

## ARTÍCULOS

### Finding Dūrī: Communal Transmission of Abū ‘Amr among the People of ‘Irāq

En busca de Dūrī: la transmisión comunitaria de Abū ‘Amr  
entre las gentes del ‘Irāq

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#### Abstract

This paper challenges the conventional understanding of the transmission of Abū ‘Amr’s reading tradition. It argues that the now dominant two-*rāwī* system, which designates al-Dūrī and al-Sūsī as the sole transmitters of Abū ‘Amr, is a later simplification of an earlier communal transmission in early *qirā’āt* works. By examining these works, it is shown that al-Dūrī was initially understood as representing a group of Iraqi transmitters (*Ahl al-‘Irāq*) who were all considered equally authoritative sources of al-Yazīdī’s transmission from Abū ‘Amr. This concept of *Ahl al-‘Irāq* can be traced back to Ibn Ḡalbūn the father (d. 389/999). Furthermore, the paper shows how over time the canon came to focus on al-Dūrī alone and how readings of other members of *Ahl al-‘Irāq*, like Ibn al-Yazīdī, were eventually incorporated into the canonical transmission of al-Dūrī, even if they were not originally transmitted through him.

**Keywords:** Quranic reading traditions; Abū ‘Amr; al-Dūrī; *Ahl al-‘Irāq*; transmission; *riwāya*; *tilāwa*.

#### Resumen

Este artículo cuestiona la comprensión convencional de la transmisión de la tradición de lectura de Abū ‘Amr y sostiene que el sistema de dos *rāwīs*, que designa a al-Dūrī y a al-Sūsī como los únicos transmisores de Abū ‘Amr, es una simplificación posterior de una transmisión comunal anterior documentada en los primeros trabajos de *qirā’āt*. Al examinar estos trabajos, se observa que, en un principio, al-Dūrī se entendía como representante de un grupo de transmisores iraquíes (*Ahl al-‘Irāq*), considerados todos ellos como fuentes igualmente autorizadas de la transmisión de al-Yazīdī a partir de Abū ‘Amr. Este concepto de *Ahl al-‘Irāq* se puede rastrear hasta Ibn Ḡalbūn el padre (d. 389/999). Además, se muestra cómo con el tiempo el canon pasó a centrarse únicamente en al-Dūrī y cómo las lecturas de otros miembros de los *Ahl al-‘Irāq*, como Ibn al-Yazīdī, fueron eventualmente incorporadas a la transmisión canónica de al-Dūrī, incluso si originalmente no se transmitían a través de él.

**Palabras clave:** Tradiciones de lecturas coránicas; Abū ‘Amr; al-Dūrī; *Ahl al-‘Irāq*; transmisión; *riwāya*; *tilāwa*.

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## Introduction

Today, there are ten canonical reading traditions with two transmissions each that are considered canonical. This two-*rāwī* canon first emerged as a simplified schema to teach the seven reading traditions first brought together as a group by Ibn Muğāhid (d. 324/936). The emergence of this two-*rāwī* canon has received attention in recent years from Shady Nasser.<sup>1</sup> For most readers there were significantly more than two distinct transmissions. As Nasser shows, after Ibn Ġalbūn the father (d. 389/998), who introduced this system, the Islamic east did not adopt this culled down two-*rāwī* system until much later. In the Islamic west, however, this simplified system gains significant popularity, and most authors following Ibn Ġalbūn the father, more or less, follow his schematic simplification.

Today, for one of the canonical readers from Basra, Abū ‘Amr b. al-‘Alā’ (d. 154/770),<sup>2</sup> two transmitters are considered canonical. These are Abū ‘Umar al-Dūrī (d. 246/860)<sup>3</sup> and Abū Šu‘ayb al-Sūsī (d. 261/874)<sup>4</sup> who are both students of Yahyā b. al-Mubārak al-Yazīdī (d. 202/818)<sup>5</sup> who in turn was one of Abū ‘Amr’s students. However, as I will show in this paper, the model where Abū ‘Amr — like the other readers in the two-*rāwī* system — is represented by precisely two individual transmitters, is a simplified version of a system that is established centuries after the introduction of the two-*rāwī* system.

Nasser already noted that in al-Dānī’s (d. 444/1053) learner’s manual, *Kitāb al-Taysīr fī al-qirā’āt al-sab‘*, which later served as a pedagogical basis for the establishment of the two-*rāwī* canon, something unusual happens in his discussion of the *isnāds* for the transmission of al-Dūrī. In the *Taysīr*, all readers are provided with an *isnād* for *riwāya* transmission (a formal textual transmission of specific variants)<sup>6</sup> and *tilāwa* transmission (full recitation of the Quran to a teacher according to a certain transmission).<sup>7</sup> While his *tilāwa* transmission goes through al-Dūrī → Abū al-Za‘rā’ b. ‘Abdūs → Ibn Muğāhid, a transmission path that would eventually become one of the main paths for al-Dūrī, his *riwāya* transmission for al-Dūrī does not go through al-Dūrī at all. Instead, it goes through a fellow Iraqi transmitter from al-Yazīdī named Abū Ḥallād Sulaymān b. Ḥallād (d. 261/875).<sup>8</sup>

Nasser speculates that this is a mistake on al-Dānī’s end, saying “in al-Dānī’s subconscious mind, al-Yazīdī was a *Rāwī* while al-Dūrī and al-Sūsī were *ṭuruq*. This is confirmed by simply studying al-Dānī’s *isnāds* in *Jāmi‘ al-bayān* where he clearly and explicitly determined the two *Rāwīs* of Abū ‘Amr b. al-‘Alā’ to be al-Yazīdī and Shujā’ b. Abī Naṣr. [...] Was al-Dānī dictating his book from memory where this wandering *isnād* made its way by mistake from *Jāmi‘ al-bayān* to *at-Taysīr*?”<sup>9</sup>

In this paper I will show that while al-Dānī’s presentation is perhaps surprising to us, it is neither a mistake nor an innovation on his part. We will see that going as far back as at least Ibn Ġalbūn the father, it was customary to consider multiple of al-Dūrī’s contemporary colleagues as all equally representative of the transmission of “the People of Iraq” (*ahl al-‘Irāq*), which al-Dānī along with other authors explicitly also called the transmission of al-Dūrī as a kind of *pars pro toto* reference.

### *Ahl al-‘Irāq in Mufradat Abī ‘Amr b. al-‘Alā’ al-Baṣrī*

The first indication that we are not dealing with a mistake on al-Dānī’s part is that he repeats this supposed mistake in his *Mufradat Abī ‘Amr b. al-‘Alā’ al-Baṣrī*,<sup>10</sup> a work that solely focuses on describing the reading of Abū ‘Amr. This work is divided into two sections, the first describes the

<sup>1</sup> Nasser, “The Two-*Rāwī* Canon”.

<sup>2</sup> al-Ḍahabī, *Ma‘rifat al-qurrā’ al-kibār*, I, pp. 223-237, #44.

<sup>3</sup> al-Ḍahabī, *Ma‘rifat al-qurrā’ al-kibār*, I, pp. 386-389, #118.

<sup>4</sup> al-Ḍahabī, *Ma‘rifat al-qurrā’ al-kibār*, I, pp. 390-391, #119.

<sup>5</sup> al-Ḍahabī, *Ma‘rifat al-qurrā’ al-kibār*, I, pp. 320-323, #79. Al-Yazīdī was the head of a veritable dynasty of philologists and Quran readers, closely associated with the Abbasid caliph al-Ma’mūn. See Sellheim, “al-Yazīdī”.

<sup>6</sup> *Riwāyah Isnāds* are indicated with the phrase *ḥaddaṭānī/ḥaddātanā (biḥā) fulānun qāla* “so-and-so related (according to it, i.e. the transmission) to me/us saying”.

<sup>7</sup> *Tilāwah Isnāds* are indicated with the phrase *qara’ tu biḥā (l-qur’āna kullahū) ‘alā fulān in wa-qāla* “I recited according to it (the complete Quran) to so-and-so and he said:”

<sup>8</sup> al-Ḍahabī, *Ma‘rifat al-qurrā’ al-kibār*, I, pp. 394-395, #125.

