarians present it, with full case/mood inflection and *tanwīn*. But this conclusion is not borne out by the evidence either. Between a stage of full case inflection, which must certainly be reconstructed for Proto-Arabic (Al-Jallad and Putten 2017), and no case at all, there must be a whole spectrum of case systems that were in the process of losing it. Already in the pre-Islamic period there were clearly varieties that had lost their case inflection to various degrees.

While the loss of case and mood has often been seen as a catastrophic event that very rapidly, or instantly changed the language from its Old Arabic stages to its Neo-Arabic stage (e.g. Ferguson 1959; Blau 1977; Versteegh 1984), discoveries of the past decades in Arabic dialectology and especially of recent years in Old Arabic epigraphy have made it clear that such a simplified scenario cannot account for the variation that we see. Safaitic, for example, seems to have only marked the accusative case, while not marking *tanwīn* at all, centuries before the rise of Islam (Al-Jallad 2015, 69). Also, the case system of Nabataean Arabic, lacks *tanwīn* in the earliest period but still seems to have a tripartite case inflection. Only later this case distinction seems to be lost, exchanged with an invariable <-w> (“wawation”)—a trace of the original nominative (Al-Jallad forthcoming; Diem 1973). Likewise, the case system present in the Damascus

psalm fragment is almost completely on its way out, despite being written around the same time as the activities of the early Arab grammarians (Al-Jallad 2020b). However, if we would follow the indications of the Arab grammarians, we would never know such varieties existed at all, as these clearly fell outside of their normative framework of proper Arabic.

It is now clear that certain forms of pre-Islamic Arabic with clearly archaic features—often more archaic than what we find in Classical Arabic—existed which, nevertheless had a different and frequently more reduced *ʔiṣrāb/tanwīn* system than Classical Arabic. It is therefore not a given that this system, whose linguistic reality is proven by the rhyme and meter in pre-Islamic poetry, could be imposed onto the language of the Quran, even if it is present in all the Quranic reading traditions.

Van Putten & Stokes (2018) argued that the Quran did not completely lack the Proto-Arabic case system as Vollers suggests, but rather had a transitional system where final short vowels and nunation had been lost (where *an* had become *ā*). Case expressed by long vowels was generally retained, as well as case vowels for nouns in construct. In other words, we have argued and adduced evidence that case was only retained in places where the QCT actually reflects it. Examples usually invoked to prove that the case system must have operated, tend to not counter such a system particularly well. In countering Vollers' suggestion, for example Fück (1950, 2) cites the following examples which he considered ambiguous had case been lost. All of the examples would be unambiguous in the case system that Van Putten & Stokes reconstruct. The examples of Fück are given below along with the likely form they may have taken in Quranic Arabic as I would reconstruct it:

انما يخشى الله من عباده العلوياء / *innamā yaxšē l-lāh min ʕibādi-h al-ʕulamō*¹/
(Q35:28)

'Only the knowledgeable among his servants fear God'

واذا حضر القسمة اولوا القربى / *wa-idā ḥaḍar al-qismah ulū l-qurbē* / (Q4:8)

'And when relatives, at the time of division, are present'

1 The interpretation of the final *wāw-ʔalif* sequence in what in Classical Arabic is pronounced *al-ʕulamāʔu* remains somewhat difficult to determine. It seems fairly clear that it does not represent *āwu* or *āw*. *ō* seems like a reasonable option. See Appendix A.2.3.6 for a discussion.

ان الله برى من المشركين ورسوله /anna llāh bariyy min al-mušrikīna wa-rasūlu-h/ (Q9:3)

‘That God is free from the idolaters, as is his messenger’

واذ ابتلى إبراهيم ربه /wa-id ibtalē ibrahām rabbu-h/ (Q2:124)

‘And when his lord tried Abraham’

The first two of these are in fact distinguished by the *rasm*, and certainly did not present any problem to the understanding. The other two would not be ambiguous if, as we have argued, case vowels had been retained in construct. One should note, however, that even if such phrases would be fully ambiguous, pragmatically such phrases hardly ever pose true ambiguity—it is unlikely that anyone would think that it is God who fears the servant in Q35:28, for example. The very fact that Classical Arabic writing manages to communicate the intended meanings with a writing system that generally does not express case, should make it clear that such ambiguities can be resolved to a large extent through pragmatic considerations.

Moreover, many extra-linguistic hints such as intonation and pause, which are likely to have played a role in the original composition of the Quran, are systematically erased almost completely in Quranic recitation. These too would have helped with the resolution of ambiguities, even with a strongly reduced case system. It is therefore difficult to accept unusual word order to hold much weight as an argument for a full case system, and evidence for its presence or absence needs to be found elsewhere.

Starting from the linguistic situation where *? and final short vowels and nunation were lost completely, one would naturally expect that at times the Quran had been imperfectly classicized towards a variety that did have these features. It has, on multiple occasions, been claimed that the Quran cannot have been classicized for the exact reason that there are no such traces of imperfect classicization, as exemplified, for example by Blau saying that “the total lack of Neorabic and pseudo-correct features in the Koran establishes a linguistic situation in which the differences between the literary and spoken language could not have been too far-reaching” (Blau 1977, 15). I agree with Blau that the Arabic of the Quran was probably close to the vernacular of the Hijaz, and that little to no reworking has been undertaken on the consonantal text. However, this implies that the language of the Quran did not have *hamzah*, and indeed that it had a reduced case/*tanwīn* system. Blau seems to admit the possibility that Quranic Arabic had a somewhat reduced system that had lost (at

least) word final *-i* (pg. 15 f.), but does not commit to a strong opinion on what this system may have looked like.

However, we frequently find evidence in the Quranic reading traditions that these texts *have* been grammatically reworked by its reciters. Pseudo-correct features that clearly point to conscious and artificial tampering with the language of recitation frequently appears in them. In fact, Vollers found many examples of this in his *magnum opus*, although many of his critics seem to have missed these points, and have rather chosen to attack his admittedly much weaker argumentation in favour of his 'caseless Quran'.

As I see it, there are three main systematic features that differentiate Quranic Arabic as it can be reconstructed from the QCT, and how it appears in the Quranic reading traditions. The first, and the most widely admitted difference is that Quranic Arabic seems to have lost the *hamzah* entirely, something that is obvious from the orthography and can be clearly demonstrated from Quranic rhyme (van Putten 2018). In this chapter we will show that the pattern of both the pseudocorrect presence and absence of *hamzah* frequently occurs in the Quranic readings, clearly showing that later philologists have inserted the *hamzah* into the recitation of the Quran and were not always successful in doing so with regard to the placement that would be expected from its etymology.

The second feature, is the quintessentially Classical Arabic feature, namely the system of *ʔiṣrāb* and *tanwīn*, which the language of the QCT appears to have largely lost (van Putten and Stokes 2018). In chapter 7, I will show that to the Quranic reciters, placement of *ʔiṣrāb* and *tanwīn* was a highly theoretical undertaking, not one that unambiguously stemmed from its prototypical recitation and composition. Within this theoretical framework, there are also occasional cases where the reciters fail to fully apply the final short vowels in a manner that would be expected, yielding forms without final short vowels, where we would have expected them.

The third feature, is the retention of a phonemic distinction between the two *ʔalif maqṣūrah*s, the one written with *ʔalif* reflecting /ā/ and the one written with *yāʔ* reflecting /ē/, a distinction clearly reflected in the Quranic rhyme (van Putten 2017a). This feature is different from the previous two. While all readings have, to a greater or lesser extent, retained a good number of cases of etymological *hamzah*, and all of them in principle reflect the Classical Arabic system with *ʔiṣrāb* and *tanwīn*, this last feature is a topic of disagreement among the canonical readers. While normative Classical Arabic eventually opts for a merger of these two sounds, the Quranic reading traditions give ample evidence for an original distinction between the two sounds. This is found regularly in the readings of Ḥamzah, al-Kisāʔī, Xalaf and Warṣ ʿan Nāfiʿ. It is self-evident that not

both retention and loss can be true simultaneously for the original composition of the Quran, and rhyme clearly favours the readings that retain this distinction. I will therefore not discuss this feature in more detail in these chapters.

6.2 Pseudocorrect *Hamzah*

In § 5.2 and Van Putten (2018) we have argued that the language of the QCT lacked a *hamzah* altogether and that the reading traditions eventually classicized Quranic Arabic. Van Putten (2018, 98–101) showed already that the reading traditions treat the *hamzah* rather inconsistently. In phonetically identical environments sometimes the *hamzah* is lost while other times it is not, occasionally based on grammatical principles, other times seemingly by rhyme. The fact that the Quranic readings fail to undergo regular sound changes clearly suggests that the readings are not natural language, but rather a mixed literary register (see § 3.3).

Evidence for a transition from a Hijazi *hamzah*-less pronunciation of the Quran, as confirmed by the rhyme and orthography, towards a more classical system can be seen by the presence of pseudocorrection of the *hamzah* in the Quranic reading traditions. Indeed, we would expect to see the application of *hamzah* where it should have never appeared etymologically, and likewise failure to insert the *hamzah* where we would etymologically expect it. Cases of both types of pseudocorrection can indeed be found in the reading traditions (as well as in Classical Arabic). This is a strong indication that Quranic Arabic originally lacked the *hamzah* and that it was only later artificially inserted, as it became fashionable for proper Arabic to have a *hamzah*.

There appears to be a historical memory of this transition taking place in the beginning of the second Islamic century, at least for Medina, as Ibn Muğāhid (60) reports that Qālūn said: *kāna ʔahlu l-madīnati lā yahmizūna ḥattā hamaza bnu ʔundabin, fa-hamazū mustahziʔūna, wa-stahziʔ* “The people from Madīnah used to not apply the *hamzah* until [Muslim] Ibn ʔundab (d. 130 AH/747 AH) applied the *hamzah*. From then on they applied the *hamzah* to *mustahziʔūna* and *istahziʔ*”²

2 See also al-Dahabī (1, 59); Ibn al-Ġazarī (*al-Ġāyah*, II, 260).

6.3 *Hamzah among the Quranic Readers*

Before we discuss the cases of pseudocorrect *hamzah* it is worth discussing the generalizable treatment of the *hamzah* in the different canonical reading traditions, as this way we are better able to appreciate the instances when readers deviate not just from the imagined classical Arabic norm, but also from their own norms.

The majority of the Quranic readers regularly retain the *hamzah* in most environments. Readers such as ʿĀṣim, Ibn ʿĀṣim, Ibn ʿĀṣim, Qālūn ʿĀṣim, Ibn Kaṭīr, al-Kisāʿī, Xalaf and Yaʿqūb by and large retain the *hamzah* in all positions. That is: in pre-consonantal position, post-consonantal position and in intervocalic positions. The only position where all readers agree that etymological *hamzah* is to be dropped is in sequences of two *hamzahs*, where the first one is followed by a vowel and the second by a consonant, within a single word, e.g. *ʔaʔmuru-hū* → *ʔāmuru-hū* ‘I order him’ (Q12:32).

The remaining readers adhere to several general principles of the dropping of the *hamzah*. In the following discussion we will only discuss cases of pseudocorrect *hamzah* that cannot be explained by the general rules of the readings.

