Case in the Qurʾānic Consonantal Text

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Abstract
The nature of the language underlying the Qurʾānic Consonantal Text (QCT) has been a topic of scholarly discussion for well over a hundred years. The traditional position is that this language was essentially identical to that of the pre-Islamic poetry. The mismatch between the language of the reading traditions and the orthography has normally been explained as the result of orthographic conventions such as 'pausal spelling'. A minority of scholars have challenged this view, suggesting instead that the Qurʾān was originally delivered in a local dialect and only subsequently brought in line with Classical Arabic. Neither permutation of these two positions has been based on the one part of the Qurʾānic text that can, with certainty, be dated back to the early Islamic period, the Qurʾānic Consonantal Text. This paper examines the nominal case system of Qurʾānic Arabic. Instead of relying on traditions that developed a century or more after the original composition of the Qurʾān, we rely primarily on the QCT itself, paying special attention to implications of internal rhyme schemata, as well as patterns in the orthography. We will show, based on internal data supported by, but not dependent upon, the orthography that the language behind the QCT possessed a functional but reduced case system, in which cases marked by long vowels were retained, whereas those marked by short vowels were mostly lost. A place where the short case vowel appear to have been retained is in construct. An examination of early Qurʾānic manuscripts suggests that even in this position case distinction was already in the process of breaking down.

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1. Introduction

The question of the linguistic nature of the language of the Qurʾān, often called 'Qurʾānic Arabic,' has received much attention over the past century. Despite the near unanimous witness of the Islamic tradition that the Qurʾān was revealed in a variety of *al-fuṣḥā*, "the purest Arabic," standardized during the 8th - 10th centuries CE, it has been noted that the orthography does not seem to reflect many of the features associated with that variety (e.g. Diem 1976, 1979, 1980, 1981). The mismatch between orthography and recitation traditions is apparent in the phonology, for example in the representation of the glottal stop, as well as morphology, most notably regarding the representation of nunation and case and modal inflectional morphemes.

Scholars have been divided over the proper interpretation of the evidence. Karl Vollers famously challenged the traditional understanding in his *Volkssprache*

und Schriftsprache im alten Arabien (1906), where he argued that the Qurʾān was actually composed in the local Hijazi dialect, which he argued lacked case and modal inflection completely. It was only subsequently, he argued, that the norms of the *fuṣḥā*, or Classical Arabic, were applied to its recitation.

Vollers' proposal was met with widespread resistance. Theodor Nöldeke (1910: 1-5) countered that, when evident in the consonantal text, case inflects in all but two places as we would expect in Classical Arabic. Further, Nöldeke argued, the idea that the tradition of an *ʾiʿrāb*-less Qurʾān could not have disappeared completely without leaving some trace.[1] Therefore, he concludes, the Qurʾān was indeed delivered in a variety with *ʾiʿrāb*, which he considered identical with the poetic language, itself identical with the spoken language of contemporary bedouin.

Subsequently, Joshua Blau (1977) furthered this line of argumentation, suggesting that the language of the Qurʾān possessed full case and modal inflection, and was representative of the spoken dialect of Mecca. For Blau, unlike Nöldeke, there was no fundamental difference between the language of the bedouin and the urban Hijazi dialects. As evidence, Blau points to the lack of pseudo-correct forms in the Qurʾān, which, he argues, would be unusual if the dialect of Mecca had lacked case and mood inflectional endings. While this can certainly be evidence that the language of the Qurʾān possessed a case system, it is not necessarily evidence that it was equivalent with Classical Arabic. We have evidence for pre-Islamic Arabic varieties that possessed functional case systems but were clearly not Classical Arabic (see section 2). Therefore even though we agree that the language of the Qurʾān had a case system (see further below), we cannot agree that the presence of case of necessity means that the language of the Qurʾān is equivalent to Classical Arabic.

A final position was articulated most fully by Zwettler (1978), who argues, against Vollers, that the Qurʾān was delivered in a variety with full *ʾiʿrāb*, but, against Nöldeke and Blau, that the desinential case and modal inflection had ceased to be a part of any spoken dialect, whether bedouin or sedentary. For Zwettler the variety of the Qurʾān was an oral-poetic register, which alone had retained the use of the morphosyntactic case and modal endings as part of a highly stylized archaic prosodic system. On the one hand, Zwettler's arguments for a Homeric Greek-like oral-poetic register are certainly compelling within the context of the

[1] Which Kahle (1947: 65-71, 1948, 1949) famously challenged, collecting hundreds of Muslims traditions with exhortations to recite the Qurʾān with *ʾiʿrāb*, which he justifiably points out could be the traces of this "lost *ʾiʿrāb*-less tradition" that Nöldeke claimed did not exist. However Rabin (1955: 25) and Zwettler (1978: 118) rightly observe that these traditions only prove that Muslims would occasionally recite the Qurʾān without *ʾiʿrāb*, which was clearly perceived as a negative enough practice to preserve such traditions, and it certainly does not prove that it was delivered as such by the prophet.