<sup>9</sup> Nasser, “Two-*Rāwī* Canon,” p. 55.

<sup>10</sup> al-Dānī, *Mufradat Abī ‘Amr*.

transmission of al-Dūrī by comparing it to how it differs from Qālūn’s (d. 220/835) transmission of Nāfi’ (d. 169/785).<sup>11</sup> The second part describes the transmission of al-Sūsī by listing the ways in which it deviates from al-Dūrī.

In the introduction, al-Dānī tells us: “I will single out the wordings that are unique to Abū ‘Amr, in the path of the people of Iraq (*ahl al-‘Irāq*), and it is the transmission of Abū ‘Umar Ḥaṣṣ b. ‘Umar al-Dūrī from al-Yazīdī from him”.<sup>12</sup> Here he clearly considers the transmission of “the People of Iraq” to be equivalent to one another and to al-Dūrī. This wording is important, because when we turn to the *isnād* section in the al-Dūrī part, we find that, like in the *Taysīr*, not all *isnāds* go through al-Dūrī.<sup>13</sup> In fact, his *riwāya isnāds* go through five different Iraqi transmissions from al-Yazīdī: Al-Dūrī, Abū Ḥamdūn (d. ca. 240/855),<sup>14</sup> Abū Ḥallād, Abū Ayyūb al-Ḥayyāt (d. mid third c./mid ninth c.)<sup>15</sup> and Abū ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Ibn al-Yazīdī (d. 284/897).<sup>16</sup> In other words, al-Dānī considered all five of these readers functionally equivalent representations of the Iraqi tradition of the transmission of al-Yazīdī.

The chart below reproduces these *isnāds*. Two *isnāds* change from *riwāya* to *tilāwa* transmission from Ibn Muḡāhid on down.<sup>17</sup> I have marked this with a double stroked connection. I have highlighted the one *isnād* that is also present in the *Taysīr*. Clearly, to al-Dānī equating these five Iraqis (*Ahl al-‘Irāq*) with al-Dūrī was done on purpose and not by mistake.

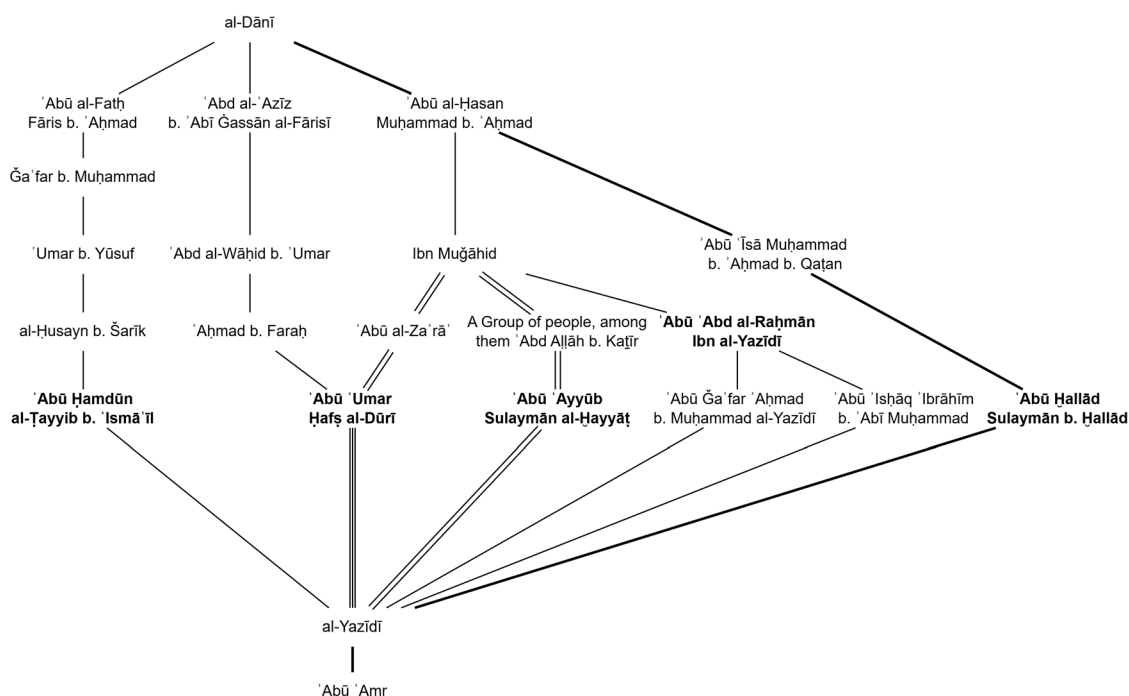


Figure 1. The Riwaya Isnāds of al-Dānī’s *Mufradat Abī ‘Amr*.

<sup>11</sup> al-Dānī’s choice of Nāfi’ to serve as the basis of comparison is to be expected. Nāfi’ was and still is the most dominant reading of the Maghreb and al-Andalus. The transmission of Warš was probably more common, but in terms of special phonological and morphological rules Qālūn is a lot more “normal”, making it an easier basis for comparison.

<sup>12</sup> al-Dānī, *Mufradat Abī ‘Amr*, pp. 23-24.

<sup>13</sup> al-Dānī, *Mufradat Abī ‘Amr*, pp. 40-44.

<sup>14</sup> al-Dahabī, *Ma’rifat al-qurrā’ al-kibār*, I, pp. 425-426, #147.

<sup>15</sup> al-Dahabī, *Ma’rifat al-qurrā’ al-kibār*, I, pp. 391-392, #120.

<sup>16</sup> Ibn al-Ḡazārī, *Ḡāyat al-nihāya fī ṭabaqāt al-qurrā’*, I, p. 438, #2049 (as *Abū al-Qāsim* Ibn al-Yazīdī). Ibn al-Yazīdī was the grandson of Abū Muḥammad Yaḥyā b. al-Mubārak al-Yazīdī, not his son as Sellheim, “al-Yazīdī”, suggests. But being commonly called ‘Ibn al-Yazīdī’ appears to have caused significant confusion early on already, as al-Dānī explicitly tries to set the record straight, see al-Dānī, *Mufradat Abī ‘Amr*, pp. 40-41.

<sup>17</sup> This should certainly be understood as indicating that what counted as the *riwāya* mode was the textual transmission of Muḡāhid, *Kitāb al-Sab’a fī al-Qirā’āt*. Ibn Muḡāhid himself received these paths through *tilāwa* transmission.

His *tilāwa isnāds* go much more clearly through al-Dūrī. Nevertheless, here too there is still a path that goes through one of the other *Ahl al-ʿIrāq*, namely, Abū Ayyūb. Still, the much more dominant path through al-Dūrī for *tilāwa* transmission plausibly explains why *Ahl al-ʿIrāq* could be referred to *pars pro toto* as “al-Dūrī”.



Figure 2. The Tilawa Isnads of al-Dānī's *Mufradat Abī 'Amr*.

While one might entertain the possibility in isolation that the odd appearance of Abū Ḥallād in the *riwāya* transmission of the *Taysīr* was a mistake, this can of course not be maintained if he does it again in his other work (and in much clearer terms with *more* transmitters that are not al-Dūrī). Clearly, the fact that al-Dūrī was the transmission al-Dānī reports was simply not perceived to be in conflict with the fact that this reading was *also* transmitted by “people of Iraq” other than al-Dūrī.