ʔabū Ǧaʿfar drops each pre-consonantal *hamzah*, with compensatory lengthening, e.g. *muʔminūna* → *mūminūna*, *šīʔta* → *šīta*, *yaʔkulu* → *yākulu*. He likewise does the same for word-final vowel + ʔ sequences: *iqraʔ* → *iqrā*, *nabbīʔ* → *nabbī* (Ibn al-Ǧazarī, §1466). Besides this he also regularly shifts the sequences *iʔūna*, *iʔīna* and *iʔū* to *ūna* and *ī(na)* respectively, e.g. *mustahzūna* (Q2:14; Q15:95), *ʔa-tunabbūna* (Q10:18), *muttakūna* (Q36:56), *fa-mālūna* (Q37:66; Q56:53), *al-munšūna* (Q56:72), *al-xāṭūna* (Q69:37), *al-xāṭīna* (Q12:29, 91, 97), *al-mustahzīna* (Q15:95), *muttakīna* (Q18:31), *yutfū* (Q9:32). He has a single exception to this: *xāsiʔīna* (Q2:65; Q7:166) (Ibn al-Ǧazarī, §1496). He would also drop the *hamzah* whenever it stood in the sequence *uʔa*, where ʔ was the first root consonant, e.g. *yuʔaddihī* → *yuwaddihī*, *yuʔāxiḍu* → *yuwāxiḍu* (Ibn al-Ǧazarī, §1485).

ʔabū ʿĀṣim has the option to drop preconsonantal *hamzah*, or to conservatively keep it (Ibn al-Ǧazarī, §1472–1474). However, even with the option to drop the *hamzah*, ʔabū ʿĀṣim would not drop it if *hamzah* was root-final, and in the apocopate or imperative. This is not just in word-final position such as *našaʔ* and *tasuʔ*, but also on morpheme boundaries such as *ʔanbiʔ-hum* and *ʔarǧīʔ-hu*, where the *hamzah* is pre-consonantal within the same word (Ibn al-Ǧazarī, §1475).

Warš ʿĀṣim has two main treatments. In the transmission path of al-ʔazraq the rule is that Warš drops pre-consonantal and intervocalic *hamzah*,

but only if it is the first root consonant. Hence: *muʾminun* → *mūminun* and *yaʾxiḍu* → *yāxiḍu*, and *yuʾaxxiru* → *yuwaxxiru* but not *biʾsa*, *ǧiʾta*, or *yašaʾ* (Ibn al-Ġazarī, §1471).

The other path of transmission of Warš, that of al-ʾaṣbahānī, has a principle that is closer to that of ʾabū Ġaʿfar. He drops any preconsonantal *hamzah*, regardless of the position in the root. He, however, has a list of exceptions to this general rule, causing him to retain significantly more *hamzahs* than ʾabū Ġaʿfar. These exceptions are: *baʾs*, *baʾsāʾ*, (*al*)-*luʾluʾ*, *riʾyan*, *kaʾs*, *ar-raʾs*, *ǧiʾta* (and other forms of the verb such as *ǧiʾnā-hum*), *nabbiʾ* (and other apocopes derive from that root), *qaraʾta* (and other suffixed forms of the verb); *hayyiʾ*/*yuhayyiʾ* and *tuʾwī*/*tuʾwī-hi* (Ibn al-Ġazarī, §1469). Like Warš in the path of al-ʾazraq, he also drops any word-internal intervocalic *hamzah* when it is the first root consonant (Ibn al-Ġazarī, §1485).

Both transmissions of Warš are in agreement that post-consonantal *hamzah* is dropped if there is a word boundary between the word-final consonant and the next word, or if the word preceding the *hamzah* is the definite article. Thus, *qad ʾaflaḥa* → *qadaflaḥa* and *al-ʾarḍu* → *alarḍu* (Ibn al-Ġazarī, §1541).

Ḥamzah and Hišām ʿan ibn ʿāmir both have conservative *hamzah* treatment, but make a special exception in pause. Hišām drops all word final *hamzahs* in pause (after dropping the final short vowels), whereas Ḥamzah drops *all hamzahs* in pause. That is, words like *yaʾkulu*, *yasʾalu*, *al-luʾluʾi*, *as-samāʾu* and *al-ʾarḍu* would be pronounced *yākul*, *yasal*, *as-samāʾ*,³ *al-lūlū* and *alarḍ* in pause (Ibn al-Ġazarī, §1541).

6.4 Pseudocorrect Presence of *Hamzah*

In several cases throughout the Quran, we find examples where readers have a *hamzah* where clearly none was ever present etymologically. Such pseudocorrections fall into three types. First, some words can be shown to behave irregularly within the system of the *ʿarabiyyah* in the appearance of the *hamzah*. Second, some words are loanwords from Hebrew or Aramaic where the *hamzah* is absent, but has been inserted into the Arabic form. Finally, there are several inherited Semitic words which on comparative Semitic grounds can be shown to have never had a *hamzah* in their stem but have acquired them in the readings.

3 Optionally with an overlong vowel triggered by the following, now dropped *hamzah*, or without the length.

6.4.1 *Ḍiyā? → ḍi?ā?*

Qunbul ṣan Ibn Kaṭīr pronounces the verbal noun of *ḍā?a* (√ḍw?) not as *ḍiyā?*, as one would expect for a *fiʿāl* pattern of such a root, but as *ḍi?ā?* (Ibn al-Ġazarī §1534). This is clearly pseudocorrect: the root consonant *w* (which appears in the also Quranic *ḍaw?*) is simply expected to shift to *y* after *i* (for example *ii-w* roots with CiCāC plural like, *ḍiyār* ‘dwellings’, or verbal nouns like *qiyāmah* ‘resurrection’).⁴

Ibn Muğāhid (323), who was a direct student of Qunbul, was clearly bothered by this reading. He reports that Ibn Kaṭīr read it as such and that that is how he learned it from Qunbul. However, he brings transmissions of not just al-Bazzī, one of the transmitters he also reports in his discussion of his *ʔisnāds* of Ibn Kaṭīr but also Ibn Fulayḥ, that they rejected the reading and that Ibn Kaṭīr only read with one *hamzah*. He discusses this word again at Q28:71, where Ibn Muğāhid (495) says: “Only Ibn Kāṭīr read *bi-ḍi?ā?in* with two *hamzahs*. And I learned it thus from Qunbul, but he was wrong (*ġalaṭa*).”⁵

6.4.2 *Mūṣadah → mu?ṣadah*

The C-stem passive participle written as *موصده* ‘closed’ (Q90:20; Q104:8) is read by the majority of the readers as *mūṣadah*. However, Ḥaḥṣ ṣan Ṣāṣim, ʔabū Ṣamr and Ḥamzah read it as *mu?ṣadah* (Ibn al-Ġazarī, §1484). This variant is a clear pseudocorrection. The verb *ʔawṣada* ‘to close’ (√wṣd) is also recorded as *ʔāṣada* (√ʔṣd) in classical lexicons, but within the QCT the verb clearly has √wṣd as its root, as is confirmed by *waṣīd* ‘threshold, doorstep’ derived from the same root and also attested in the Quran *الوصيد* (Q18:18). As the root is √wṣd in Quranic Arabic, *mūṣadah* is the expected form and *mu?ṣadah* the pseudocorrection resulting from the ambiguity of the *hamzah*-less Quranic Arabic, where C-stem participles (and imperfect) of I-ʔ regularly merge with I-w roots.

This pseudocorrection did not go unnoticed by classical authors either. Al-Zamaxšarī (d. 538AH/1144 CE) in his *al-Kaššāf* (IV, 257) brings a report (without *ʔisnād*) on the authority of Šuʿbah—who read *mūṣadah*—saying: “our Imam [i.e. Ṣāṣim] would apply the *hamzah* to *موصده*; and I wanted to plug my ears whenever I would hear it.” This story may be apocryphal, designed to explain the difference between Ḥaḥṣ and Šuʿbah in their transmission of Ṣāṣim. Nevertheless, it highlights that clearly this reading was disturbing enough to the grammarian and theologian al-Zamaxšarī, that it was worth relating it.

4 Vollers (1906, 95) sees the *hamzah* as the transitional stage between an original **ḍiḡā?* and the form *ḍiyā?*. There is no reason to assume nor is there evidence that such a transitional stage took place.

5 This line is missing in the first edition of this text, but the third edition has this line added.

The confusion between I-ʔ and I-*w* roots is well-known for the D-, L- and C-stems in Middle Arabic (Blau 1967, §72.1), and is the result of subsequent analogies after the loss of the *hamzah*, which is common to Quranic Arabic and Middle Arabic alike. This results in a merger of the two root types in the prefix conjugation and participial derivations. This leads to the frequent appearance of pairs of I-ʔ and I-*w* verbs with identical meaning. We find a similar case of such a development for *توكيدها* ‘their affirmation’ (Q16:91), which looks like the verbal noun of *wakkada* ‘to affirm’, but Classical Arabic lexicons also record *taʔkid* and *ʔakkada* with the same meaning. When cognates in other Semitic languages are lacking, it is often difficult to recover whether the I-ʔ form was originally a pseudocorrection, or that the I-*w* is simply a generalized form from an original I-ʔ verb in a dialect that has lost the *hamzah*.

6.4.3 *Ḍiʔzā*

Another case of pseudocorrection in Ibn Kaṭīr’s reading is the word *ضيزى* ‘most unfair’ (Q53:22) as he reads it as *ḍiʔzā* rather than *ḍīzā/ḍīzē* (Ibn al-Ġazārī, §1484). While this word seems to be basically only known to the Arabic lexicographers and grammarians from its Quranic context, its morphology is transparent: it must be a feminine elative, as there are no other feminine adjectives that end in *ʔalif maqṣūrah*. It being an elative, one would expect the pattern to be CuCCā, had the noun indeed been derived from a root √ḍʔz, then we would expect *ḍuʔzā*, not *ḍiʔzā*, which rather is a pseudocorrect insertion of *hamzah* on the vocalic pattern of a √ḍyz root, cf. CAr. *ʔaṭyab* f. *ṭībā* ‘better’, CAr. *ʔarʔaz* f. *ruʔzā* ‘more roaring’.⁶

6.4.4 *Manōh* → *manāʔah*

The majority of the readers read the name of the pre-Islamic goddess Manāt as *manāh*. But Ibn Kaṭīr reads this as *manāʔah*. The goddess Manāt is a personification of Fate, whose name is derived from the root √mnw alternating with √mny. This root is well-attested in Pre-Islamic Arabic, the deity Manāt is spelled *mnwt* in Nabataean, and the fates are also an often invoked in Safaitic as *mny* /*manāy*/ (Al-Jallad and Jaworska 2019). The insertion of the *hamzah* by Ibn Kaṭīr cannot be seen as anything but a pseudocorrect reading.

⁶ Arabic lexicographers appear to have been aware of the weakness of this reading, as, for example *Lisān* (2540c) lists *ḍuʔzā* first, then *ḍūzā* (the expected form if one would drop the *hamzah*) and only then *ḍiʔzā* and *ḍīzā* respectively.