pre-Islamic poetry, with its rigid metrics and case vowel-dependent rhymes. It is certainly convincing that it is in such a context that we would expect case to have been preserved.[2] His argument is much less convincing, however, when it comes to the Qurʾān, which lacks such structure and metrics as found in the poetry, the structure of which is exactly what he claims was conducive to the preservation of the complex case and mood system. The assumption then leads to an inherent contradiction when it is applied to the language of the Qurʾān. The prose of the Qurʾānic text lacks all of the metrical and formulaic elements of the oral-poetic framework that Zwettler envisions to have been conducive to retention of the full *ʾiʿrāb*. As such, it does not at all follow from his premise that the Qurʾān would have been composed in Classical Arabic.

Sadly, these criticisms of Vollers' arguments amount to arguments of incredulity rather than challenges on linguistic grounds. Many arguments against Vollers' hypothesis that are of linguistic nature cite examples of the *rasm* showing case. This is however yet another (implicit) argument of incredulity, as it assumed that the Uthmanic codex could not have been completely 'corrected' towards the Classical Standard without a trace.[3] However, one need not resort to arguments of incredulity. Also linguistic analysis shows that Voller's hypothesis is incorrect.

Vollers (1906: §42) argued that the accusative ending *-an* would have been lost without a trace in the original composition of the Qurʾān. He bases this, in part, on the fact that large portions of the Qurʾān have a ŪRā rhyme (suras 4, 17, 35 and 73), which looks very similar to the even more common ŪR rhyme (where R stands for any resonant *r, l, m,* or *n* and Ū for a high long vowel *ī* or *ū*). He reconstructs these Suras then with the common ŪR rhyme (*op. cit.* §13). This analysis is clearly untenable. Had these Suras been composed without their final indefinite accusative vowel *-ā*, then there would have been no way of knowing for the composer whether the word was an accusative, genitive or nominative. That the word that the composer chose to place at the end of an Ayah happened to be a grammatical accusative over 500 times in the Qurʾān is statistically implausible.[4]

If this does not convince, let us also have a look at two variants of a common formula attested in the Qurʾān. Many verses of the Qurʾān end in a short, somewhat disconnected phrase that is obviously used to accommodate the rhyme of the Sura. This formula can be summed up as follows:

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[2] Still, it need not have been preserved in such a context. For example, modern *nabaṭī* poetry has a metrical structure quite similar to Classical Arabic metres, yet is without case (Holes & Abu Athera 2009).

[3] Fischer (1967: 60), for example, cites the existence of case vowels in a forms like ابانا and ابانا for *ʾābāʾu-nā* and *ʾābāʾi-nā*, a non-argument if one assumes – as Vollers does – the rasm itself has been classicized.

[4] Fischer (1967: 60) does address the fact that such rhymes exist and presents it as a counterargument. But Vollers readily acknowledges the existence of these rhymes.

ʾinna llāha CaCŪRun CaCŪR "Surely God is [attribute], [attribute]"

This formula is obviously designed to apply to the common ŪR rhyme, and this is in fact where it occurs. But a very similar formula is found as well:

wa-kāna llāhu CaCŪRan CaCŪRā "and God was [attribute], [attribute]"

This one is, as expected, found in Suras that have the ŪRā rhyme. There is, of course, absolutely no reason semantically for the composer to have chosen the past tense *kāna* in these cases. The reason for the choice of a past tense copular sentence is because it gives the intended indefinite accusative ending, proving without a shadow of a doubt that the indefinite accusative ending existed in the language of the Qurʾān.

Despite their differences, however, each of these scholars' arguments shares a fundamental assumption in common, namely, that case was either something that was fully present or fully absent. That is, they do not allow for the possibility that a reduced but still functional case system could stand behind the Qurʾānic Consonantal Text (QCT). Further, Nöldeke, Blau, Zwettler and those who have followed these positions have relied solely on inferences based on later data about the linguistic reality on the eve of Islam.

However, in recent years our understanding of Old Arabic, as attested in the pre-Islamic epigraphic record, has improved dramatically. From the in-depth studies by Al-Jallad (2015; *forthcoming a*), it is now clear that the Old Arabic dialects of the southern Levant, written in the Ancient North Arabian scripts called Safaitic and Ḥismaic, as well as the Nabataean Aramaic script, possessed reduced case systems. These data, reviewed in section 2, are crucial precisely because they are primary data from the pre-Islamic period, both geographically and chronologically proximate to the period during which the Qurʾān was first delivered. It is therefore not *a priori* likely that the language of the QCT had full case inflection like Classical Arabic, as Nöldeke, Blau and Zwettler contend, nor that it had a completely reduced case system like in the modern dialects, as Vollers famously suggested. In this paper we will argue that the balance of the evidence from the QCT points strongly toward a reduced case system, in which final short vowels were lost, leading to a loss of case in most environments, but with retention of case when this was not expressed (solely) by final short vowels, thus differing from both the traditionalists' and Vollers' proposals.