For al-Sūsī, all the transmissions do go through him back to al-Yazīdī, al-Dānī lists the following:

1. Riwaya: Abū 'Abd al-Raḥmān Aḥmad b. Šu'ayb al-Nisā'ī ← al-Sūsī ← al-Yazīdī ← Abū 'Amr
2. Riwaya: 'Alī b. Mūsā ← al-Sūsī ← al-Yazīdī ← Abū 'Amr
3. Tilāwa: Muḥammad b. Ismā'īl ← al-Sūsī ← al-Yazīdī ← Abū 'Amr
4. Tilāwa: Abū 'Uṭmān al-Naḥwī ← al-Sūsī ← al-Yazīdī ← Abū 'Amr
5. Tilāwa: Mūsā b. Ḡarīr ← al-Sūsī ← al-Yazīdī ← Abū 'Amr

This conceptualization of a group of people (to be precise: al-Dūrī, Abū Ḥallād, Abū Ḥamdūn, Abū Ayyūb and Ibn al-Yazīdī) representing “the People of Iraq” is found several times throughout the *Taysīr*, where rather than referring to a reading as being read by al-Dūrī. This is then sometimes put in contrast to “the people of Raqqa” (*ahl al-raqqā*), as al-Sūsī moved to Raqqa, and many of the people that transmit from him are subsequently Raqqans. This kind of wording seems to especially come up in cases where there is disagreement on how to read particularly contentious points in the

transmissions between these different readers of the people of Iraq, while avoiding going into the fine-grained details over who is transmitting what. As these readers were functionally equivalent, all being direct students of the authoritative al-Yazīdī, their disagreement in certain cases was considered to be of equivalent authority. In such cases, al-Dānī’s expert manual, *Ġāmi‘ al-bayān*, will likewise use *Ahl al-‘Irāq* in contrast to *Ahl al-Raqqā*.

Below, we will discuss the cases where these terms appear in the *Taysīr*. Even though the *Taysīr* only gives an *isnād* for one of the people of Iraq besides al-Dūrī (Abū Ḥallād), al-Dānī actually cites a number of the other transmitters in the work as well. Both Abū Ḥamdūn and Ibn al-Yazīdī are invoked on multiple occasions by name. Further analysis of this and other evidence will make clear that, while neither the *Taysīr* nor the *Ġāmi‘ al-bayān* explicitly defines the concept of *Ahl al-‘Irāq*, al-Dānī works with this conceptualisation, like he does in his *Mufradat Abī ‘Amr*.

From the later standard that upholds that every canonical reader gets two canonical transmitters that are two specific individuals, this presentation of impersonal communal transmission is rather surprising. While it can be instructive to read the early *qirā’āt* works with these later frameworks in mind, we should be cautious in assuming that deviations from this later standard represent errors or mistakes. In the following, I show that the terms *Ahl al-‘Irāq* and *Ahl al-Raqqā* functioned as a widely-understood abstraction in early *Qirā’āt* works. We have already noted al-Dānī’s indifferent treatment of these terms is suggestive of the fact that they required no further explanation for his audience. Therefore, it is worth looking at some of the other Maghribi *qirā’āt* works composed before those of al-Dānī in order to trace back the origins of this conceptualization of *Ahl al-‘Irāq*.

### Tracing the Concept of *Ahl al-‘Irāq*

Al-Dānī is by no means the first author to equate the transmission of al-Dūrī with *Ahl al-‘Irāq*. We see this exact same schema with a number of contemporary and earlier scholars. For example, al-Dānī’s Cordovan contemporary Makkī b. Abī Ṭālib (d. 435/1044) in his *Tabṣira* transmits the transmission of “al-Dūrī” through the four Iraqis al-Dūrī, Abū Ḥamdūn, Abū Ayyūb, Abū Ḥallād, and explicitly says that his teacher Ibn Ḡalbūn the father did not mention any differences between them,<sup>18</sup> and that whenever he refers to “al-Dūrī”, *al-‘Irāqīyyīn* “the Iraqis” or *Ahl al-‘Irāq* “The people of Iraq” he always means the transmission of all four of them, and that when he mentions *al-Raqqīyyīn* “the Raqqans” he means al-Sūsī and his students<sup>19, 20</sup>.

But Makkī’s reference to his teacher Ibn Ḡalbūn the father clearly shows that the conceptualization of the transmission paths according to the People of Iraq and the People of Raqqā goes back even further. So, as we would expect, earlier works also follow this schema. For example, Muḥammad b. Sufyān al-Qayrawānī (d. 413/1023) in his *al-Hādī fī al-Qurrā’ al-Sab‘* represents the two transmission paths of Abū ‘Amr as the People of Iraq (= Abū Ayyūb, al-Dūrī, Abū Ḥamdūn)<sup>21</sup> versus the People of Raqqā (= al-Sūsī as transmitted by a group of readers from Raqqā).<sup>22</sup>

Abū al-Ḥasan b. Ḡalbūn the son (d. 399/1008) — whose work does not follow a two-*rāwī* system — traces his transmission of “al-Dūrī” back to not only al-Dūrī, but also another Iraqi we have not encountered in the other works yet: Abū al-Faṭḥ ‘Āmir b. ‘Amr (or ‘Umar) al-Mawṣilī, also known as Ūqīyya<sup>23</sup> (d. 250/865).<sup>24</sup>

Finally, since Makkī b. Abī Ṭālib traces all of his transmissions through Ibn Ḡalbūn the father, and explicitly refers to the identity of *Ahl al-‘Irāq*, we would of course expect that Ibn Ḡalbūn the father likewise uses this conceptualization. Indeed, his *al-Irṣād* — the first work to have a fully

<sup>18</sup> Makkī b. Abī Ṭālib, *al-Tabṣira fī al-qirā’āt al-sab‘*, p. 207.

<sup>19</sup> Makkī b. Abī Ṭālib, *al-Tabṣira fī al-qirā’āt al-sab‘*, p. 208.

<sup>20</sup> Nasser, “Two-Rāwī Canon”, p. 67, noticed this, and noticed the distinction of *Ahl al-‘Irāq* vs. *Ahl al-Riqqah* (sic) that Makkī makes, but does not realize that this resolves the apparent mistake that al-Dānī commits.

<sup>21</sup> Pace Nasser, “Two-Rāwī Canon,” p. 66. who says that in this work *Ahl al-‘Irāq* are represented by al-Dūrī.

<sup>22</sup> al-Qayrawānī, *al-Hādī fī al-qurrā’ al-sab‘*, pp. 85-88.

<sup>23</sup> al-Dahabī, *Ma’rifat al-qurrā’ al-kibār*, I, p. 394, #124. Pace Nasser, “Two-Rāwī Canon,” p. 64, who mentions only al-Dūrī.

<sup>24</sup> Ibn Ḡalbūn, *al-Taḍkira fī al-qirā’āt al-ṭamān*, pp. 38-39.

recognizable two-*rāwī* system —<sup>25</sup> again has the schematic “people of Iraq” which is represented through *tilāwa* transmission by al-Dūrī, Abū Ayyūb and Abū Ḥamdūn, and probably also Ūqiyya,<sup>26</sup> and through *riwāya* transmission, just like al-Dānī’s *Taysīr*, only by Abū Ḥallād.<sup>27</sup>

To sum up, from the first introduction of the two-*rāwī* system by Ibn Ḡalbūn the father up until al-Dānī, it remained perfectly normal to think of al-Dūrī as representing a group of Iraqi transmitters from al-Yazīdī rather than strictly the person al-Dūrī.