6.4.5 *ʿādan l-ʾūlā*

Q53:50 contains a unique sequence in the Quran, the only place where a word ending in *tanwīn* is followed by the definite article, which is followed by a word that starts with a *hamzah*. This sequence yields a cluster of three consonants /ʿādan l-ʾūlā/, which is resolved differently by different readers (Ibn al-Ġazārī, §1547–1557s). Normally, in the case of a clash of nunation with the definite article, an epenthetic *i* is inserted, and that is the reading of the majority of the canonical readers: [ʿādani l-ʾūlā]. Warš ʿan Nāfiʿ and ʾabū ʿamr, however, resolve this cluster differently in this specific case. The *tanwīn* is assimilated to the *lām* and the subsequence /ll/ is resolved by eliding the glottal stop of the word, yielding [ʿādal-l-ūlā].

Qālūn ʿan Nāfiʿ however, applies yet another development and reads the [ʿādal-l-uʾlā]. Qālūn must have interpreted the feminine elative as being phonemically /ʾuʾlā/, after the application of the regular development ʾvʿC > ʾvC, as seen for example in *ʾaʾkulu > ʾākulu ‘I eat’, *ʾuʾtiya > ʾūtiya ‘it was given’. With the loss of the initial *hamzah*, the second *hamzah* gets a chance to reappear, a phenomenon we mostly see in imperatives such as ʾiti / (i)ʾti/ but *wa-ʾti* / *wa-ʾti*/. The problem here, however, is that the interpretation of ʾūlā as /ʾuʾlā/, is clearly pseudocorrect due to the inherent ambiguity of the surface form. The root of this form is √ʾwl, and thus the underlying form is not **/ʾuʾlā/ but /ʾuwlā/.

6.4.6 *Durriyy → du/irriʾ*

كوكب دري “a brilliant star” (Q24:35) is read by the majority of the readers as *kawkabun durriyy*, where the latter word is clearly to be understood as a denominal adjective of *durr* ‘pearls’ followed by the *nisbah*-ending. However, ʾabū ʿamr and al-Kisāʾī read this word as *dirriʾ* and Šuʿbah ʿan ʿašim and Ḥamzah as *durriʾ* (Ibn al-Ġazārī, §3731).

Ibn Xālawayh (*hujjah*, 262) explains that the reading *dirriʾ* should be understood as an intensive adjective (like *sikkūt* ‘intensely silent’) of the root *drʾ* ‘to avert; rush out (said of a torrent)’, hence ‘rushing out intensely’ likening the rushing out to the intensity of the light. This explanation is probably a *post hoc* rationalization of a reading with a pseudocorrect *hamzah*. Ibn Xālawayh suggests that *durriʾ* has the same meaning as *dirriʾ*, but *fuʿʿil* nouns like this otherwise do not exist in Arabic, so such an explanation is not particularly convincing.

6.4.7 *Maʿāyiš*

An interesting point where what is considered correct and what is transmitted comes into conflict is in the plural of *maʿīšah* ‘livelihood’, which in the reading

traditions today is *maṣāyis* (Q7:10, Q15:20). The use of a *yā?* in this case is surprising, other nouns with a similar structure consistently have a *hamzah* in this position, e.g. *madīnah* pl. *madāʔin* 'town'; *ḥadīqah* pl. *ḥadāʔiq* 'garden'; *xalīfah* pl. *xalāʔif* 'successor'; *qabīlah* pl. *qabāʔil* 'tribe', etc.

The shift of *āyi*, *āwi* to *āʔi* is essentially a regular development, and we find it not just in the broken plural pattern here, but also active participles of hollow roots, e.g. *qāʔim* 'standing', and this development may also be the origin of word final *āʔ* such as in *samāʔ* 'sky'.⁷

The only place in Classical Arabic where both **y* and **w* are retained after *ā* and before *i* is in the verbal system, the L-stems retain the root consonant in the imperfective, even though the regular development would require a shift to *āʔi*. This, however, can be easily explained as the result of analogy. The perfective form regularly retains the root consonants, and this is simply expanded to the imperfect, where it would have regularly been lost. This development can be seen as a three-stage development as follows:

1. Proto-Arabic	2. * <i>āyi</i> , * <i>āwi</i> > <i>āʔi</i>	3. Analogical levelling
<i>qāwama/yuqāwimu</i> <i>ṣāyaša/yuṣāyišu</i>	<i>qāwama/yuqāʔimu</i> <i>ṣāyaša/yuṣāʔišu</i>	<i>qāwama/yuqāʔimu</i> >> <i>yuqāwimu</i> <i>ṣāyaša/yuṣāʔišu</i> >> <i>yuṣāyišu</i>

For the plural *maṣāyis* no analogical basis to which the **y* could be restored can be found. As such, *maṣāyis* is a deviation from what we would expect a form of Arabic that underwent the **āyi*, **āwi* > *āʔi* shift to produce. It turns out that in the reading traditions, the form *maṣāʔis* is in fact known.⁸ Ibn Muğāhid, who does not usually spend time discussing *šādḍ* readings in his *Sabḥ fī al-Qirāʔāt* discusses this form and is curt about it:

- 7 See Brockelmann (1908, 138f.) for a discussion on this development, which has striking similarities with a development as found in Aramaic (see also van Putten 2020a, 61). Note however that this development cannot be reconstructed for Proto-Arabic, as varieties of Old Arabic still retain the glide in such places, e.g. Safaitic *s'my* /samāy/ 'sky', *ḥyt* /xāyet/ 'travelling', *gy* /gāyeʔ/ 'starving'. Moreover, the shift does not seem to have taken in several dialects of Yemen, where we find forms such as *samāy* 'sky', *ʔalḥāy* 'jaws' (pl. of *liḥi*) and *ṣamyāy* 'blind' (cf. CAR. *samāʔ*, *ʔalḥāʔ* and *ṣamyāʔ*) (Behnstedt 1987, 59–61).
- 8 Vollers (1906, 95) takes the plural *maṣāʔis* as a pseudocorrection. Fück (1950, 39f.), rather prescriptively, considers the reading *maṣāʔis* a mistake and evidence that there was a lack of a developed grammatical school in Medina.

The word معيش: All of them read *maṣāyīš* without the *hamzah*. But Xāriḡah, on the authority of Nāfiṣ transmits *maṣāʔīš* with an overlong vowel and a *hamzah*. And ʔabū Bakr [ibn Muḡāhid] said: this is a mistake.⁹

Sadly, Ibn Muḡāhid does not elaborate on why he considers it a mistake. An answer is found in Sibawayh's *al-Kitāb* however, who is in agreement with Ibn Muḡāhid that this word should not have a *hamzah*. He argues that, because this word is derived from a root where the *yāʔ* is part of the root $\sqrt{\text{ʕyš}}$, this *yāʔ* should be retained (Sibawayh, iv, 354–357). Sibawayh is right to observe that this makes the word objectively different from the other words cited so far, where the *ī* of the singular formation is part of the pattern CaCīCah, rather than part of the root, e.g. *madīnah* has $\sqrt{\text{mdn}}$ ¹⁰ and *ṭarīqah* has $\sqrt{\text{ṭrq}}$.

In this argument, Sibawayh is undoubtedly thinking of words such as the imperfective L-stem verbs such as *yūṣāyīšu* where the root consonant is retained as well. However, we must conclude that this is a *post hoc* argumentation. First of all, we cannot assume that speakers of Arabic were themselves grammarians like Sibawayh, and therefore a sound law that would *only* apply to CaCīCah nouns, when the *ī* happened to not be the result of a root consonant, is not something that is likely to have occurred in natural language, as it requires a highly abstract model of formal grammatical thinking. Second, the argument that because the *yāʔ* is part of the root it could not undergo the **āyi > āʔi* shift clearly breaks down in other derivational forms. The active participle of 'to live', after all is *ṣāʔīš*, not *ṣāyīš*, nor is 'bird' *ṭāyir*, but rather *ṭāʔir*. Sibawayh's opinion, which Ibn Muḡāhid upholds as the status quo, therefore cannot be seen as anything other than rationalization for his choice to prefer *maṣāyīš* over *maṣāʔīš* when he was confronted with the choice between the two.

While later scholars of the *qirāʔāt*, such as Al-Dānī (*ġāmiʕ*, 51), simply fell in line with Ibn Muḡāhid's opinion, not all scholars found themselves in agreement with his judgment. ʔabū Ḥayyān al-Andalusī (d. 754AH) in his *al-Baḥr al-Muḥīṭ* (v, 15) brings forth a rather spirited argument in favour of *maṣāʔīš* as a correct and acceptable reading.¹¹

9 *qawluhū* "معيش", *kulluhum qaraʔa "maṣāyīša" bi-ġayri hamz. Wa-rawā Xāriḡatu ʕan Nāfiṣin "maṣāʔīšaḥ" mamdūdatan mahmūzah. Wa-Qāla ʔabū Bakrin: wa-huwa ġalaṭ.* (Ibn Muḡāhid, 278).

10 Note that it is synchronically correct to consider this noun to be from a root $\sqrt{\text{mdn}}$ in Arabic, as can also be seen from the other plural *mudun*, but ultimately in Aramaic, from which the word stems, *mḏintā* 'province, city' is a noun of place of the root $\sqrt{\text{dyn}}$ 'to judge' (Jeffery 2007, 260).

11 I thank Hythem Sidky for pointing me to this reference.

The general public reads *maṣāyīš* with the *yāʔ*, this is an analogy (*qiyās*), because the *yāʔ* in the singular is part of the root, and not an extra letter to the pattern so that it receives a *hamzah*. When it is an extra letter of the pattern, they add the *hamzah*, for example *ṣaḥāʔif* of *ṣaḥīfah*. Al-ʔaʕrağ and Zayd b. ʕalī and al-ʔaʕmaš and Xāriğah, on the authority of Nāfiʕ and Ibn ʕāmir in their (respective) transmission read *maṣāʔiṣ* with a *hamz*. This is not analogy (*qiyās*), because they reported it, and they were trustworthy, so it is necessary to accept it (as a valid reading). This *hamzah* is irregular in the same way as it is irregular in *manāʔir*, the plural of *manārah*—it is originally *manwarah*—and [it is irregular in the same way as it is irregular] in *maṣāʔib*, the plural of *maṣībah*—it is originally *maṣwibah*. *Manāwir* and *maṣāwib* are analogies as they would say *maṣāwib* on the basis of the root, in the same way that they say the plural of *maqāmah* as *maqāwim*; [the plural of] *maṣūnah* as *maṣāwin*.

Al-Zağğāğ said “all of the Basran grammarians decided that adding a *hamzah* is a mistake, but I know nothing of this perspective; [I know] only that [adding *hamzah* makes] it similar to *ṣaḥīfah*, *ṣaḥāʔif* and it is not proper to rely on this reading [i.e. *maṣāʔiṣ*].”

Al-Māzinī said: “The origin of the dispute of this reading is on the authority of Nāfiʕ, but he did not know what the *ʕarabiyyah* was, and the speech of the Arabs [i.e. correct Arabic] is to correct it [i.e. towards *maṣāyīš*] in such cases.”