2. Case in Old Arabic

Until the middle of the 20th century, Old Arabic was primarily equated with the language of the pre-Islamic poetry, which became the primary corpus upon which Classical Arabic was based. This, in turn, led to the conclusion, by both Arab grammarians and western scholars alike, that Old Arabic, or pre-Islamic Arabic, consisted of varieties which possessed the full array of desinential case and modal markers found in Classical Arabic (Nöldeke et al. 2013: 260). Eventually, some primary data were incorporated into the picture of pre-Islamic Arabic, such as the

Arabic material identified in the Nabataean Aramaic corpora, which received significant scholarly attention beginning in the 1970s. Werner Diem, for example, wrote detailed treatments of the Arabic linguistic data in Nabataean (1979; 1980; 1981). Significantly, he showed, correctly in our view, that the dialect(s) represented in these corpora attested remnants of case, but that case had broken down already by the 1st century CE (Diem 1973). We have thus had evidence for several decades of pre-Islamic Arabic varieties that lacked a fully functional case system before the advent of Islam. Nevertheless, scholars have largely marginalized this Nabataean data, arguing, for example, that these tribes were geographically peripheral to Arabia, and had lost case as a result of their heavy contact with speakers of other languages (see, e.g., Blau 1977: §4; cf. also Versteegh 1997: 46-51).

Additional discoveries, as well as more refined philological and linguistic work on existing data have shown, however, that in terms of case marking, the Nabataean evidence is hardly exceptional. For example, several inscriptions, discovered after Diem's and Blau's studies, have allowed scholars to chart the development of case in Nabataean Arabic more precisely. The En Avdat inscription dated to the late 1st or early 2nd century CE, attests what appears to be a fully functional case system, with both Nominative and Accusative case but no nunation (Kropp 2017; Al-Jallad *forthcoming a*). While the nature of the inscription, probably a hymn to the deified king Obodas, makes it possible that the language represented an archaic register, it nevertheless confirms a case system similar to the one found in Classical Arabic in the area after Diem's timetable for its loss.

One of the most significant areas of development in the study of Old Arabic is the recognition, argued for convincingly by Al-Jallad (2015), that the inscriptions written in the Ancient North Arabian scripts called Safaitic and Ḥismaic belong to the dialect continuum of Old Arabic. Until now the category of 'Ancient North Arabian' has been treated as a linguistic category as well as one defined by script type. Al-Jallad (*forthcoming b*), however, has shown that several of these corpora attest features that separate them linguistically from other Ancient North Arabian corpora. Taymanitic, for example, attests several features, such as the shift of word-initial **w* > *y*, which are absent in other ANA languages (Kootstra 2016). Safaitic attests several innovations found only in Arabic, such as the widespread use of **mā* as a negator, a *mafʿūl*-based passive participle, and *lam* + jussive to negate the past tense (Al-Jallad 2015: 12). Ḥismaic likewise attests innovations characteristic of Arabic (Al-Jallad *forthcoming b*: §3). Finally, we have one inscription written in the Dadanitisch script, JSLih 384, which represents a form of Old Hijazi Arabic (Al-Jallad *forthcoming b*: §4.1). Our sources for the study of Old Arabic, and in turn for knowledge of case in the pre-Islamic period, have thus been significantly expanded.

Direct evidence for the state of the case system in the Safaitic inscriptions, given the defective nature of the script, is largely restricted to III-glide roots. Al-Jallad (2015: 71) shows convincingly, however, that patterns in the distribution

of III-glide roots point to an accusative/non-accusative distinction. This is now confirmed by A1 (Al-Jallad & al-Manaser 2015), an Old Arabic inscription from NE Jordan written in Greek script – geographically, phraseologically and linguistically similar to the Safaitic inscriptions – which shows a functional accusative, marked by -α, versus a zero-marked nominative/genitive.

Another significant point about the pre-Islamic epigraphic data is the almost complete absence of nunation in any of the corpora. Aside from a few possible relics, Safaitic lacks it (Al-Jallad 2015: 60), as does Nabataean Arabic and (Al-Jallad *forthcoming a*). Thus our linguistic context for the Qurʾān is drastically changed by the primary data from the southern Levant, as well as the Hijaz.