Eventually, the *Isnāds* become focused on al-Dūrī the person alone. This was probably instigated in part by al-Šāṭibī (d. 590/1194) who wrote the didactic poem *Ḥirz al-amānī wa-waḡh al-tahānī*, colloquially known as *al-Šāṭibiyya*, on the basis of al-Dānī’s *al-Taysīr*.<sup>28</sup> Al-Šāṭibī presents no *isnāds* at all in this work, and simply mentions two transmitters for each of the seven readers. For Abū ‘Amr, these are al-Dūrī and al-Sūsī. While it is mostly true that after Ibn Ḡalbūn the father, the Maghrebi scholars seem to converge on the two-*rāwī* transmission, it is incorrect to say, as Nasser does, that “they had always identified al-Dūrī and al-Sūsī as the two canonical *Rāwīs* of Abū ‘Amr b. al-‘Alā’.”<sup>29</sup> This was by no means the case. The Iraqi transmission path continued to be represented by two to five different transmitters from Ibn Ḡalbūn up until Muḥammad b. Šurayḥ al-Ru‘aynī (d. 476/1084). In al-Ru‘aynī’s *al-Kāfi fī al-qirā’āt al-sab*, he exclusively presents al-Dūrī and al-Sūsī, but still displays a clear awareness of the situation present in earlier works as tells us that al-Dūrī is “the transmission of the Iraqis” and al-Sūsī is “the transmission of the Raqqi’s”.<sup>30</sup> An even later work, by Ibn al-Faḥḥām al-Siqillī (d. 516/1123)’s *Kitāb al-Taḡrīd li-buḡyat al-murīd fī al-qirā’āt al-sab* still does not limit transmission to just al-Dūrī and includes Abū Ḥamdūn, Abū Ayyūb, and Ibn al-Yazīdī.<sup>31</sup>

## The Fitness of The People of Iraq

In his 2020 book, Nasser proposes a theory of the development of canonical forms of the readings through a principle that he identifies as “survival of the fittest”.<sup>32</sup> One of the requirements that in Nasser’s evaluation lead for certain transmitters and sub-transmissions (*turuq*, sg. *ṭarīq*) to be favoured and therefore get upgraded to canonical transmitter is them generally agreeing with the consensus of transmitters and not having a lot of unusual readings that come down as single strand transmission.<sup>33</sup>

I agree with Nasser that it is quite plausible that such a heuristic was used by the people who developed the two-*rāwī* system, though probably not with the purpose of “canonizing” such normal forms. Rather this was an inevitable result of simplifying the discipline to make it more accessible; if a work follows the most “normal” transmissions, these are easier to describe. For al-Dānī at least, simplification of the discipline was one of his explicitly stated goals of the *Taysīr*.<sup>34</sup> However, this general trend does not fully explain what becomes canonical and what gets taken out. Nasser discusses a number of transmissions of Abū ‘Amr which he considers to be cases of single strand transmissions that, according to his proposal, would have been filtered out of the canon. A good number of them, however, actually continue to be in the canon and have become the standard reading adopted in recitation of Abū ‘Amr to this day. It is probably not surprising that many of these variants are exactly

<sup>25</sup> Nöldeke et al., *The History of the Qur’ān*, p. 556.

<sup>26</sup> Ibn Ḡalbūn the father cites a *tilāwa isnād* through Ibn Šannabūd which he does not trace all the way to Abū ‘Amr, but this same *Isnād* is cited in Ibn Ḡalbūn the son who does complete it via Ūqiyya, see Ibn Ḡalbūn, *al-Iršād fī qirā’āt al-a’imma al-sab’a wa-šarḥ uṣūlihim*, p. 196, fn. 6; Ibn Ḡalbūn, *al-Taḍkira*, I, pp. 42-45.

<sup>27</sup> Ibn Ḡalbūn, *al-Iršād*, pp. 193-198. Pace Nasser, “Two-*Rāwī* Canon”, p. 64, who says he only transmits al-Dūrī.

<sup>28</sup> al-Šāṭibī, *Ḥirz al-amānī wa-waḡh al-tahānī fī al-qirā’āt al-sab’a*.

<sup>29</sup> Nasser, “Two-*Rāwī* Canon,” p. 72.

<sup>30</sup> al-Ru‘aynī, “al-Kāfi fī al-qirā’āt al-sab’a”, p. 178.

<sup>31</sup> al-Siqillī, *al-Taḡrīd li-buḡyat al-murīd fī al-qirā’āt al-sab’a*, pp. 109-110. Incidentally, this author still brings transmissions from outside the two-*rāwī* canon, despite being a Maghrebi author, namely Šuḡā’ ← Abū ‘Amr, see al-Siqillī, *al-Taḡrīd*, pp. 110-111.

<sup>32</sup> Nasser, *The Second Canonization of the Qur’ān*, pp. 16-99.

<sup>33</sup> Nasser, *The Second Canonization of the Qur’ān*, p. 50.

<sup>34</sup> al-Dānī, *al-Taysīr*, pp. 2-3.

the variants where there is some disagreement among “the people of Iraq”, whose disagreement ends up getting mapped onto the person of al-Dūrī. Because the presence or absence of word-initial hamza is distinctive in Quranic recitation, I transcribe it in Quranic citations in this section.

The first of these is the reading of the genitive of *al-nās* with *imāla*, i.e. *an-nēsi*. Nasser presents this variant as a *šādḍ* reading transmitted by Abū Ṭāhir ‘Abd al-Wāḥid b. ‘Umar al-Bazzār (d. 349/960).<sup>35</sup> Nasser is indeed correct that the medieval biographical works remember a controversy in this transmission of Abū Ṭāhir from Abū ‘Amr, but to conclude from this that “he developed an affinity for *shawādh*”,<sup>36</sup> does not follow from this report, nor does it seem appropriate to consider this reading *šādḍ* at all. This *imāla* of *an-nēsi* in all places it occurs is the standard recitation for al-Dūrī ← Abū ‘Amr today,<sup>37</sup> although *an-nāsi* is still listed as an option by Ibn al-Ġazarī.<sup>38</sup> It is also the reading explicitly endorsed by al-Dānī. The reason for this is obvious: al-Dānī receives his *ṭilāwa* transmission of al-Dūrī through this very same route: al-Dānī ← al-Fārisī ← Abū Ṭāhir ← Ibn Muġāhid ← Abū al-Za‘rā’ ← al-Dūrī.<sup>39</sup> It is made explicit that this variant is cause for some controversy in the discussion on it in the *Taysīr*, and several transmitters from the People of Iraq are invoked to defend this reading despite Ibn Muġāhid not describing or adopting this variant:

Al-Fārisī taught me to recite according to his recitation to Abū Ṭāhir in the reading of Abū ‘Amr with *imāla* of the *fatha* of the *nūn* of *an-nēsi* (e.g. Q2:8) in the genitive, wherever it occurs.

This is the transmission of Abū ‘Abd al-Raḥmān [Ibn al-Yazīdī], Abū Ḥamdūn and Ibn Sa‘dān from al-Yazīdī.

Others than him (i.e., Abū al-Faṭḥ and perhaps Ibn Ġalbūn the son<sup>40</sup>) taught me to recite it with *fath*; this is the transmission of Aḥmad b. Ġubayr from al-Yazīdī, and it is what Ibn Muġāhid used to observe.

The rest [of the seven readers] read it with that (with *fath*).<sup>41</sup>

So, we can clearly see from this passage that Abū Ṭāhir recited differently from his teacher Ibn Muġāhid and that this reading is backed up by the fact that not just al-Dūrī (via Abū Ṭāhir) transmitted this from al-Yazīdī, but also Ibn al-Yazīdī, Abū Ḥamdūn and Ibn Sa‘dān (d. 231/846).<sup>42</sup> The other reading is defended by the *ṭilāwa* transmission via Abū al-Faṭḥ (and Ibn Ġalbūn the son?) but also because it is transmitted by Aḥmad b. Ġubayr (d. 258/872)<sup>43</sup> ← al-Yazīdī. It seems quite plausible that Abū Ṭāhir really did innovate here, and that al-Dūrī never taught this *imāla*, and that we are dealing with a case of contamination from other People of Iraq. However, this did not make this variant “unfit” and it was not filtered out as a result. On the contrary, it is the canonical variant recited today! It is worth noting here also that this variant is explicitly mentioned in *al-Šāṭibiyya* who simply says that both *an-nēsi* and *an-nāsi* are attributed to Abū ‘Amr.<sup>44</sup> To continue Nasser’s evolutionary analogy, reading *an-nēsi* turned out to be the *fittest* reading, making it into the canonical transmission of al-Dūrī, and the reading without *imāla*, although it survives in *al-Šāṭibiyya* as an option, seems to have mostly fallen out of use.

<sup>35</sup> Nasser, *The Second Canonization of the Qur’ān*, p. 21.

<sup>36</sup> Nasser, *The Second Canonization of the Qur’ān*, p. 21.

<sup>37</sup> As may be exemplified by the fact that this is the reading that is printed in the modern print edition of al-Dūrī’s transmission without the mention of any other option in the back matter, see *al-Qur’ān al-Karīm bi-riwāyat al-Dūrī ‘an Abī ‘Amr*, pp. 3, 604 and *passim*.