But we are not worshippers of the opinions of the grammarians of Basra! (*lasnā mutaṣabiddīna bi-ʔaḡwālī nuḥāti l-baṣrah*).

Al-Farrāʔ said: “sometimes the Arabs added a *hamzah* to this and what is like it, supposing that it is a *faṣīlah*, and they liken *maṣīlah* to *faṣīlah*”.¹² So, this is an account from al-Farrāʔ on the authority of the Arabs that they would sometimes add a *hamzah* to this and what is like it.

He brought an account of the reading of trustworthy people: Ibn ʕāmir, he is a pure Arab, and he received the Quran from ʕuṭmān before corruption [of the Arabic language] manifested itself. As for al-ʔaʕrağ, he was among the greats of the readers of the followers [of the companions of the prophets]. Zayd b. ʕalī, with regard to eloquence and knowledge and cases one seldomly encounters, in that [more than] anyone. As for Al-ʔaʕmaš, he was, with regard to precision, perfection, memory and trustworthiness of high status. As for Nāfiʕ, he was taught by 70 of the followers [of the

12 ʔabū Ḥayyān is citing al-Farrāʔ (*Maṣānī*, I, 373) whose wording is slightly different in the edition we have.

companions of the prophet] and with regard to eloquence, precision and trustworthiness he was of high status, as he was not ignorant. Therefore, it is necessary that we accept what they relate to us, and [we should] not pay heed to the disagreement of the grammarians of Basra in this example.

As for the words of al-Mazānī “The origin of the dispute of this reading is on the authority of Nāfiʿ”, this is incorrect, because it is (also) reported on the authority of ibn ʿĀmir and on the authority of al-ʿaṣraḡ, Zayd b. ʿAlī and al-ʿaṣmaš; As for the words “Nāfiʿ did not know what the *ʿarabiyyah* is”, this is the evidence for the rebuttal: If we suppose that he did not know what the *ʿarabiyyah* was; is it this skill [i.e. knowing what the *ʿarabiyyah* is] which gives him access to speaking the language of the Arabs? He does not have to [know what the *ʿarabiyyah* is] to do that [speaking the *ʿarabiyyah*]! For he is eloquent of speaking the *ʿarabiyyah*, as he is a transmitter of the reading on the authority of the eloquent Arabs. And many among those grammarians think badly of the readers, but it is not correct of them [to do] that.

This account clearly shows that, despite the objections of the Basran grammarians, such forms were known and at least allowed by some, and may have indeed been the regular outcome in the dialects that gave rise to the CaCāʾiC style plurals.

6.4.8 *Māḡoḡ* → *Maʿḡūḡ*

ʿĀṣim is the only reader who reads the names of Gog and Magog as *yaʿḡūḡ* and *maʿḡūḡ*, whereas the other readers read *yāḡūḡ* and *māḡūḡ* (Ibn al-Ġazarī, §1484). As these names are clearly borrowed from the Hebrew גוג ומגוג *gog u-māḡoḡ*, which do not have a *hamzah* in either word, ʿĀṣim’s reading is an innovation from its original source.

6.4.9 *Zakariyyā* → *Zakariyyāʾ*

Most readers are in agreement that the Biblical name Zachariah in Arabic is supposed to end in a *hamzah*, i.e. *zakariyyāʾ*?, this despite the fact that the Quranic rhyme in Q19:3 clearly suggests the name was pronounced /zakariyyā/ in Quranic Arabic. Only Ḥaḥṣ ʿĀn ʿĀṣim, al-Kisāʾī, Ḥamzah and Xalaf lack this *hamzah* (Ibn al-Ġazarī, §2840). Considering that the Hebrew name is זכריה *Zəḡaryā*, (or Greek Ζαχαρίας) without a final glottal stop, we must conclude that the majority of the readers are pronouncing the name with a pseudocorrect *hamzah*.¹³

13 Larcher (2021, 49, n. 40) suggests that the “Classical Arabic” form of this name has the

6.4.10 *Sāq, sāqay-hā, sūq → saʔq, saʔqay-hā, suʔq/suʔūq*

Another case of pseudocorrection is found in the plural and dual of *sāq* ‘thigh, shank’ in the canonical reading traditions. While in Classical Arabic this word is pronounced *sāq* pl. *sūq*, Ibn al-Ġazārī (§ 3810) reports that Qunbul ʿan Ibn Kaṭīr read بالسوق (Q38:33) and سوقه (Q48:29) with a *hamzah* (= *bi-s-suʔq* or alternatively *bi-s-suʔūq*), but his transmitter al-Bazzī read it without a *hamzah*. He also reports the presence of the *hamzah* for the dual ساقيهما (Q27:44), i.e. *saʔqay-hā* ‘her two shins’.

Ibn Muġāhid (483) explicitly points out that the singular *sāqin* (Q68:42, and by extension presumably its other attestation in Q75:29) was not pronounced with a *hamzah*. Eventually the form without the *hamzah* wins out in the classical norm, and it is clear that even by Ibn Muġāhid’s time this was the norm, but it is also clear that the form with *hamzah* was a serious contender at least in the tradition that sprouted from Ibn Kaṭīr. For the plural, the forms *suʔq* and *suʔūq* have become canonical in Qunbul’s transmission, rather than the expected form *sūq*.

Unease with these forms used by Ibn Kaṭīr can also be gleaned in the discussion of ʾabū Ḥayyān (VIII, 244 and also IX, 155), who quotes ʾabū ʿaliyy¹⁴ as saying that forms like *saʔq*, *saʔqay-hā* and *suʔq* are weak, and that it is based on a ‘well-known linguistic practice’ (*luġah maʾshūrah*) to apply the *hamzah* to a unvowelled *wāw* when a *ḍammah* precedes, citing a piece of poetry from ʾabū Ḥibbah al-Numayrī: *ʾaḥabbu l-muʔqidīna ʾilayya muʔsā* ‘Moses is the most beloved of kindlers¹⁵ to me’. This explanation fails to account for the presence of the *hamzah* in the dual *saʔqay-hā*, and presumably for that reason ʾabū Ḥayyān disagrees. He says that the form is acceptable because there is a *hamzah* in the root, clearly showing that as late as his lifetime there still had not

hamzah. This is a typical example of the imposition of modern norms onto the opinions of the Arab grammarians. Both Sibawayh (III, 394) and al-Farrāʾ (*Luġāt*, 47; *Maʾānī*, I, 208) explicitly state that this name may be pronounced *Zakariyyā* or *Zakariyyāʾu* with no normative preference for one over the other. Incidentally, as there is no reason to consider *Zakariyyāʾu* as more original, it is of course incorrect to take its appearance in Q19:3 in rhyme as evidence that word-final *āʾ* had lost its *hamzah*, in Quranic Arabic. It simply never had it, unlike the examples I adduce of *āʾ* that does seem to rhyme with words that end in a final consonant, and are words that derive from ancient **āy* sequences that shifted to *āʾ* (van Putten 2018, 103–105).

14 Presumably ʾabū ʿaliyy al-Fārisī (d. 377 AH) a student of Ibn Muġāhid (Ibn al-Ġazārī *al-ġāyah*, I, 189). While ʾabū ʿaliyy discusses these variants in detail in his *Huġġah* (IV, 109–111), nowhere does he call the hamzated forms weak.

15 In one of the two places that this line is cited, this form is vocalized *al-muʔqidayni*, but I would not know who these two kindlers would be.

developed a complete consensus as to whether the root of *sāq* should be understood to be $\sqrt{s}ʔq$ or $\sqrt{sw}q$.

The Arab grammarians were unable to resolve the question as to whether the root was supposed to contain a *hamzah* or not. But from a comparative linguistic perspective it is clear that the *hamzah* in the word is pseudocorrect. Other Semitic languages show no sign of the $ʔ$ in this word. Aramaic has *šāq*, but the sequence $*aʔC$ should yield $\bar{e}C$ in Aramaic. This is clear from the verbal system, e.g. *yēmar* ‘he says’ < $*yaʔmuru$ and also from other words of the shape $CaʔC$, e.g. *rēš* ‘head’ (cf. Ar. *raʔs*, Hebr. *roš* spelled etymologically as רֹשׁ), *kēb* ‘grief’ (cf. Ar. *kaʔb* ‘id.’ and Hebr. *kēb* ‘id.’).¹⁶ Hebrew has *šoq*, spelled שֹׁק; this points to the absence of the $ʔ$ as Hebrew usually retains the spelling of the $ʔ$ spelled with $\sqrt{alep}$ in the consonantal text, but *šoq* is not spelled $**\langle šʔiq \rangle$. Finally, in Ugaritic, which retains the Proto-Semitic $ʔ$ with a variety of signs, lacks it completely in this word $\langle šq \rangle$ (not the expected $**\langle šʔiq \rangle$). This evidence leads us to an unambiguous reconstruction of this word for Proto-West Semitic as $*sāḳ$, without a glottal stop. The form *sāq* is therefore etymological and forms with a *hamzah* are pseudocorrect.¹⁷

On the discussion of *sāq*, Ibn Xālawayh (*ʔiṣrāb*, II, 152f.) explicitly calls out ‘Arabs’ for placing the *hamzah* in places where it is incorrect.

Others said: *sāq* is like *bāb*, because the root is s-w-q, and the *wāw* is changed to an *ʔalif*, so it is incorrect to give it a *hamzah*. This is what is among the things in which the Arabs make mistakes, so they do apply the *hamzah* on what does not have a *hamzah*, and similarly with what has a *hamzah* they do not give it the *hamzah*, so *kaʔs* and *raʔs* and *sāq* their stem shape (*waznuhā*) is the same (i.e. as $CāC$), so they make them similar to one-another, yes, he has seen that Arabs say: *ḥallaʔtu s-sawīqa*, but originally it is *ḥallaytu*, and likewise, with *ḥallaʔtu l-ʔinsāna ṣani l-māʔi wa-l-ʔibili*. However, the plural of *sāq*, through replacement (*qalb*) (of the *hamzah*) is *ʔaswuq* without *hamzah* and if you wish (can be) *ʔasʔuq* with *hamzah*.¹⁸

16 An interesting exception appears to be Aramaic *ṣānā* ‘sheep’, which has lost the $ʔ$ already in Official Aramaic times, spelled 𐤌𐤍 where Hebrew *šōn* שֹׁן, Arabic *ḡaʔn* and Akkadian *ṣēn* point to a reconstruction $*ṣaʔn$. This is probably the result of a dissimilation of the two guttural consonants occurring in a row.

17 As already recognized by Vollers (1906, 94). Vollers also noticed that such pseudocorrect forms entered the classical language through other channels than Quranic recitation, this is clear from the variable *bāz/baʔz* ‘falcon’, which, considering that it comes from Persian *bāz*, must certainly be considered a pseudocorrection as well.