This brief review of the primary evidence for case in Old Arabic suffices to illustrate two important points. First, nominal case marking, while present in a number of the attested pre-Islamic varieties, was nevertheless reduced in some, and absent completely in others. Second, the evidence points to a complete, or at least near-complete, loss of nunation in the varieties of the southern Levant and Hijaz. Therefore, whatever one's position on the authenticity of the pre-Islamic poetry, as well as whether some dialects resembled Classical Arabic in this period, the direct evidence we have of pre-Islamic Arabic all points to varieties with partially or completely reduced case systems. A position that *a priori* assumes the presence of the full Classical Arabic case system in the Qurʾān is thus no longer justified.

Ultimately, the nature of the language of the Qurʾān in general, and the presence or absence of case in specific, must, wherever possible, rest on an analysis of the Qurʾānic Consonantal Text. In the remainder of the paper we focus on evidence from the Qurʾān itself.

3. The Origins of Pausal Spelling

One of the striking features of unvocalized Classical Arabic[5] orthography, as well as the orthography of the QCT, is its rather large disconnect from the way these languages are pronounced. Final short case vowels are not expressed in writing, nor is the word-final *n* of the nunation on singular nouns and adjectives. Other features, such as the absence of a written *hamzah* and the unwritten vowel length of the third person masculine clitic allomorph *-hū/-hī* also catch the eye.

As Arabic orthography does not write short vowels at all, it does not *a priori* seem implausible that they would remain unwritten in word-final position too,[6]

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[5] Throughout this paper we will refer to Classical Arabic, by which we mean the collection of forms and structures described and standardized by the grammarians, especially those working in the 8th - 10th centuries CE. It is this variety that is the topic of the classic descriptions by Wright (1896-8) and Fischer (2002).

[6] Although this is somewhat surprising from the point of view of the origin of the writing system. Nabataean Arabic appears to have used the *waw* and *yod* (and perhaps also the

but it is surprising that a consonant like the *n* of nunation would not be represented in writing with a ـٰـن. Only the indefinite accusative *-an* is represented in writing, and there it is written with a final ـٰا, which would normally represent /ā/.

This non-representation of the consonantal *n*, and the writing of the feminine ending *-at-* with ـة is traditionally explained as the result of 'pausal spelling'. Pausal spelling means that the orthography is based on the form pronounced in pause (e.g. Nöldeke et al. 2013: 408, n. 137). In pause, *-an* becomes *-ā* whereas all other traces of final short vowels and nunation are lost completely. Moreover, the nominal feminine ending *-at* shifts to *-ah*.

While such a 'pausal' spelling convention is, of course, not impossible, as can be readily seen from Classical Arabic orthography as it is used today, such a spelling convention is – to our knowledge – unique among the languages of the world. Despite this, very few scholars have attempted to explain the origins of the mechanics of Arabic pausal spelling and rather just cite it as a given fact.[7]

The few authors that comment on it (e.g. Rabin 1951: 26; Blau 1977: 12) often explain the pausal spelling as the result of authors writing very slowly, while sounding out each word individually. The assumption of "many people['s]" (Blau 1977: 12) unfamiliarity with writing is of course not proven, and probably unprovable.

The only scholar who seriously tackles the origin of the 'pausal spelling' principle is Diem (1981). He describes an ingenious series of linguistic and orthographic developments from Nabatean Aramaic to the Hijazi orthography as found in the Qurʾān. We will summarize his argument, and then point out where his analysis falls short. Ultimately we will propose an alternative origin of the so-called pausal spelling principle.

Diem (1981: §132) argues that the principle of pausal spelling developed from the linguistic context in which Arabic writing first appears, that is, as linguistic islands of Arabic names within Nabatean Aramaic text. As these words would be essentially isolated units within Aramaic text, they would naturally take the pausal

aleph) to write word-final short case vowels. For an excellent discussion on the history of *wawation* and the case system of Nabataean Arabic, see Al-Jallad (*forthcoming b*).

7 It is important here to distinguish non-sandhi spellings from pausal spellings. It is not uncommon for an orthography to spell a word without certain contextual phonetic rules applied. Such rules are generally productive phonetic processes. For example, in Dutch the voiced labiodental fricative /v/ devoices and merges with /f/ when it follows a voiceless stop, e.g. *het vee* [ɦɛt fej] 'the cattle' versus *vee* [vej] 'cattle'. The orthography does not reflect this. This is, however, quite different from the Arabic pausal spelling, as such variations are still part of the productive phonetics of the language. This is not the case for the pausal rules of Classical Arabic, e.g. the energic ending *-an* is not pronounced as **-*ā* in isolation, nor is final *-at* pronounced as **-*ah* if it is the verbal ending. The pausal forms of Classical Arabic are therefore not phonetic variants, but allomorphs. Not writing what is essentially morphological alternation is a unique property of Classical Arabic.

form. From this 'isolated within Aramaic text' context, which always required a pausal spelling, eventually a general principle of pausal spelling was deduced, which was simply transferred when the Nabataean script came to be used to write fully Arabic texts. While this mechanism does not prove that pausal spelling was an orthographic principle that governed Nabatean Arabic, as Diem (1981: §141) admits, it provides a plausible motivation for it.