<sup>38</sup> Ibn al-Ġazarī, *Naṣr al-Qirā’āt al-‘Ašr*, pp. 1686-1689, §2074.

<sup>39</sup> al-Dānī, *al-Taysīr*, p. 12.

<sup>40</sup> In the *Ġāmi‘ al-bayān*, al-Dānī does not yet include a *ṭilāwa isnād* to al-Dūrī/The People of Iraq via Ibn Ġalbūn the son, nor is this mentioned in the *Taysīr* (which only lists a subset of *isnāds* al-Dānī had access to). He does include it in his *Mufrada*, al-Dānī, *Mufradat Abī ‘Amr*, p. 44. Depending on whether the *Taysīr* was written before or after al-Dānī acquired this *isnād*, the wording *gayruhū* “other than him” may either include Ibn Ġalbūn the son, or not. No mention is made of *an-nēsi* in Ibn Ġalbūn the son’s *taḍkira*, so this statement could indeed be intended to include him. See Ibn Ġalbūn, *al-Taḍkira*, pp. 190-216. I thank one of the anonymous reviewers for bringing this to my attention.

<sup>41</sup> al-Dānī, *al-Taysīr*, p. 52.

<sup>42</sup> al-Dahabī, *Ma‘rifat al-qurrā’ al-kibār*, I, pp. 431-432, #154.

<sup>43</sup> al-Dahabī, *Ma‘rifat al-qurrā’ al-kibār*, I, pp. 416-417, #140.

<sup>44</sup> al-Šāṭibī, *Ḥirz al-amānī*, line 331.

In his chapter on the “Survival of the Fittest”, Nasser lists yet more cases of “problematic transmissions of variants” from Abū ‘Amr, where again readers are said to deviate from the standard consensus, and from the “standard rendition promulgated by al-Dūrī and al-Sūsī which was adopted later on by the Qurṛā’ community.”<sup>45</sup> A number of these are standard even today, and are discussed at length in the works that would go on to become the basis for the two-*rāwī* canon. Rather than such readings being single strand transmissions, they are examples of *communal transmission*, which perhaps lack a clear single authority that one might hope for, but which are attributed broadly to (certain members of) the People of Iraq.

One of the “unfit” readings in Nasser’s list is particularly relevant to the People of Iraq question. Ibn Muğāhid reports that Ibn al-Yazīdī would read Q39:7 as *yardahū* rather than *yardah*. According to Nasser “the standard reading of al-Yazīdī through both al-Dūrī and al-Sūsī was *yardah*.”<sup>46</sup> It is certainly true that this is how Ibn Muğāhid presents it, but it is not what becomes the standard practice. Today, reciters of al-Dūrī consistently read *yardahū*,<sup>47</sup> and when we look at the works that follow the two-*rāwī* system, we can indeed see this variant being promulgated. Al-Dānī explicitly says that in his *tilāwa* transmission through al-Fārisī (again, through Abū Ṭāhir) he recites it the way it is recited today:

Nāfi‘, ‘Āsim, Ḥamza and Hišām with some disagreement read *yardahu lakum* with shortness of the *damma* on the *hā*.

Hišām in my recitation to Abū al-Faṭḥ, and Abū Šu‘ayb [as-Sūsī], Abū ‘Umar [al-Dūrī] and other than those two from al-Yazīdī read it without a vowel (i.e. *yardah*).

However, I recited it to al-Fārisī and other than him (= Abū al-Faṭḥ and perhaps ibn Ġalbūn the father) via the People of Iraq (*min ṭarīqi ahli l-irāq*) with the *šila* of *wāw*, and this is the transmission of Abū ‘Abd al-Raḥmān [Ibn al-Yazīdī] and Abū Ḥamdūn and others<sup>48</sup> from al-Yazīdī (i.e. *yardahū*).<sup>49</sup>

In other words, al-Dānī explicitly connects *yardahū* to “the People of Iraq” in his recitation (= *tilāwa* transmission) to al-Fārisī while the *yardah* option is connected with al-Sūsī and al-Dūrī. It is the very fact that this reading is transmitted by more than just Ibn al-Yazīdī that this variant is “fit” rather than “unfit”. It is the most commonly recited option for al-Dūrī today. Both variants are recorded by al-Šāṭibī, who attributes *yardah* to al-Sūsī and to al-Dūrī, with disagreement.<sup>50</sup> Notable here is thus that even though al-Dānī attributes the reading *yardah* to al-Dūrī and *yardahū* to the “the people of Iraq” (which may or may not include al-Dūrī in this case), al-Šāṭibī translates this in his versification to “there is disagreement in the transmission from al-Dūrī”, thus merging al-Dūrī and the people of Iraq, even though the most straightforward reading of al-Dānī here is that al-Dūrī deviated from the people of Iraq in reading *yardah* while the rest of them read *yardahū*.<sup>51</sup> This quote also reveals that al-Fārisī (and other than him, i.e. Abū al-Faṭḥ, and possibly Ibn Ġalbūn the father) seemingly taught the reading of “the people of Iraq” rather than a specific path through a single transmitter from al-Yazīdī. This is in line with what Makkī b. Abī Ṭālib reports on how he was taught by Ibn Ġalbūn the father, as we saw in the previous section.

While a “survival of the fittest” model is perhaps the correct way of conceptualizing the survival of certain variants and the disappearance of others, it is clear that what may look like isolated readings in Ibn Muğāhid’s work are often much more widely documented in later works along

<sup>45</sup> Nasser, *The Second Canonization of the Qur’ān*, pp. 50-55.

<sup>46</sup> Nasser, *The Second Canonization of the Qur’ān*, p. 54.

<sup>47</sup> *al-Qur’ān al-Karīm bi-riwāyat al-Dūrī ‘an Abī ‘Amr*, p. 459 though the other option is mentioned in the back matter on page ٢٠.

<sup>48</sup> al-Dānī specifies the others in his *Ġāmi‘ al-Bayān*, where he says that besides Abū Ḥamdūn and Ibn al-Yazīdī this reading was transmitted from al-Yazīdī by Ibrāhīm according to the transmission of al-‘Abbās, Ibn Sa’dān, Ibn Ġubayr and Aḥmad b. Wāṣil, see al-Dānī, *Ġāmi‘ al-bayān*, pp. 1539-1540.

<sup>49</sup> al-Dānī, *al-Taysīr*, p. 189.

<sup>50</sup> al-Šāṭibī, *Ḥirz al-amānī*, lines 164-165.

<sup>51</sup> This is also how, for example, Abū Ma‘šar al-Ṭabarī presents the data. Al-Dūrī is said to have *yardah* (except in the path of Ibn Barzah, who read *yardahū*) while the other Iraqi transmitters of al-Yazīdī transmit *yardahū* Abū Ma‘šar al-Ṭabarī. 2021. *Ġāmi‘ ‘Abī Ma‘šar al-mašhūr bi-sm ‘Sawq al-‘arūs’*. Edited by Ḥālid Ḥasan ‘Abū al-Ġūd. 5 vols. (Manṣūrah, Egypt: Dār al-Lu‘lu‘ah), IV, pp. 440-441.

different paths. Moreover, with the communal transmission of the people of Iraq feeding into the now standard two-*rāwī* canon, we can see that even a reading that is not recorded for al-Dūrī or al-Sūsī at all may eventually be “upgraded” to canonical status. It is now worth exploring some of the other cases where al-Dānī invokes *Ahl al-‘Irāq* or Iraqi readers that belong to them, rather than al-Dūrī himself on details of recitation in the *Taysīr*.