18 This is the result of a fairly regular rule in the *ʔarabīyyah* that sequences of $*wu$ or $*wū$

6.4.11 *Kās* → *kaʔs*

As already noticed by Blau (1970, 56), much like the case of *saʔq* discussed above, comparative Semitic evidence shows that *kaʔs* ‘cup’ must have a pseudocorrect *hamzah* in Arabic. The reflexes in Hebrew כוס *kos* (spelled without *ʾāleḥ*) and Aramaic *kās* as well as Ugaritic <ks> leave no doubt that the reconstruction of this noun in Proto-West Semitic is **kāʔs* and the *hamzah* in the Quranic reading traditions must be pseudocorrect. What is different from the case of *saʔq*, however, is that this word is read with *hamzah* universally by all the canonical readers. Moreover, this pronunciation has become the *de facto* standard in Classical Arabic, although the form *kās* is known to exist among the lexicographers (Lane 2639c; *Lisān* 3802c).

6.4.12 *Yuḏāhūna* → *yuḏāhiʔūna*

Ḥāšim is unique in reading يظهون ‘they imitate’ (Q9:30) as a III-ʔ root *yuḏāhiʔūna*. All other readers treat the verb as a III-w/y verb, reading *yuḏāhūna* (Ibn al-Ġazārī, §1532). This verb is attested in an Old Arabic inscription in Safaitic script as *ḏhw* ‘to copy’ (Al-Jallad and Jaworska 2019). As Safaitic regularly retains the *hamzah* (Al-Jallad 2015, 45, 53), Ḥāšim’s reading is evidently pseudocorrect here, and the majority reading is the original.

6.4.13 *Aṣ-ṣābūna* → *aṣ-ṣābiʔūna*

There is disagreement among the readers on how to read الصبين/الصبيون ‘the Sabians’ (Q2:62, Q5:69, Q22:17), which is variously read as *aṣ-ṣābū/ina* (Nāfi¹⁹) an *aṣ-ṣābiʔū/ina* (the others) (Ibn al-Ġazārī §1496). That is, either as an active participle from a root *ṣṣbw/y* or from a root *ṣṣbʔ*.

Neither the root *ṣṣbw/y* nor *ṣṣbʔ* is attested in Arabic in a meaning that would elucidate the meaning of the word Sabians as an Arabic word; hence it is usually taken to be a loanword. If Wellhausen (1897, 237) is correct to identify this word as a plural active participle derived from the Mandaic verb *ṣṣbā* ‘to baptize’ then we must conclude that the *hamzah* is a pseudocorrection. As the Mandaic form is a final weak verb, we would expect the plural active participle to simply be *aṣ-ṣābūna*.²⁰

become *ʔu*, therefore the plural *ʔaswuq* is expected to shift to *ʔasʔuq*. Note that this explanation is unable to make sense of the reading of the dual with *hamzah*, or in fact the other plural *suʔq/suʔūq*.

19 Ṭabū Ḥaṣṣar also reads *as-ṣābū/ina*, but this is part of his regular pattern of dropping the *hamzah* (see section §5.2).

20 The Mandaic form is likely ultimately from a root **ṣṣbʔ* which yields Ar. *ṣṣabaġa* ‘to dye, baptize’ and Aramaic *ṣṣbaʕ* with the typical loss of the gutturals of Mandaic.

6.4.14 Conclusion

While the cases where *hamzah* is applied to a word which etymologically never had it is relatively rare, it is common enough to show that there was a real attempt to classicize the readings towards an ideal that included *hamzah*, by people to whom it was not necessarily obvious which words were supposed to have a *hamzah* or not. This is certainly consistent with what we would expect to find, considering that rhyme evidence shows that the Quran was originally composed in the Hijazi dialect without a *hamzah*.

It is remarkable that a good number of these pseudocorrections are found with Ibn Kaṭīr, the Meccan reciter. Ibn Kaṭīr, despite being a Hijazi, has a remarkably conservative use of *hamzah* in his recitation. Considering how the Hijazi vernacular appears to have mostly lost the *hamzah*, it is by no means surprising that it is exactly this reader that is most prone to pseudocorrection. It should be noted, however, that pseudocorrections are also found with other readers. All readers read *kaʿs*, and the Kufans have several forms with pseudo-correct presence of *hamzah* as well.

6.5 Failure to Insert *hamzah*

While the amount of pseudocorrect insertions of *hamzah* in places where the word historically lacked the *hamzah* is a fairly rare occurrence among the readers, failure to insert the *hamzah* is more common. The tradition also explicitly acknowledges this: the dropping of *hamzah* is part of the *ʿarabiyyah* (Sībawayh, III, 541ff.) and therefore grammarians did not see it as a problem to, in general, retain *hamzah*, but in cases that one was uncertain whether the root had a *hamzah*, to opt for the *hamzahless* form instead. However, the pseudo-correct application of *hamzah* was considered something to be avoided. This can be seen, for example in ʿAbū ʿamr’s statement concerning his reading of *minsāʾata-hū* as *minsāta-hū* (Ibn al-Ğazārī, §3962). On this topic al-Farrāʾ (Maʿānī II, 356f.) reports:

ʿAbū Jaʿfar al-Ruʾāṣī (d. 187AH) declared to me (al-Farrāʾ, d. 208AH) that he asked ʿAbū ʿamr (d. 154AH) about it [i.e. the pronunciation of منسته], and (ʿAbū ʿamr) said: “*minsāta-hū* is without *hamzah*”, and he also said: “Because I do not know it, I remove its *hamzah*.”

A slightly more expanded version of this account is related by ʿAbū Ḥayyān (VIII, 531):

ʿabū ʿamr said: “I do not apply *hamza* to it, because I do not know its derivation; If it was among those (roots) that are not *hamzated*, I have been (sufficiently) cautious (*iḥtaṭṭu*), and if it was *hamzated*, then it would be permissible for me to take away the *hamzah* in what contains a *hamzah*.”

This account clearly shows that the leaving out the *hamzah* in places where it is etymologically present was not considered a mistake, while adding it where it should have been was. Moreover, it shows that adding the *hamzah* was a rational and theoretical endeavour by the readers, and in case of uncertainty they could decide to leave it out.

The reading of Ibn ʿaḳwān of this word is *minsāʾta-hū* (sic!). This is evidently ungrammatical as it suggests a miCCaCt stem formation, something that does not occur in any form of Arabic. It rather seems like an attempt at inserting the *hamzah* into a word that he originally learned to recite as *minsāta-hū*. If one disregards any forms of grammar, there is no way to decide whether a base for *minsāta-hū* is to be pronounced *minsāʾta-hū* or *minsāʾata-hū*.

Al-Dānī (*Ġāmiʿ*, 680) points out that Ibn ʿaḳwān’s reading was considered extremely weak by the Arab grammarians in general, because the feminine ending should always be preceded by *-a-* or an *ʾalif*. But, he says, there is a line of poetry, transmitted by al-ʾaxfaš (the same person who transmits this reading for Ibn ʿaḳwān), which serves as evidence that the form *minsāʾt-* exists:

× × ◡ – × × ◡ – × × ◡ –	× × ◡ – × × ◡ – × × ◡ –
šarīʿu xamrin qāma min wakaʾti-hī	ka-qawmati š-šayxi ʾilā minsāʾti-hī
‘A drunk stood up from his reclination, like the standing up of an old man on his stick.’	

The problem with this poetic evidence is that *minsāʾti-hī* is metrically identical to *minsāti-hī*, and therefore this poem can hardly be used as evidence for it. This is assuming that this line of poetry is not an outright fabrication, which seems more likely in this case. This anonymous line of poetry is only ever cited to explain Ibn ʿaḳwān’s reading, and al-ʾaxfaš seems to be the originator of the line.

The contemplative and theoretical nature of the reading with or without *hamzah* is also displayed in a colourful exchange between al-Kisāʾī and Ḥamzah on the discussion of al-Kisāʾī reading *dīʾb*, as *dīb* (Xalaf, Warš and regularly by his principles ʿabū Ġaṣṣar follow him in this exceptional reading, see Ibn al-Ġazarī §1472). This is related in several Ṭabaqāt works, such as the one of al-Dahabī (153f.):

[...] Muḥammad b. ʿalī b. Sulaymān al-Marwazī said: I asked Xalaf b. Hišām: why is al-Kisāʾī called al-Kisāʾī? And he said: al-Kisāʾī entered Kufa and came to the as-Sabīʿī mosque where Ḥamzah was teaching recitation, and al-Kisāʾī came forward and he was wrapped in a black robe. When Ḥamzah was done praying he said: who goes first? And it was said: “al-Kisāʾī”, and they meant the guy in the (black) robe, and they turned their gaze to him and said: if you are a weaver,²¹ you will recite Sūrat Yūsuf and if you are a salt vendor (or sailor (?), *mallāḥ*), you will recite Sūrat ʿĀḩā. So, he heard them and started to recite Sūrat Yūsuf, and when he arrived at the pericope of the wolf, he recited it without *hamzah* (i.e. *aḍ-ḍib*). So, Ḥamzah said: “*aḍ-ḍib* is with *hamzah*.” So, al-Kisāʾī replied: “So should I apply the *hamzah* like that in *al-ḥuṭ*? (for *al-ḥūt* ‘the whale’) as well?”—this is about (the verses) *fa-ʾakala-hu ḍ-ḍib* (Q12:17) and *fa-ltaqama-hu l-ḥūt* (Q37:142). Ḥamzah looked to Xallād the cross-eyed, and they argued as a group, but nobody was able to (answer him). Then they said (to al-Kisāʾī): “liberate us, please!” Then (al-Kisāʾī) said: “Learn from what this weaver has to say! When you compare a man to a wolf, you say *qad istaḍaʾaba r-raḡul* ‘the man was fierce like a wolf’, and if you would say *istaḍāba* without *hamzah*, then it is as if you attribute to him emaciation (*huzāl*) [because *ḍāb* means ‘vice, fault, defect’]. But when you liken him to a whale, you say: *istaḥāta r-raḡul*”—which means he eats a lot, because a whale eats a lot—and then he recited:

ʾaʿyuhā ḍ-ḍibu wa-bnu-hū wa-ʾabū-hū

ʾanta ʿindī min ʾaḍḍubin ḍāriyātī

‘O wolf, and his son, and his father!

You are to me among the voracious wolves!’

And he is known as al-Kisāʾī ever since that day.

This account once again shows that, while eliding the *hamzah* is considered acceptable—after all that is how the star of the story recites it—it is *not* allowed to pseudocorrectly apply the *hamzah* to words that do not have it in their root.²²

21 Clearly meant as an insult, weavers were despised in medieval Islamic society, a position they share with the *textor* of Roman times (E1² s.v. *ḥāʾik*).

22 Another humorous story about al-Kisāʾī’s reading of *ḍib* as *ḍib* exploits the polysemy of the verb *hamaza* which means both ‘to apply the hamzah’ and ‘to prod’. Someone asked al-Kisāʾī: *lima lā tahmizu ḍ-ḍib*? “why do you not hamzate/prod the wolf?”. To this al-Kisāʾī answers: *ʾaxāfu ʾan yaʾkula-nī* “I am afraid that it would eat me!” (al-Ḍahabī, 300) where al-Kisāʾī is playfully riffing on the verse in which his reading *aḍ-ḍib* occurs: *wa-ʾaxāfu ʾan yaʾkulahu ḍ-ḍib* “I fear that a wolf will eat him” (Q12:13).