Diem, in our opinion correctly, considers the final ו that appears on (mostly triptotic) names – conventionally referred to as *wawation* – a reflex of the nominative ending **-un*, and the few cases where we find an י a reflex of the genitive **-in*. From this he concludes that in Nabatean Arabic, triptotic nouns probably had the following paradigm:[8]

	Context	Pause
Definite	**-u, *-i, *-a*	—, —, —
Indefinite	**-un, *in, *-an*	*-ū, -ī, -ā*

We accept the possibility that the Nabatean Arabic material represents pausal spellings and that a pausal spelling principle could have derived from the unique context of 'Arabic islands' in an Aramaic context.[9] If the Nabatean orthography had been adapted to write Arabic in the period that this pausal spelling principle was still active, such an explanation would even be attractive.

However, all evidence suggests that this is not the case. As Diem (1981: §151-156) convincingly argues, it seems that Nabatean Arabic at some point starts to lose whatever sound *wawation* represented, and it became a purely orthographic device. This then removes the equivalence of the spelling of words to their pausal

[8] A recent study by Al-Jallad (*forthcoming a*) has convincingly reexamined the evidence. Al-Jallad concludes that both the definite and indefinite triptotic nouns had the case vowels **-o*, **-e*, **-a* while diptotes lacked all endings. While we find this argument convincing, it does not greatly affect Diem's argument in terms of the possibility of a developed pausal spelling principle, as Al-Jallad does not discuss the possibility that these spellings only reflect the pausal pronunciation.

[9] Note, however, that this possibility is now seriously challenged by the discovery of the En Avdat inscription published by Negev in 1986, a few years after Diem's important series of papers on the Qurʾānic orthography (Diem 1976, 1979, 1980, 1981, 1983). This inscription, which probably dates as early as the 2nd century AD, contains a fully Arabic liturgy with functioning case. It is to be doubted that in such a context at such an early stage a pausal spelling principle would be active. See Kropp (2017) for an in-depth discussion of this inscription and Al-Jallad (*forthcoming a*) for a discussion of the case system of this inscription.

pronunciation.[10] Likewise, Nabatean Arabic at some point appears to undergo an **-at* > *-ah* shift. The development of this shift can be deduced from rare doublets such as אמת / אמה for /amah/ (Diem 1981: §157-159).[11] Nevertheless the ת spelling remained in use even after this shift has taken place as a historical spelling. This once again divorces the actual spelling from its pausal pronunciation.

This non-pausal spelling of names continues to be an orthographic practice into the period in which the Nabataean script comes to be used to write Arabic continuing into the Islamic period, as evidenced by the presence of *wawation* in the name طلمو /ṭālem/ in the Harran inscription, dated to 568 AD (Cantineau 1978: 50); حدىدو /ḥadīd/ in PERF 558, dated 644 AD;[12] and of course the spelling of the name *ʿamr* as عمرو even today.

So even if we accept that Nabataean Arabic used a pausal spelling principle, this principle cannot have given rise to the pausal spelling principle of Classical Arabic as it had certainly been abandoned before the Nabatean orthography was adapted to writing fully Arabic text. Instead, it would seem that the Nabatean Aramaic orthography was eventually adapted to write a dialect of Arabic that had lost word-final short vowels and nunation in all positions, not just pause.

A different explanation for the origin of the Qurʾānic orthography is provided by Zwettler (1987: 122-125). He assumes the orthography was based on a dialect that had lost many of the final short vowels (with perhaps the exception of *-ā* < **-an*). When this new orthography was employed to write Classical Arabic, this led to a mismatch between the pronunciation and orthographic practice, which then gave rise to a pausal spelling principle.

The concept of a mediating (non-Classical Arabic) dialect between Nabatean Orthography and Classical Arabic orthography has to be assumed for other reasons as well. As Diem (1980: §116-128) convincingly shows, the QCT (and Classical Arabic) orthography derives from a dialect that had lost the *hamzah*. Nabatean orthography employed the א (which became Ar. ا) to write pre-consonantal and intervocalic glottal stop, e.g. דאבו = Ar. ذيب *ḏiʾb*, דאיבו = Ar. ذويب *ḏuʾayb*, הנאו = Ar. هانى *hāniʾ*. The QCT and Classical Arabic orthography, however, uses the glides ى and و to write the *hamzah* in these positions. The only way to understand this change in orthography, is to assume that the dialect on which the Arabic orthography is based had lost the glottal stop in these positions, a fact widely acknowledged by many authors (e.g. Rabin 1951: 130f., Zwettler 1978: 123).