### The *isti‘āḍa*

Al-Dānī tells us in the *Taysīr* that pronouncing the *isti‘āḍa*<sup>52</sup> out loud (as opposed to silently) is transmitted from Abū ‘Amr through Abū Ḥamdūn ← al-Yazīdī ← Abū ‘Amr and from Muḥammad b. Ḡālib ← Šuḡā‘ ← Abū ‘Amr.<sup>53</sup>

### Major Assimilation

For the major assimilation (*al-idḡām al-kabīr*), i.e. assimilation of two consonants across short vowels. Ibn al-Yazīdī is cited on several occasions, for example for the assimilation Q3:185 *fa-man zuḥẓi* ‘an (← *zuḥẓiḥa* ‘an) al-Dānī says “and Abū ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. al-Yazīdī transmitted that in written form (*manṣūṣan*) from his father [al-Yazīdī]<sup>54</sup> from him [Abū ‘Amr].”<sup>55</sup> and he is cited again for Q17:42 *‘ilā ḡi l-‘arsasabīlan* (← *‘ilā ḡi l-‘arṣi sabīlan*) he adds “Ibn al-Yazīdī transmitted that in written form (*manṣūṣan*) from his father from him.”<sup>56</sup> The reason why Ibn al-Yazīdī is cited in this section seems to be largely because of the fact that he apparently had a book listing cases of major assimilation which al-Dānī used as a source that contained some cases not recorded elsewhere. Al-Šāṭibī accepts both of these assimilations, despite this assimilation not being attributed to either al-Dūrī or as-Sūsī.<sup>57</sup>

### Pausal forms of (unusually spelled) words

On the question of how to pause on the word *ka-‘ayyin* (Q3:146; Q12:105 etc.) — which is spelled with *nūn* for *tanwīn* (كَيْن) — al-Dānī tells us that Abū ‘Amr paused on it as *ka-‘ayy#* in the transmission of Ibn al-Yazīdī (*Abū ‘Amr min riwāyati bni l-yazīdiyyi ‘an abīhi ‘anh*),<sup>58</sup> while others pause on the *nūn* (*ka-‘ayyin#*).<sup>59</sup> In *al-Šāṭibīyya* this reading is simply attributed to Abū ‘Amr.<sup>60</sup>

For *mā li-* (Q4:78; Q18:49; Q25:7; Q70:36) — which is spelled as if it were *māl* (مَال) — al-Dānī tells us that Abū ‘Amr paused on it as *mā#* in the transmission of Ibn al-Yazīdī.<sup>61</sup> Again, in *al-Šāṭibīyya* this reading is simply attributed to Abū ‘Amr.<sup>62</sup>

In the *Taysīr*, al-Sūsī reads Q39:17-18 *‘ibādiya // llaḡīna* — which is spelled عِبَادِ الذِينَ — and it is pronounced in pause as *‘ibādī#*. Whereas it is said that Abū Ḥamdūn and another<sup>63</sup> transmitting from al-Yazīdī read *‘ibādiya llaḡīna* but *‘ibād#* in pause, following the *rasm*.<sup>64</sup> *Al-Šāṭibīyya* likewise attributes the *‘ibādī#* reading to al-Sūsī, and does not explicitly mention the other reading, which implies that reading is attributed to al-Dūrī.<sup>65</sup>

<sup>52</sup> The practice of saying the formula *a‘ūdū bi-llāhi min aš-šayṭāni r-raḡīm* “I seek refuge in God from the accursed Satan” before starting one’s recitation.

<sup>53</sup> al-Dānī, *al-Taysīr*, p. 17. Note that the direct transmitter Šuḡā‘ is not present in the *isnād* section of the *Taysīr* at all.

<sup>54</sup> al-Dānī appears to be committing the same mistake that he warns others from making in his *Mufradat Abī ‘Amr*, and takes Ibn al-Yazīdī to be al-Yazīdī’s son, cf. footnote 16.

<sup>55</sup> al-Dānī, *al-Taysīr*, p. 23.

<sup>56</sup> al-Dānī, *al-Taysīr*, p. 23.

<sup>57</sup> al-Šāṭibī, *Ḥirz al-amānī*, lines 139, 142.

<sup>58</sup> Again al-Dānī presents Ibn al-Yazīdī as al-Yazīdī’s son rather than his grandson. He corrects this in al-Dānī, *Mufradat Abī ‘Amr*, p. 84.

<sup>59</sup> al-Dānī, *al-Taysīr*, p. 60.

<sup>60</sup> al-Šāṭibī, *Ḥirz al-amānī*, line 380.

<sup>61</sup> al-Dānī, *al-Taysīr*, p. 61.

<sup>62</sup> al-Šāṭibī, *Ḥirz al-amānī*, line 381.

<sup>63</sup> This includes Ibn al-Yazīdī, as can be seen in al-Dānī, *Ḡāmi‘ al-bayān*, pp. 1545-1546.

<sup>64</sup> al-Dānī, *al-Taysīr*, pp. 67, 189.

<sup>65</sup> al-Šāṭibī, *Ḥirz al-amānī*, line 439.

Abū ‘Amr recited *ḥāšā li-llāhi* “God forbid” (Q12:31, 51) — which is spelled حاشى الله without a final *alif* — and it is paused upon as *ḥāš#*. Al-Dānī says this was transmitted in written form (*manṣūṣan*) by Ibn al-Yazīdī, and it was also transmitted by Abū Ḥamdūn, Aḥmad b. Wāṣil (d. unknown)<sup>66</sup> and al-Sūsī in the transmission of Abū al-‘Abbās al-Adīb (d. after 258/872)<sup>67, 68</sup> Here a number of people of Iraq are mentioned (but not al-Dūrī!) and one specific transmission for the people of Raqqa (not part of the *Isnāds* included in the *Taysīr* nor the *Ġāmi‘ al-Bayān*). In *al-Šāṭibiyya* this reading is attributed to Abū ‘Amr.<sup>69</sup>

In the first two cases, Ibn al-Yazīdī is the *only* authority invoked for Abū ‘Amr, but this serves to represent the transmission paths for Abū ‘Amr — despite Ibn al-Yazīdī not being either al-Dūrī or al-Sūsī. For the third case, Abū Ḥamdūn “and another” (which is certainly Ibn al-Yazīdī) are cited. For the fourth case, a whole slew of transmitters is cited, including Ibn al-Yazīdī and Abū Ḥamdūn but not al-Dūrī. This type of information does not seem to be available to al-Dānī via al-Dūrī. The reason for this should be obvious: this kind of information was simply not typically transmitted by teachers.<sup>70</sup> The occasion of pausing on *ka-‘ayyin*, *mā li-* or *ḥāšā lillāhi* is mostly theoretical.<sup>71</sup> *Ka-‘ayyin* appears at the beginning of a verse every time it occurs, and *mā li-* soon after a pause or beginning of a verse in most cases, and *ḥāšā lillāhi* as a fixed phrase can hardly be coherently paused on in the middle of it. In practice, pausing on such words is extremely awkward, and does not come up under normal circumstances. It therefore is possible to recite the Quran according to a transmission without ever having to wonder how to pause on such words. This explains why the transmission of al-Dūrī lacked information on this eventuality. The question is slightly more relevant for *‘ibādiya* as it is a verse ending in at least some verse counts.<sup>72</sup>

The presence of specifically transmissions from Ibn al-Yazīdī in written form (*manṣūṣan*), strongly suggests that he had a book that covered *al-waqf ‘alā marsūm al-ḥaṭṭ* “pausing on what is written in the *rasm*” which al-Dānī had access to. This is confirmed by al-Dānī in the *Ġāmi‘ al-Bayān* which explicitly attributes to him a book on *al-waṣl wa-l-qat‘* “connected and interrupted [speech]”.<sup>73</sup> While no such book is attributed to Abū Ḥamdūn, it seems significant that he shows up in two of these four cases along with Ibn al-Yazīdī. This either indicates that Abū Ḥamdūn, unlike other transmitters of the People of Iraq, took the trouble to teach these pausal forms or that he in fact had a book with such information as well.

## Ra’ ā ~ re’ ē

A complicated point takes place in the transmission of Abū ‘Amr when it comes to the *imāla* of the verb *ra’ ā/re’ ē* ‘to see’, depending on whether an *alif al-waṣl* follows or not. Here too, a specific practice for Abū Ḥamdūn and Ibn al-Yazīdī is invoked. The table below summarizes the situation.<sup>74</sup>

<sup>66</sup> Ibn al-Ġazarī, *Ġāyat al-nihāya*, I, p. 134.