It is worth mentioning here a not quite as colourful, but related account on the authority of Nāfiʿ related by al-ʿaṣmaʿī → ʿabū Saʿīd al-Ḥārīṭī → Ibn Muğāhid: “I asked Nāfiʿ about البير والذيب, and he said: ‘If the Arabs provide a *hamzah* to them, then provide them with a *hamzah*’” (Ibn Muğāhid, 346). This quote is related in the context of disagreement among the transmitters of Nāfiʿ on these words. While most transmitters are in agreement that he read these words with *hamzah*, Warš and the non-canonical transmitter Ibn Ġammāz read them as *al-bīr* and *ad-dīb*, a practice that Ibn Muğāhid considered mistaken (*wa-hādā wahm*). What this quote illustrates is the rather practical nature of reading with or without *hamzah*. Nāfiʿ gives a rather non-committal answer to the question, telling the readers to follow what they believe what “the Arabs” do.²³

Once we look closer among the canonical readers, we find numerous examples where there is uncertainty on whether a word is supposed to carry a *hamzah* or not, several readers opt for *hamzah*-less forms where according to their general principles of recitation we would expect them to have been retained. In the following section, we will examine the many cases of incomplete application of the *hamzah* as they occur among the readings.

All of this uncertainty about where the *hamzah* should go is difficult to understand, if we assume that the language of the Quran was indeed pronounced and transmitted with a *hamzah* from the very start. On the other hand, such discussions make perfect sense if the Quranic language was—as is admitted for Hijazi Arabic—without the *hamzah*, and as a new linguistic ideal of the classical poem gained prominence, reciters started adapting features, including the use of the *hamzah*, into their recitation.

6.5.1 Long Vowels Followed by Hamzah

6.5.1.1 Nabīʾ, nabīʾīn, ʾanbīʾāʾ, nubūʾah

The majority of the Quranic reciters do not pronounce the *hamzah* in the word النبي ‘prophet’ or its plurals النبیین, النبوة ‘prophecy’. The Medinan reciter Nāfiʿ, however is an exception to this, as he consistently recites these words as *nabīʾ*, *an-nabīʾīn*, *ʾanbīʾāʾ* and *an-nubūʾah* (Ibn al-Ġazarī, § 1531).

²³ Ibn Muğāhid seems to have understood this quote as meaning that one is indeed to pronounce these words as *bīr* and *dīb*, which reveals a significantly developed view of what ‘Classical Arabic’ is in the late third/early fourth century AH. To him what ‘Arabs’ say is clearly the form with *hamzah*. But one wonders if Nāfiʿ truly meant it in such a manner. To Sibawayh, for example, *bīr* and *dīb* are acceptable and certainly also something that ‘the Arabs’ say (Sibawayh, III, 541 ff.).

This has frequently been construed as pseudocorrect application of the *hamzah* (e.g. Vollers 1906, 95; Rabin 1951, 131–133; Fischer 2002, 26), where Zwettler (1978, 179f., n. 71) even claims that it was never part of the *ʿarabiyyah*. From an etymological perspective it is not clear that this is correct. This word is ultimately a loanword from Aramaic or perhaps Hebrew, and while in later forms of both Aramaic and Hebrew the *ʔ is lost, Biblical Hebrew and Aramaic still retain the *ʾalep* spelling, suggesting its original presence and pronunciation in these respective corpora, cf. Biblical Aramaic Ktiv נביא **nabīʾā*; Qre *nḥīyy-ā* pl. Ktiv נביאים **nabīʾ-ayyā* Qre *nḥīyyayyā* (Ezra 5:1); Hebrew נביא *nāḇī* < **nabīʾ* pl. נביאים *nḥī'im* < **nabī'im*. Cf. also Hebrew נבואה *nḇuʾā* ‘prophecy’ and Biblical Aramaic Ktiv חגי בנבואת **bi-nabūʾat*/ Qre *bi-nḇuʾat* ‘the prophecy of (Haggai)’ (Ezra 6:14). As the Aramaic loanwords in the Quran consistently show exceptionally archaic phonology (see van Putten 2020a, 69 ff.), it is not *a priori* obvious that the presence of the *hamzah* in these words was never part of the Classical language.

The belief that this must be a pseudocorrection seems to be based on the fact that Sibawayh (III, 555) expresses a clear normative bias against pronouncing the word as *nabīʾ* (and *idem* for *barīʾah* for *bariyyah* see the discussion below), saying that this is the manner of pronunciation of the people of the Hijaz who pronounce the *hamzah*, calling it rare and abhorrent (*qalīl radīʾ*). But while this is the case, he clearly considers the base of this word and *barīʾah* to contain a *hamzah*, as he discusses it as part of the shift of *īʾ, ūʾ, ayʾ* → *īyy, uww, ayy* including words which in Classical Arabic are usually realized with the *hamzah*, e.g. *xaṭīʾah* → *xaṭīyyah* ‘sin’, and *maqrūʾ* → *maqrūww* ‘readable’. For the formation of diminutives Sibawayh (III, 547) explicitly allows both *nubayy* and *nubayyiʾ*, but the diminutives of *barīʾah/bariyyah* and *nubūʾah/nubuwwah* he only endorses the forms with *hamzah*, i.e. *burayyiʾah* and *nubayyiʾah*. So, while he has a normative opinion for the dropping of *hamzah*, he clearly considers the *ʾaṣl* of the word to have had the *hamzah*. We cannot conclude from this that *nabīʾ* or *barīʾah* are pseudocorrect, but only that the now normative form without *hamzah* had gained enough ground in Basra in Sibawayh’s time that it was considered normative despite being exceptional among the people that usually preserve the *hamzah*. But Nāfiʿ is Medinan and a contemporary of Sibawayh’s teacher al-Xalīl b. ʾaḥmad, so clearly it was still part of the *ʿarabiyyah* at that time despite Sibawayh’s misgivings.

Despite the archaic nature of Nāfiʿ’s reading, it is quite clear that this was not the reading that belonged to the language of the QCT. The broken plural pattern the QCT uses (*ʾaCCiCāʾ*) is almost exclusively applied to final weak and geminate roots only a few sound roots have this pattern, e.g. *ḡaniyy* → *ʾaḡ-niyāʾ* ‘rich’ and *šadīd* → *ʾašiddāʾ* ‘strong’, *qarīb* → *ʾaqribāʾ* ‘relative’ (van Putten

2020a, 64). Had the Quranic Arabic form indeed been *nabīʔ*, we would have rather expected a plural *nubaʔāʔ*.²⁴ This plural pattern therefore suggests that in Quranic Arabic, as would be expected in Hijazi Arabic the final *hamzah* had been lost and the word was indeed pronounced as the majority of the readers read it.

Nāfiʔ's reading in this case is therefore an archaism, and one that was not considered proper by everyone. A commonly cited prophetic Hadith has someone address the prophet by *yā nabīʔa ʔlāh*, which is promptly denounced by the prophet. This tradition is explicitly invoked as one of the reasons why a reciter might read *nabiyy* instead of *nabīʔ* by Ibn Xālawayh (*Huǧǧah*, 80f.): “the first reason is that applying the *hamzah* is heavy on their speech, and the evidence for this is his speech (PBUH): I am not the prophe' of God (*lastu nabīʔa ʔlāh*); it is as if he disliked applying the *hamzah* because he was of Qurayš who do not apply the *hamzah*”.

6.5.1.2 Bariʔah/bariyyah

Another loanword from Aramaic or Hebrew is البریه ‘creature’ (Q98:6,7), which like *nabīʔ*, is read as *al-bariʔah* by Nāfiʔ, but in this case Ibn ʔakwān ʔan Ibn ʔāmir joins him in this reading, other reciters read *al-bariyyah* (Ibn al-Ġazarī, §1536).

Here too we are likely dealing not with a pseudocorrection, but an accurate transmission of the ancient pronunciation of an original in Hebrew בריאה *brīʔā* and/or Aramaic (Jeffery 2007, 76), which is a derivation from the verb ברא ‘to create’ (Hebrew *bārāʔ*), which likewise was borrowed into Arabic as *baraʔa*.

6.5.1.3 Nasīʔ

النسي (Q9:37) ‘the postponement’ is read by Warš ʔan Nāfiʔ (in the path of al-ʔazraq) and ʔabū Ġaʔfar as *an-nasiyy* while the other readers read it as *an-nasīʔ* (Ibn al-Ġazarī §1525). In the context, it seems quite clear that we should derive this word from the root *nasaʔa* ‘to postpone; to drive’, and not from *nasā* ‘to forget’, where *an-nasiyy* would end up meaning ‘the forgotten one; that which is to be forgotten’. Note that *minsāʔah*, also a word derived from this root, likewise yielded uncertainty among the readers as to whether or not it should have the *hamzah* (see §6.5 above).

24 This plural is in fact attested in a poem by al-ʔabbās b. Mirdās (d. ca. 18–35 AH) starting with *yā xātama n-nubaʔāʔi ʔinnaka mursalun* ‘O seal of the prophets, you are sent’ (al-Ġabbūrī 1968, 95), another piece of evidence that the form *nabīʔ* pl. *nubaʔāʔ* indeed existed in the *ʔarabiyyah*, also outside of Quranic recitation.

Ibn Muğāhid (314) reports several other readings. In non-canonical transmission paths of Ibn Kaṭīr we find *an-nas?* (ʿuqayl ← Šibl ← Ibn Kaṭīr)—a reading that seems to disagree with the *rasm*—and *an-nasiyy* (ʿubayd ← Šibl ← Ibn Kaṭīr). He also reports *an-nasy* on Ibn Kaṭīr’s authority, but without *ʾis-nād*.

6.5.1.4 Xaṭīʾah pl. xaṭāyā ‘sin’

A clear example of failure to apply *hamzah* in the QCT which has subsequently made it into the Classical Arabic language is the plural formation of *xaṭīʾah* ‘sin’, its plural, *xaṭāyā*, not only lacks the expected *hamzah* altogether, it could never have even had this *hamzah*, as the plural formation it employs is one typical of final-weak roots. Fischer (2002, § 99b) cites as examples *hadiyyah* pl. *hadāyā* ‘gift’, *hirāwah* pl. *harāwā* ‘club’ and *zāwiyah* pl. *zawāyā* ‘corner, angle’.

There are some other contexts in which the CaCāCā plural appears, but none of them apply to *xaṭīʾah*.²⁵ There are a few isolated lexical items that take this plural of sound roots, for example *yatīm* pl. *yatāmā*. Note, however, that if *xaṭīʾah* would belong to this group of nouns we would have expected **xaṭāʾā* rather than the inexplicable *xaṭāyā*.