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[10] The lack of any phonetic reality of the *wawation* is especially clear in an inscription from Sakaka dated to 428 AD which appears to have *wawation* on an Aramaic adjective in a *genitive* context בטבו 'for good' (Nehmé 2010: 71), see also Al-Jallad (*forthcoming b*) who traces the breakdown of the case system of Nabataean Arabic.

[11] Al-Jallad (2017: 157f.) dates this development as early as the second century BCE in Nabatean Arabic based on Greek transcriptions of Aretas I.

[12] Accessed through the Arabic Papyrology Database: http://www.apd.gwi.uni-muenchen.de:8080/apd/project.jsp.

When this new orthography was adapted to Classical Arabic – which retained *hamzah* – these glides were reinterpreted as carriers of the *hamzah*.

To sum up, we have to assume an orthography based on a dialect that was unlike Classical Arabic that functioned as an intermediary between Nabatean Aramaic orthography and the adaptation of that script for Classical Arabic. In the following sections we will argue that the language of the QCT was not Classical Arabic, but rather this mediating dialect which, while not having lost case completely, lost its final short vowels and nunation, giving rise to the orthographic model on which Classical Arabic orthography was eventually based.

4. Challenges to Pausal spelling

In the above section, we have argued that that the orthography of Classical Arabic originates from an adaptation of the Nabataean orthography, adapted to write a dialect without final short vowels and nunation (and without *hamzah*) which was only later adapted for writing Classical Arabic.

It is uncontroversial that Classical Arabic is a language far removed from the orthography which it is written in. We must, therefore, also question whether the language of the QCT was not also written in an orthography far removed from the way the language was pronounced. The absence of case vowels and nunation in the QCT, by themselves, are therefore no guarantee that they were absent in the language of the text (nor, in fact, that they were present).

The presence of short case vowels and nunation in the language of the QCT is often assumed to be true and left unchallenged. As such, the absence of case vowels and nunation is taken as evidence of pausal spelling of the Qurʾān (Nöldeke et al. 2013: 408; Versteegh 1997: 47). This however entails the *a priori* assumption that the Classical Arabic case endings are present in the language of the QCT. This is not evident from the orthography itself. The following two sections will show that it is not clear from the evidence that a pausal spelling principle operated in the QCT. First, rhyme suggests that words were pronounced pausally word-internally. Second words in final *-ī* undergo pausal shortening. This pausal pronunciation is only expressed in the orthography in pause, which we would not expect in case of pausal spelling.

4.1 Pausal forms in context from the rhyme

In the reading traditions of the Qurʾān, prose pausal forms (Fischer 2002: §57) are obligatorily employed at the end of a verse, as well as when a pause is taken in the positions where the reading traditions allow or require it. However, there is some evidence in the rhyme of the QCT that suggests that forms not in pause have to be read as if it were a Classical Arabic pausal form.

There are several examples of rhymes in the Qurʾān that span multiple syllables. In these cases we find that the accusative *-an* may rhyme with *-ā* in non-

pausal position. For example, Q47 has a complex rhyming scheme that can be summarised as *āRa-h/kum*[13] where *R* stands for any resonant *r, l, m* or *n*, e.g.
Q47:1 *ʾaʿmālahum* اعملهم
Q47:7 *ʾaqdāmakum* اقدامهكم
Q47:26 *ʾisrārahum* اسرارهم
Q47:29 *ʾaḍġānahum* اضغنهم

This rhyme scheme may cross word-boundaries, e.g.

Q47:6 *ʿarrafahā lahum* عرفها لهم

In Q47:21 we find an example of an indefinite accusative that is clearly part of the general rhyming scheme: *xayran la-hum* خيرا لهم, which suggests that it is to be read as /xayrā lahum/.

Likewise, Q47:11-12 suggest that the nunation was absent from *alif maqṣūrah* nouns too:

Q47:11 *mawlā lahum* مولى لهم /mawlē lahum/[14]
Q47:12 *maṯwan lahum* مثوى لهم /maṯwē lahum/

Loss of final short case vowel *-u* may be found in Q47:34 *allāhu lahum* الله لهم which, to agree with the rest of the Surah's rhyming scheme *āRah/kum* would have to be read as /allā(h) lahum/.

Other short sections of the Qurʾān have more complex multiple-word rhyming schemes, which only become evident if we assume short-final vowels were lost and **-an* yielded /-ā/ outside of pause as well.

A clear example of a *Sağʿ* unit[15] of two lines is found in Q56. The verses 25 and 26 are flanked on both sides by large sections of *-ū/īC*-rhyme, but they themselves have an *-ā* rhyme:

25: *lā yasmaʿūna fī-hā laġwan walā taʾṯīman*
'They will not hear therein ill speech or commission of sin'

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[13] Several variants of this rhyming scheme occur in this Surah. Ayas 14-16 are marked by the rhyme *āʾa-hum* which might be considered a subtype of the main rhyme. Ayas 17-20 have the rhyme *ē-hum*. Finally, there are two isolated Ayas (10 and 24) with the rhyme *ālu-hā*.