<sup>67</sup> Ibn al-Ġazarī, II, p. 255.

<sup>68</sup> al-Dānī, *al-Taysīr*, pp. 128-129.

<sup>69</sup> al-Šāṭibī, *Ḥirz al-amānī*, line 779.

<sup>70</sup> Something which is also confirmed by al-Dānī himself who starts of the chapter on pausal forms of unusually spelled words with the statement: “know that the transmission is well-established for us from Nāfi‘, Abū ‘Amr and the Kufans in terms of how they used to pause on what is written. We do not have anything transmitted from Ibn Kaṭīr and Ibn ‘Āmir”, al-Dānī, *al-Taysīr*, p. 60.

<sup>71</sup> In fact, most pausal prescriptions of the type of *al-waqf ‘alā marsūm al-ḥaṭṭ* fall in this theoretical knowledge.

<sup>72</sup> Indeed, in the *Ġāmi‘ al-bayān* there is an extensive discussion on how to deal with this word because there is disagreement at this place whether there is a verse division.

<sup>73</sup> al-Dānī, *Ġāmi‘ al-bayān*, p. 1546.

<sup>74</sup> al-Dānī, *al-Taysīr*, p. 104.

| Not before <i>alif al-waṣl</i>    | Before <i>alif al-waṣl</i>       | Transmitters                 |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| <i>ra’ē</i>                       | <i>ra’a l-</i>                   | Abū ‘Amr                     |
| <i>re’ē</i> (“it is transmitted”) | <i>re’è l-</i> (“more than one”) | al-Sūsī                      |
| <i>ra’ē</i>                       | <i>ra’è l-</i>                   | Abū Ḥamdūn and Ibn al-Yazīdī |

The situation presented in *al-Šāṭibiyya* simply drops the option reported for Abū Ḥamdūn and Ibn al-Yazīdī thus effectively filtering out the non-al-Dūrī transmission of the people of Iraq.<sup>75</sup>

## Madd

On the discussion of overlong vowels (*madd*) al-Dānī discusses Abū ‘Amr’s relative length compared to other transmitters according to the transmission of the people of Iraq which is said to be the same length as the transmission of Qālūn in the path of Abū Naṣīṭ, and shorter than that of Ibn ‘Āmir and al-Kisā’ī.<sup>76</sup> *Al-Šāṭibiyya* no longer discusses the relative lengths of *madd*.

## Assimilation of *rā’* to *lām*

Abū ‘Amr is said to have assimilated *rā’* to *lām* in cases such as *nağfil-lakum* (← *nağfir lakum*) (Q2:58; Q7:161), but with disagreement among the people of Iraq (and thus by implication no disagreement for the people of Raqqa/al-Sūsī).<sup>77</sup> *Al-Šāṭibiyya* translates this to disagreement for al-Dūrī and consistent assimilation for al-Sūsī.<sup>78</sup>

## *Yā-waylatā, yā-ḥasratā* and *’annā*

The exclamations of woe and the word ‘how’ are pronounced in between *imāla* and *fath*, i.e. *yā-waylatā* (Q5:31; Q11:72; Q25:82), *yā-ḥasratā* (Q39:56) and *’annā* (e.g. Q2:223) “via the people of Iraq”, whereas “the people of Raqqa” pronounced it with ā.<sup>79</sup> These are simply attributed to al-Dūrī and al-Sūsī respectively in *al-Šāṭibiyya*.<sup>80</sup>

## Summary

The examination above shows all cases where al-Dānī cites the People of Iraq other than al-Dūrī and al-Sūsī as a group or by name in the *Taysīr*. Because al-Šāṭibī’s didactic poem can only cite Abū ‘Amr (represented by al-Dūrī and al-Sūsī) or al-Dūrī and al-Sūsī individually, these variants, even when they were not attributed to these two transmitters have all become attributed to them in some way. In cases of major assimilation and pausal forms, information about Abū ‘Amr that was only available through Ibn al-Yazīdī or non-al-Dūrī people of Iraq are presented simply as the reading of Abū ‘Amr, as if such information was transmitted through al-Dūrī and al-Sūsī. *Al-Šāṭibiyya* thus effectively simplifies the attribution, which in practice has led to information being transmitted that passes through an *isnād* from al-Dūrī, even though in reality it never did. The table below summarizes these cases. I have distinguished the modes of transmission (*tilāwa* or *riwāya*) if the *Taysīr* clearly makes such a distinction. Whenever this distinction is not explicitly made, it is probably safe to assume that there is no disagreement between the information received through both modes, but we cannot be certain that the information was actually received through both modes in those cases.

<sup>75</sup> al-Šāṭibī, *Ḥirz al-amānī*, lines 646-648.

<sup>76</sup> al-Dānī, *al-Taysīr*, pp. 30-31.

<sup>77</sup> al-Dānī, p. 44.

<sup>78</sup> al-Šāṭibī, *Ḥirz al-amānī*, line 280.

<sup>79</sup> al-Dānī, *al-Taysīr*, p. 48.

<sup>80</sup> al-Šāṭibī, *Ḥirz al-amānī*, line 317.

| Variant                  | al-Taysīr Tilāwa                                     | al-Taysīr Riwāya                                                   | al-Šaṭibiyya                                           |
|--------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>an-nēsi</i>           | al-Fārisī (via <i>Ahl al-‘Irāq</i> ?)                | Ibn al-Yazīdī, Abū Ḥamdūn, Ibn Sa‘dān                              | <i>an-nēsi/an-nāsi</i> with disagreement from Abū ‘Amr |
| <i>an-nāsi</i>           | Abū al-Faṭḥ (via <i>Ahl al-‘Irāq</i> ?)              | Aḥmad b. Ġubayr                                                    |                                                        |
| <i>yardah</i>            | al-Dūrī, al-Sūsī and others                          |                                                                    | <i>yardah/yardahū</i> with disagreement                |
| <i>yardahū</i>           | al-Fārisī and Abū al-Faṭḥ (via <i>Ahl al-‘Irāq</i> ) | Ibn al-Yazīdī, Abū Ḥamdūn                                          |                                                        |
| <i>zuhzi</i> ‘ <i>an</i> | N/A                                                  | Ibn al-Yazīdī                                                      | Abū ‘Amr                                               |
| <i>al-‘ars</i>           | N/A                                                  | Ibn al-Yazīdī                                                      | Abū ‘Amr                                               |
| <i>sabīlan</i>           |                                                      |                                                                    |                                                        |
| <i>ka-‘ayy#</i>          | N/A                                                  | Ibn al-Yazīdī                                                      | Abū ‘Amr                                               |
| <i>mā# li-</i>           | N/A                                                  | Ibn al-Yazīdī                                                      | Abū ‘Amr                                               |
| <i>‘ibādī</i>            | al-Sūsī                                              |                                                                    | al-Sūsī                                                |
| <i>‘ibād#</i>            | N/A                                                  | Abū Ḥamdūn & Ibn al-Yazīdī                                         | al-Dūrī                                                |
| <i>ḥāš#</i>              | N/A                                                  | Ibn al-Yazīdī, Abū Ḥamdūn, Aḥmad b. Wāṣil, al-Sūsī (Abū al-‘Abbād) | Abū ‘Amr                                               |
| <i>ra’ē/ra’a l-</i>      | Abū ‘Amr                                             |                                                                    | Abū ‘Amr                                               |
| <i>re’ē/re’e l-</i>      | “more than one from al-Sūsī”                         | N/A                                                                | al-Sūsī with disagreement                              |
| <i>ra’ē/ra’e l-</i>      | N/A                                                  | Abū Ḥamdūn and Ibn al-Yazīdī                                       | N/A                                                    |
| <i>r l → lzl</i>         | People of Iraq                                       |                                                                    | al-Dūrī                                                |
| <i>r l → r l</i>         | People of Raqqa                                      |                                                                    | al-Sūsī                                                |
| <i>yā-waylatā</i>        | People of Iraq                                       |                                                                    | al-Dūrī                                                |
| <i>yā-waylatā</i>        | People of Raqqa                                      |                                                                    | al-Sūsī                                                |

## Conclusions

Al-Yazīdī was a reader who was the student of Abū ‘Amr, specializing in his reading, and clearly was a highly successful transmitter. Among the different works we have looked at, we uncover no fewer than eleven named students — al-Dūrī, al-Sūsī, Abū Ḥamdūn, Abū Ḥallād, Abū Ayyūb, Abū al-‘Abbās, Ibn al-Yazīdī, Ibn Sa‘dān, Ūqiyya, Aḥmad b. al-Ġubayr and Aḥmad b. Wāṣil — and there were no doubt more.