As such we would expect the original singular of this noun in Quranic Arabic to have been the *hamzahless* form *xaṭīyyah*, following the same derivation as *hadiyyah*. The reading *xaṭīyyah* was subsequently classicized to *xaṭīʾah* by all readers, while failing to classicize the plural formation along with it.²⁶ The issue of this specific broken plural pattern associated with this singular was not lost on the Arab grammarians, and *Lisān al-ʿArab* has a lengthy discussion on what was evidently perceived as a problematic plural. The regular plural of CaCīCah nouns is CaCāʾiC (cf. *ḥadiqah* pl. *ḥadāʾiq*; *madīnah* pl. *madāʾin*), and as such the expected plural is *al-xaṭāʾiʿu*,²⁷ due to the regular elision of the second *hamzah* when two *hamzahs* follow in a row, this should have become *al-xaṭāʾiʿi*, in the same way that the active participle of ‘to come’ turns from *al-ğāʾiʿu* into *al-ğāʾiʿi*, and it would therefore be expected to have merged with the *faʿālīn* type plurals. Sībawayh (III, 552 f.) starts his discussion of this plural

25 For example, it is a regular plural (besides CaCāCin) for nouns that end in the feminine endings *-ā* and *-āʾ*, e.g. *fatwā* ‘legal opinion’, pl. *fatāwin*, *fatāwā* and *ʾaḍrāʾ* ‘virgin’ pl. *ʾaḍārīn*, *ʾaḍārā* (Fischer 2002, § 99a).

26 The expected for *xaṭīyyah* is attested in Classical Arabic lexicons (*Lane* 761c; *Lisān* 1193b).

27 Al-Zamaxšarī (*mufaṣṣal*, 167) cites ʾabū Zayd as having heard someone use this original plural in *al-lāhumma ǧfir lī xaṭāʾiʿī* ‘O God, forgive me my sins.’

with: “it is as if [the *hamzah*] was turned into a *yāʔ* and the end of *xaṭāyā* (i.e. the *yāʔ* of *xaṭāʔī*) was replaced with an *ʔalif*”. He then commences to explain how one could get from a singular *xaṭīʔah* to the plural *xaṭāyā* without having to assume a singular base *xaṭīyyah*. He likens the replacement of the final *yāʔ* of the hypothetical **xaṭāʔī* (from earlier *xaṭāʔīʔ*) with *ʔalif* to this happening in the final weak plural *maṭāyā* (plural of *maṭīyyah* ‘mount’), it is striking here that Sibawayh has to draw an analogy with a CaCiyyah noun, to be able to explain the presence of this plural pattern, while the discussion seems explicitly aimed to avoid this. This brings him to an intermediary form **xaṭāʔā*. The *hamzah* of **xaṭāʔā* is subsequently replaced with a *yāʔ* because it stands between two *ʔalifs*. While *hamzah* as a root consonant can stand between two *ʔalifs* such as in *kisāʔāni*, *kisāʔā*, *hanāʔā*, this is not the case for **xaṭāʔā* because its *hamzah* is not a root consonant, but part of the plural pattern (CaCāʔiC), therefore it is weakened to a *yāʔ* instead, yielding *xaṭāyā*. The change from *ī* → *ā* is, of course, *ad hoc*, as is the rule for replacing the *hamzah* with a *yāʔ* to go from *xaṭāʔā* to *xaṭāyā*, which as far as I can tell is not applied to any other word in the lexicon.

The complexity of discussion ultimately comes down to the fact that Sibawayh, and grammarians after him (see the discussions in *Lisān*, 1193, for example) refuse to use a surface form like *xaṭīyyah*—a form explicitly considered to be allowed—for the derivation of the plural. This constraint that the grammarians imposed upon themselves does not lead to a convincing explanation, and that does not seem to have been the point. The grammarians were simply trying to find an explanation of how one could *hypothetically* come from the idealized source form *xaṭīʔah* to *xaṭāyā* without having to assume the loss of *hamzah* as the basis. The self-evident explanation for the plural *xaṭāyā* is that it was formed upon the form *xaṭīyyah*, not *xaṭīʔah*, thus betraying an original *hamzahless* form, despite its absence in the canonical readings.

6.5.2 Post-consonantal Hamzah

Above, we discussed a class of words with the lack of the expected *hamzah* when it occurs after a long vowel. But this is not the only position where we find that readers irregularly lose the *hamzah*. We also find it in post-consonantal position.

The very name of the Quran itself is one of these cases where the presence of the *hamzah* is disagreed upon. The word is spelled both defectively قرن and plene قران in early manuscripts, and it is usually read as *qurʔān*, however Ibn Kaṭīr reads it as *qurān* (Ibn al-Ğazari, §1571). There can be no doubt that the root of *qurʔān* ‘recital’ is *qaraʔa* ‘to recite’, and thus in *qurān* the expected

hamzah is missing. Attempts of Arab philologists to see Ibn Kaṭīr's *qurān* as a derivation from *qarana* 'to bring together' are obviously not very satisfying (Jeffery 2007, 233).

Nāfiʿ treats two CiCC verbal nouns derived from III-ʔ roots as CiC stems, رداً *ridan* (versus the other readers *ridʔan*) 'as help' (Q28:34; Ibn al-Ġazārī, §1559) and مل *milu* 'fullness' (Q3:91; Ibn al-Ġazārī, §1560, only in the path of al-ʔaṣbahānī from Warš, and with disagreement among his transmitters). Thus here, like our previous word, post-consonantal *hamzah* was incompletely re-inserted in this reading.

The QCT of the Quran makes it clear that there was no *hamzah* in the imperative *saʔala* 'to ask', as it is consistently spelled سل. Had this word had a medial *hamzah*, we would have expected a prothetic ʔalif in the imperative **اسل for *isʔal*. As such, to agree with the *rasm*, readers have to read *sal* if nothing is prefixed to the word. However, whenever *wa-* or *fa-* precede the imperative, readers generally include the *hamza*, as now the *rasm* allows the correct syllable structure, hence: *wa-sʔal al-qaryah* 'ask the village' (Q12:82) and *fa-sʔalū ʔahla d-dikr* 'ask the people of remembrance' (Q16:43). Ibn Kaṭīr, al-Kisāʔī and Xalaf, however, always read the *hamzah*less form regardless of context (Ibn al-Ġazārī, §1562). Either reading is, of course, irregular as the imperfect forms of this verb have the same phonetic context but are invariably read as *yasʔalu* etc.

There are several words that are expected to have a post-consonantal *hamzah* on comparative grounds, but where all readers are in agreement to not read the *hamzah*. The most obvious of these is the word ملك *malak* 'angel'. This word is generally taken to be a loanword from Gəʕəz *mālʔāk* pl. *mālaʔəkt* 'id.', mostly because it shares the same plural formation as the Arabic مَلِكَة *malāʔikah*, which is a plural formation that is rare, and mostly restricted to loanwords (van Putten 2020a, 66). The Gəʕəz form itself is, of course ultimately derived from the Hebrew מַלְאָךְ *malʔāk* 'id.' or Aramaic *malʔakā* 'id.'

The Arabic plural itself clearly points to a missing postconsonantal *hamzah*; there are no other CaCaC nouns that have such a quadriradical plural formation (or more common formations like CaCāʔiC). The lexicographical tradition does in fact record the expected form *malʔak* (*Lisān* 4269b), but the canonical readers are in agreement that the form is *malak*, despite this being an irregular outcome within the phonologies of these reading traditions.

The imperfect of the verb *raʔā* forms a surprising exception to the retention of postconsonantal *hamzah*, as it is not *yarʔā* but *yarā/yarē* among all the canonical readers. The irregular behaviour of this verb seems to have already been a feature of the *Ṣarabiyyah* by the time of Sibawayh (III, 546), as he explicitly mentions the exceptional nature of this word: "all Arabs agree on the dropping of it (the *hamzah* in forms like *ʔarā, tarā, yarā, narā*) because of its

frequent use”, but he adds: “ʾabū al-Xaṭṭāb told me that he has heard one say *qad ʾarʾā-hum* bringing the verb in its original form *raʾaytu*, among the trustworthy Arabs.” Al-Farrāʾ (Luġāt, 165) also says that all Arabs agree on dropping the *hamzah* with the exception of the Banū ʾasad and Taym al-Rabāb.²⁸

6.5.3 Intervocalic Hamzah

6.5.3.1 Riʾāʾa n-nās → riyāʾa n-nās

رِيا الناس ‘to be seen by men’ (Q2:264; Q4:38; Q8:47) is read by most readers as *rīʾāʾa n-nās*, the regular outcome of a *fiʿāl* stem of the root $\sqrt{r}iy$, but ʾabū Ġaṣfar has irregularly shifted the medial *hamzah* to *yāʾ*, yielding *riyāʾa n-nās* (Ibn al-Ġazārī §1490).²⁹

6.5.3.2 Liʾallā → liyallā

Warš ʾan Nāfiʿ in the path of al-ʾazraq reads لِيَا as *liyallā* ‘so that not’ (Q2:150; Q4:165; Q57:29), while the rest of the Quranic readers read *li-ʾallā* (Ibn al-Ġazārī, §1495). This is irregular behaviour in the reading of Warš, which otherwise retains the *hamzah* in such environments.

6.5.3.3 Kufuʾan, huzuʾan → kufuwan, huzuwan

While Ḥaṣṣ is generally very conservative in the retention of the *hamzah*, he is unique in dropping the *hamzah* in كَفُو ‘an equal’ and هُزُو ‘contempt’, reading them as *kufuwan* and *huzuwan* respectively, while the other readers read these words either as *kufuʾan/huzuʾan* (the majority reading) or *kufʾan/huzʾan* (Ḥamzah) (Ibn al-Ġazārī §2668).

6.5.3.4 Bādiya r-raʾyi → bādiʾa r-raʾyi

An interesting point of disagreement among the readers on the placement of the *hamzah* occurs in the phrase بَادِي الرَّاي (Q11:27). The majority of the readers reads بَادِي الرَّاي as *bādiya r-raʾyi*, only ʾabū ʿamr reads it with *hamzah*,

28 A few early manuscripts appear to give evidence that in earlier times such readings were more widespread. The vocalization of Arabe 334a’s *يروا* (Q36:31), places a *fathah* sign on the *rāʾ* which likely denotes the presence of a *hamzah*, thus suggesting *yarʾaw*, and the spelling *يراي* in DAM 01.29-1 leaves little doubt the scribe intended *yarʾā/yarʾē*, as this manuscript frequently employs the *ʾalif* to denote the presence of *hamzah* (van Putten 2019a, 370, n. 210).

29 This should not be considered part of the dissimilation of two consecutive *hamzahs* as in **ʾaʾimmaḥ > ʾayimmaḥ* ‘Imāms’ and **ǧāʾiʾun > ǧāʾin* ‘coming’ as suggested by Fischer (2002, §41a). The dissimilation, at least as described by Sibawayh (III, 552) is always progressive, not regressive, and only occurs if a short vowel intervenes.

i.e. *bādiʾa r-raʿyi* (Ibn al-Ğazarī, §1535). However, it is not entirely clear that we are dealing with a pseudocorrection or irregular absence of *hamzah*.

Ibn Xālawayh (*Huğğah*, 186) takes ʾabū ʿamr’s reading as primary, saying that whoever reads it as *bādiya* is deriving it from the verb *badaʾa/yabdaʾu* ‘to begin’ and is dropping the *hamzah* thus understanding the phrase as “beginning in opinion”. If this interpretation is correct, we are indeed dealing with the absence of the expected *hamzah* which is irregular among each of the readers that reads it thus.