[14] Van Putten (2017a) discusses final *ē* in the Qurʾān, but already Rabin (1951: 115-116) and Nöldeke et al. (2013: 415) argued that Qurʾānic rhyme suggests that the *ʾalif maqṣūrah* had a different phonetic value from *ā* in language of the QCT (*pace* Diem 1979: 54-57).

[15] For a definition of a *Sağʿ* unit see Stewart (1990).

26: *ʾillā qīlan salāman salāman*
‘Only a saying “Peace, peace,”’

Putting these in the analysis of a *Saǧʿ* unit, assuming *-an* > *-ā* in all positions we get the following scheme, where every single word of the unit of both lines ends in *-ā*:

(lā yasmaʿūn)	*fī-h**ā***	*laġw**ā***	*wa-l**ā***	*tāʾṯīm**ā***
	*ʾill**ā***	*qīl**ā***	*salām**ā***	*salām**ā***

A similar isolated *Saǧʿ* unit flanked by a *-laq* rhyme preceding it and a *-ē* rhyme following it is Q96: 3-5, which in 4-5 has an internal *Ram* rhyme inside the verse, introduced by verse 3.

3: *iqraʾ wa-rabbu-ka al-ʾakramu*
‘Recite, and your Lord is the most Generous -’
4: *allaḏī ʿallama bi-l-qalami*
‘Who taught by the pen -’
5: *ʿallama lʾinsāna mā lam yaʿlam*
‘Taught man that which he knew not.’

	iqraʾ	*wa-rabbu-k*	*al-ʾak**ram***
	allaḏī	*ʿal**lam***	*bi-l-qa**lam***
ʿallam[16]	*al-ʾinsān*	*mā **lam***	*yaʿ**lam***

Larcher (2014: §7) identifies two other internal rhymes in Q96:15 *kallā la-ʾin lam yantahi la-nasfaʿan bi-n-nāṣiyati* and 16 *nāṣiyatin kāḏibatin xāṭiʾatin*, which likewise require a pausal pronunciation of the indefinite accusative, loss of final *-i*, and the non-pausal pronunciation of the feminine ending *-atin* to be *-ah*.
Q96:15 would in this interpretation have an ABAB rhyming scheme.

*kall**ā***	*la-ʾin lam yant**ah***	*la-nasfaʿ**ā***	*bi-n-nāṣiy**ah***

[16] Stewart (1990: 125) points out that in *Saǧʿ* units of two or more lines of roughly equal length, the slightly longer verse must follow the shorter verse. It appears that this device is being employed here.

Q96:16 would then be an AAA internal rhyming scheme with not just a final rhyme, but a completely repeating *fāʿilah* nouns scheme for every word of the verse.

nāṣiyah kāḏibah xāṭiyah[17]

A final piece of supporting evidence that points to loss of final case vowels in context are the epithets of Allah, which generally form verse-final internal rhymes in the shape CaCŪ/īR in pairs of two, e.g.

Q2:173, 182, 192 (and *passim*) *ġafūrun raḥīmun* /ġafūr raḥīm/ 'forgiving, merciful'
Q4:26; Q8:71; Q9:15 (and *passim*) *ʿalīmun ḥakīmun* /ʿalīm ḥakīm/ 'knowing, wise'
Q64:18 *al-ʿazīzu l-ḥakīmu* /al-ʿazīz al-ḥakīm/ 'the powerful, the wise'
Q35:30, 34; 42:23 *ġafūrun šakūrun* /ġafūr šakūr/ 'forgiving, appreciative

One may of course argue that these may be examples of the case vowels being incorporated into the rhyme, as both epithets end in a nominative *-un*. This however is not in keeping with the more general rhyming scheme in which these epithets are found. They are invariably used in larger Ū/īR rhyming sections of the Qurʾān, and are clearly being employed as a poetic device to form such a final rhyme.

It is also not possible to argue that the context form with nominative ending was used for the first element, and argue the stressed syllable is rhymed. By addition of the case vowel, with the syllabification of Arabic, the two rhyming syllables would no longer rhyme as the first rhyming syllable would be Cv̄ while the second would be CvR, i.e. |ġa.fū́.run ša.kū́r#|

From the evidence of the rhyme presented here, most conservatively, we have to conclude that pausal pronunciation was at least *allowed* and employed in context in the QCT. The following developments can be shown to have also taken place outside of pause:

**-a, *-i, *-u* > Ø
**-un, *-in* > Ø
**-an* > *-ā*
**-at* > *-ah*

These rules are, in fact, the exact rules that are normally said to be operative in pause, and for all of them, we find evidence in internal rhymes. The most conservative interpretation of these facts must therefore be that pausal forms were

[17] With loss of the intervocalic *ʾ*, as argued by Van Putten (2018).

allowed and employed in word-internal position. We can only ever see evidence for this when internal rhyme is employed, but there is of course no reason to assume that this was not the case elsewhere either.