While al-Sūsī moved to Raqqa, these other transmitters continued to transmit in Iraq, and their transmission seems to have come to be considered a shared communal tradition of the people of Iraq already by the middle of the 4th century AH, where each of these transmitters would not be strictly differentiated from others. All of them simply presented a communal Iraqi tradition of al-Yazīdī ← Abū ‘Amr. Al-Dūrī was by far the most prominent of these transmitters, likely because he was an expert in *qirā’āt* more generally, also transmitting, among others, the reading of Ismā‘īl b. Ġa‘far ← Nāfi‘, Sulaym ← Ḥamza, al-Kisā‘ī ← Šu‘ba ← ‘Āṣim, Abū ‘Ammāra ← Ḥafṣ ← ‘Āṣim and al-Kisā‘ī.<sup>81</sup> He was therefore the most prominent and famous exponent of the transmission of the people of Iraq, and the communal transmission could be referred to *pars pro toto* as the transmission of al-Dūrī.

<sup>81</sup> al-Dānī, *Ġāmi‘ al-bayān*, pp. 277-278, 342-343, 366, 376-377, 382-384.

The way the medieval authors talk about the transmission of “the people of Iraq” seems to suggest that teachers through *tilāwa* transmission did not bother to distinguish them. Makkī b. Abī Ṭālib explicitly tells us that Ibn Ḡalbūn the father did not mention any differences between the people of Iraq, suggesting the latter taught them as an undifferentiated “people of Iraq.” This also seems to be the case for at least how al-Fārisī taught the al-Yazīdī ← Abū ‘Amr *tilāwa* transmission to al-Dānī, as is clear from wording such as “I recited it to al-Fārisī and another via the people of Iraq” (*qara’ tu ‘alā l-fārisiyyi wa-ḡayrihī min ṭarīqi ahli l-‘irāq*).<sup>82</sup>

The break with the two-*rāwī* system which was mostly adhered to for the other readers<sup>83</sup> is not an accident but a clearly intentional choice. Considering the large number of Iraqi transmitters from al-Yazīdī ← Abū ‘Amr, limiting this strong Iraqi tradition to a single person was not desirable. The Yazidīan tradition of Abū ‘Amr was much more robust than a single bottleneck. Only by the efforts of al-Šāṭibī, who distinguished only between al-Sūsī and al-Dūrī, does the tradition become solely focused on al-Dūrī with *isnāds* preserved solely from him. However, not without incorporating several features of the “people of Iraq” which do not seem to have been explicitly transmitted by al-Dūrī the person (such as several assimilations, specific pausal forms, the reading *yardahū* instead of *yardah* and the *imāla* of *an-nēsi*).

Al-Dānī’s approach to the people of Iraq stands out from the treatment of the Ibn Ḡalbūns and the early Maghrebi authors. Al-Dānī, despite apparently having received an undifferentiated transmission of “the people of Iraq” through *tilāwa* transmission from his teachers, seems to have had an interest in disentangling who precisely taught what. This disentangling mostly took place through the study of the details that he received through the *riwāya* mode of transmission, which clearly involved the use of written works of these transmitters. For Ibn al-Yazīdī, we can be confident that he had a *al-waṣl wa-l-qat’* work from which al-Dānī cites, but he may also have had a formally composed book describing Abū ‘Amr’s reading.<sup>84</sup> A large number of the other people of Iraq that appear in the *riwāya isnāds* had books which al-Dānī cites from.<sup>85</sup> A closer analysis of the early *qirā’āt* works will show that we can get significant insights into the features of historical transmission of these *qirā’āt* and the textual basis for such transmissions.

To sum up, I hope this paper has shown the importance of avoiding the temptation of imposing later schematic presentations of the “canonical” transmission of the *qirā’āt* onto the early period of the discipline. When al-Dānī cited Abū Ḥallād as the *riwāya* transmission of al-Dūrī, he did not make a mistake, but acted in accordance with the established practice as it was introduced by Ibn Ḡalbūn the father. Moreover, the emergence of the canon was not just a case of “survival of the fittest” where anything that was not transmitted through the two-*rāwī* canon was culled from the transmission. Instead, to stick to this Darwinian analogy, we find that the transmission of the *qirā’āt* has mutated. A robust and broad communal transmission of the ‘People of Iraq’ merged into a single simplified, but necessarily amalgamated transmission of al-Dūrī, acquiring features it did not previously have.

<sup>82</sup> al-Dānī, *al-Taysīr*, p. 189.

<sup>83</sup> Although, many of the remarks posed above concerning the presentation of communal transmission of the reading of Abū ‘Amr could be said to apply to the transmission of the reading of Ḥamza as well. For example, Makkī b. Abī Ṭālib has two transmitters for Ḥalaf ← Sulaym ← Ḥamza, namely al-Dūrī & Ḥalaf, likewise as a communal transmission with no difference between them, see Makkī b. Abī Ṭālib, *al-Tabṣira*, pp. 208-209. Ibn Ḡalbūn the father in the transmission overview only lists Ḥalaf and Ḥallād (Ibn Ḡalbūn, *al-Irṣād*, pp. 148-149), but once one looks at the actual *isnād* section one finds that much like with the People of Iraq, Ḥalaf is represented by a group of people: Ḥalaf, al-Dūrī, Ibrāhīm b. Zarbī, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Ibn Qalūqā and Yaḥyā b. al-Ḥazzāz, see Ibn Ḡalbūn, pp. 199-202; and not only Ḥalaf *pace* Nasser, “Two-*Rāwī* Canon,” p. 64. Ibn Ḡalbūn the son likewise lists Ibrāhīm b. Zarbī as an *isnād* for Ḥalaf see Ibn Ḡalbūn, *al-Taḍkira*, pp. 43-44, and not only Ḥalaf and Ḥallād *pace* Nasser, “Two-*Rāwī* Canon,” p. 64. Muḥammad b. Sufyān al-Qayrawānī likewise has an unusual configuration with the transmitters of Ḥamza. He transmits Ḥallād, but besides him al-Dūrī and Ibrāhīm al-Zarbī together in place of Ḥalaf, see al-Qayrawānī, *al-Hādī*, pp. 92-94; and not just al-Dūrī and Ḥallād *pace* Nasser, “Two-*Rāwī* Canon,” p. 66.

<sup>84</sup> Hamdan, *Mu’ḡam muṣannafāt*, p. 51.

<sup>85</sup> Ibn Sa’dān (al-Dānī, *Ġāmi’ al-bayān*, p. 993); Ibn al-Yazīdī (al-Dānī, p. 1546); al-Dūrī (al-Dānī, *Ġāmi’ al-bayān*, 411 for his transmission of Sulaym ← Ḥamzah); Ūqiyya (Hamdan, *Mu’ḡam muṣannafāt ‘ulūm al-qur’ān*, p. 61); Aḥmad b. Wāṣil (al-Dānī, *Ġāmi’ al-bayān*, pp. 575-575, reporting on the pausal forms of Ḥamza); Aḥmad b. Ḡubayr (al-Dānī, *Ġāmi’ al-bayān* p. 988); Abū Ḥallād (Hamdan, *Mu’ḡam muṣannafāt ‘ulūm al-qur’ān*, p. 65).

## Declaration of competing interest

The author of this article declares that he has no financial, professional or personal conflicts of interest that could have inappropriately influenced this work.

## Authorship contribution statement (CRediT)

Marijn van Putten: Conceptualization, Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing.

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