However, al-Farrāʾ (*Maṣānī*, 11, 11) clearly has a different opinion and views *bādiya* and *bādiʾa* as two separate lexical items. He tells us: “you should not apply the *hamzah* to *bādiya*, because the meaning *yabdū* ‘it is obvious’ seems more obvious to us [i.e. “obvious in opinion”]; if you were to apply the *hamzah* to it, then you would intend the meaning *ʾawwal al-raʿy* “first/beginning in opinion.”” If al-Farrāʾ is correct to see the two readings as intending two different meanings, this obviously still stems from an ambiguity of the text which only became ambiguous when readers started to add the *hamzah* to the recitation of the Quran.

6.5.4 Pre-consonantal Hamzah

Among the canonical readers, the dropping of *hamzah* in pre-consonantal position is by far the most common, because it is a regular practice in a restricted form with Warš, and mostly unrestricted for ʾabū Ğaʿfar and ʾabū ʿamr (optional for the latter). For the other readers, however, such dropping of the *hamzah* is not regular, but despite that, it is occasionally attested in isolated words among the other canonical readers.

At the start of this section (§6.5) we already mentioned that al-Kisāʾī read *aḍ-ḍib* ‘the wolf’ without *hamzah*. Xalaf joins him in this reading. Warš likewise drops the *hamzah* in this word, but adds to it also *bīr* ‘well’, and *bīsa*, *bīsa-mā* ‘how bad!’ (Ibn al-Ğazarī §1471–1472). Also, the reduplicated noun *luʾluʾ*, Šuʿbah ʿan ʿāšim goes against his general principles reads *lūluʾ* in all its attestations (Ibn al-Ğazarī §1482). Qālūn ʿan Nāfiʿ and Ibn ʿakwān ʿan Ibn ʿamir read رِيَّا (Q19:74) as *riyyan* rather than *riʿyan* (Ibn al-Ğazarī §1483). Finally, Qālūn ʿan Nāfiʿ, with disagreement among his transmitters, reads *al-mūtafikah* (Q53:53) and *al-mūtafikāt* (Q9:70; Q69:9) ‘that which is overthrown’, rather than *muʾtafikah/muʾtafikāt* (Ibn al-Ğazarī §1482).

التين ‘the fig’ (Q95:1) is an example where all readers are in agreement that the word is to be read as *at-tīn*, without *hamzah*, whereas from an etymological perspective, it seems that this word should have had a *hamzah*. Hebrew תאנה³⁰

30 The pronunciation *tʔenā* of the Tiberian reading tradition is likely also pseudocorrect, as the glottal stop is expected to have been lost here.

and Syriac ܬܬܐ *tettā* both point to a reconstruction **tiʔn-(at-)*, which would be expected to just yield *tiʔn* in varieties that retained **ʔ*.

The suppletive imperative *hātū* ‘give!’ lacks a *hamzah* among all readers where it would be expected to exist. The verb is transparently historically derived from an imperative of the C-stem of $\sqrt{\text{ʔty}}$, i.e. *ʔātū* ‘to give’, and it still inflects as an imperative of this type in Classical Arabic *hāti* (m.sg.); *hātī* (f.sg.); *hātiyā* (du.); *hātū* (m.pl.); *hātīna* (f.pl.). In the Quran only the masculine plural *hātū* is attested (Q2:111; Q21:24; Q27:64; Q28:75).

The initial *h* is an ancient retention of the Central Semitic C-stem, which had an **h-* as can be seen, for example in the Hebrew C-stem that has the shape *hip̄ʕel*. So, where the causative in Classical Arabic is expected to be *ʔāti* < **ʔaʔti*, the form *hāti* developed from a form with retained **h-*, i.e. **haʔti*.³¹ While Classical Arabic undergoes a dissimilatory process of **ʔvʔ* > *ʔv* that can explain the lack of the glottal stop in the regular imperative *ʔāti*, this same sound law cannot be used to explain the absence of the glottal stop in *hāti*, which has irregularly lost the *hamzah* in Classical Arabic as well as all reading traditions. This form probably developed because the form *hāt(i)* was not transparently analysable to the speakers anymore as coming from the root $\sqrt{\text{ʔty}}$, and thus the *hamzah* could not be reinstated.

6.5.5 Interchange between III-w/y and III-ʔ Verbs

In most, if not all, modern Arabic dialects, III-w/y and III-ʔ merge completely. This merger is already well on its way in the language of the QCT. In the imperfect, the verbs appear to have been indistinguishable from final weak verbs, and in the imperative and jussive, etymological III-ʔ verbs behave as III-y verbs three of the seven times they occur (see Appendix A.4.13). The result of this partial merger has also led to disagreement between the readers as to whether a verb form should be treated as a III-ʔ or a III-y verb.

Most conspicuous of the verbs that show this disagreement is the verb *ʔar-ǧaʔa/ʔarǧā* ‘to postpone’ forms of which occur throughout the Quran, with clear disagreement between the readers (Ibn al-Ǧazārī, §1229; §1533).

31 For an account of the development of the C-stem from **sʔ* to **h* and ultimately to *ʔ* in Arabic, see Al-Jallad (*yusapʕil*). Al-Jallad argues that **sʔ* regularly becomes *h* on word-boundaries in Proto-Central Semitic. For Arabic, **h* becomes *ʔ* in pre-stress position, thus explaining the shift of **ʕim* ‘if’ and **ʕinna* ‘verily’ to *ʔin* and *ʔinna*. He moreover argues that **haffala* > *ʔaffala* is the result of the same sound shift, drawing upon stress marking in the Damascus Psalm fragment to argue that the stress of C-stems was **ʔaffála* in Proto-Arabic, something that would be corroborated by Hebrew which likewise carries the stress in this position. If this is correct, it would seem that the imperative form of the verb of **haʔti* carried the stress on the penultimate, i.e. **háʔti*, which would explain the retention of the **h* in this position.

	IK IA H	AA Y	IA ID	N AJ Q IW	N AJ K X W IJ	Ḥ A Ḥṣ	A Ṣ
ارجح (Q7:111; Q26:36)	<i>ʔarǧiʔ-hū</i>	<i>ʔarǧiʔ-hu</i>	<i>ʔarǧiʔ-hi</i>	<i>ʔarǧi-hi</i>	<i>ʔarǧi-hī</i>	<i>ʔarǧi-h</i>	
مرجون (Q9:106)	<i>murǧaʔūna</i>			<i>murǧawna</i>			<i>murǧaʔūna</i>
ترجى (Q33:51)	<i>turǧiʔu</i>			<i>turǧi</i>			<i>turǧiʔu</i>

Leaving the unusual treatment of the pronominal suffix of ارجح aside for now (for a discussion on that see § 7.1.8), there is a mostly regular split: The Damascene, Meccan and Basran readers treat the verb as a III-ʔ root, whereas the Medinans and Kufans treat it as a III-y root, with the exception of Šuʿbah ʿan ʿāsim who has a mixed paradigm where the imperative is III-y and the other forms III-ʔ. As I have found no cognates of this verb in other Semitic languages, it is difficult to be sure whether the form with the *hamzah* is the original form, or a pseudocorrection.

Another verb that shows disagreement between the readers are derivations from *waṭiʔa* ‘to tread, step on’. ʔabū Ġaʿfar in accordance with a general rule of his reads يواطوا (Q9:37) as *yuwāṭū* rather than *yuwāṭiʔū* as the rest. However, the forms of the G-stem يطون (Q9:120), تطوها (Q33:27), تطوهم (Q48:25) he reads as *yaṭawna*, *taṭaw-hā* and *taṭaw-humū* respectively, where the other readers read *yaṭaʔūna*, *taṭaʔū-hā* and *taṭaʔū-hum(ū)*. These forms are not the regular outcome of his general *hamzah* loss rules. Other verbs of this type simply retain the *hamzah*, e.g. يقرون (Q10:94; Q17:71) as *yaqraʔūna*. He also reads موطيا ‘step’ (Q9:120) as *mawṭiyan* rather than *mawṭiʔan*. ʔabū Ġaʿfar is inconsistent on the treatment of this sequence, cf. سايا *sayyiʔan* (Q9:102) but خاسيا *xāsiyā* (Q67:4).

However, he treats وطا ‘impression’ (Q73:6) as a III-ʔ stem, reading *waṭʔan*. This is rather surprising as *wiṭāʔan* is also consistent with the *rasm* and would have matched the treatment of this root as both III-y and III-ʔ, and this is in fact how ʔabū ʿamr and Ibn ʿāmir read (Ibn al-Ġazarī, § 4467).

6.5.6 *Sāla* for *saʔala* (Q70:1)

Nāfiʿ, ʔabū Ġaʿfar and Ibn ʿāmir read سال in Q70:1 (and *only* there) as *sāla*, with the expected *hamzah* not reinstated, which they do have elsewhere in their reading. Thus, for both of them سالك is read as *saʔala-ka* in Q2:186, for example (Ibn al-Ġazarī, § 4441).

6.5.7 *Šurakā-ya (Q16:27) for al-Bazzī ṣan Ibn Kaṭīr*

Most readers are in agreement that شُرَكَائِي (Q16:27) should be read with *hamzah*, *šurakā?-iya* ‘my partners’, but al-Bazzī ṣan Ibn Kaṭīr (with disagreement among his transmitters) reads it as *šurakā-ya*, treating this plural as a *ʔalif maqṣūrah* rather than an *ʔalif mamdūdah* (according to Ibn Muğāhid, 371, and al-Dānī *al-taysīr*, 137, but not according to Ibn al-Ġazarī, § 3417). This is not the regular behaviour of al-Bazzī with this noun. In fact, even the other cases of the phrase شُرَكَائِي ‘my partners’ (Q18:52; Q28:62, 74; Q41:47) are read by al-Bazzī as *šurakā?-iya*.

6.6 Conclusion

In the above sections we have examined the position of the *hamzah* among the canonical readers. As is clear from this discussion we can find ample examples both of the application of *hamzah* where it is evidently pseudocorrect and places where the reading traditions lack *hamzah* where their regular rules would not predict it. These findings show that Blau’s assertion that there is no trace of pseudocorrection in the Quran is incorrect. Besides a good number of pseudocorrect *hamzahs*, we also find many examples where the readers fail to insert the *hamzah* where we would expect it. This combined with reports of introduction of *hamzah* in the second century (at least in Medina) suggests that application of the *hamzah* into the text was part of the goals of the Quranic readers. These readers would not always have the means to do this correctly, sometimes overzealously applied it to words that certainly never had it, and in other cases refrained due to uncertainty.

Of course, this does not show that the language was composed without *hamzah*, that evidence can only be retrieved from Quranic rhyme and orthography. What it does show is that the Quranic reading traditions cannot be taken as a reliable guide for the language of the Quran in this regard. The readers were actively trying to apply *hamzah* in what they considered to be the correct way (mistaken or not), and there is no indication that these attempts had anything to do with what the situation was in the original composition. As such, the presence and pervasive use of *hamzah* in the Quranic reading traditions cannot inform us as to what the treatment of the *hamzah* in the original language of the Quran was.