It is moreover important to stress that the non-pausal forms are never employed to form internal rhymes. If we accept the conservative interpretation that pausal forms were optionally employed in context if it suited the rhyme, it would certainly be surprising that context forms are never used for creating internal rhymes.

4.2 Pausal forms are spelled different in pause

The main reason why the orthography – so far removed from the actual recitation of the Qurʾān – has until now been considered an unconvincing argument that the pronunciation of Qurʾānic Arabic might deviate, and be closer to, the spelling the orthography represents, is the idea that the Qurʾān is spelled pausally. That is, every single word is spelled as it would be spelled when pronounced at the end of an utterance. The idea is that, as words were sounded out one-by-one in isolation before being committed to writing, they would take on their pausal form and be spelled as such, which eventually became conventionalised into the pausal spelling (Nöldeke et al. 2013: 408; Blau 1977:12).[18] This of course presupposes that the language of the Qurʾān did have full case inflection and would only lose nunation and its case vowels in pause as is the case in the reading traditions. This may be plausible if we never find examples of spelling differing depending on whether it occurs in pause or in context. If an example of fairly consistent differentiation of pause and context spelling may be identified, it immediately becomes unlikely that all other spellings would be consistently spelled with their pausal form in context.

Such a case of spelling can be found in the treatment of final *-ī*. This final vowel is regularly lost in pause. This phenomenon can be observed original final **-iy-* nouns, imperfects that end in *-ī*, the 1sg. direct object marker *-nī* and possessive marker *-ī*.

The pausal form of nouns with an original final triphthong **-iy-u/in* such as **hādiyun* > *hādin* was certainly *hād* in the language of the QCT. This much is confirmed by ample examples from the rhyme.[19] This ultimately agrees with the

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[18] This is not true for several short particles such as *min* + *mā* often spelled مما besides من ما, as Nöldeke et al. (2013: 409f.) points out; But such 'exceptions' to the rule can be considered fairly trivial.

[19] Q13:11 *wāl(in)* وال 'protector'; Q13:34, 37; Q40:21 *wāq(in)* واق 'defender'; Q13:7, 33; Q39: 23, 36; Q40:33 *hād(in)* هاد 'guide'; Q55:26 *fān(in)* فان 'perishing'; Q75:27 *rāq(in)* راق 'curing'

the Classical Arabic orthography هَادٍ but disagrees with the canonical pronunciation of such pausal forms in Classical Arabic as *hādī* (Fischer 2002: §57).[20]

However, in the definite and construct forms, we would expect to find forms with final *-ī*, and we do find these forms, e.g. Q7:178 *al-muhtadī* المهتدى 'the guided one', Q24:2 *az-zānī* الزانى 'the fornicator'. But besides these, shortened forms also occur, e.g. Q17:97 *al-muhtadi* المهتد. Nöldeke et al. (2013: 409) argue convincingly that such nouns, in front of CC-clusters are occasionally spelled in the context form, e.g. Q30:53 *bi-hādi l-ʿumyi* بهاد العمى; but Q27:81 بهدى العمى 'guiding of the blind'.[21]

However, it is clear that in pause, nouns of this type only occur in their shortened form in verse final position (four times). Such shortened forms also occur in front of mid-verse pauses, which trigger these pausal forms as well. For example, Q17:97 المهتد occurs in front of mid-verse pause at the end of the formula ومن يهد الله فهو المهتد. Q22:25 الباد likewise stands in front of a mid-verse pause. Q18:17 المهتد does not occur in front of a mid-verse pause in the reading traditions that have come down to us, but it occurs in the exact same formula as Q17:97, and it seems reasonable to assume that also here originally a pause was intended. Note, however that in an identical formula in Q7:178 we find the spelling المهتدى, which suggests a not fully regular treatment of pausal forms in such mid-verse pauses. Five other cases without final ى in a non-pausal position remain.

For the imperfectives of final weak verbs that ends in *-ī*, the vast majority of the verbs are spelled with a final ى. Three shortened forms are (optional) context spellings in front of a CC-cluster: Q4:146 *sawfa yuʾti llāhu* سوف يوت الله 'and soon God will give', Q10:103 *nunǧi l-muʾminīna* ننج لمومنين 'We save the believers', Q54:5 *fa-mā tuġni n-nuḏuru* 'the warning cannot avail'. One of the remaining two forms without the final ى stands at the end of a verse, and must be considered a pausal form. The other form, Q18:64 *nabġi* نبغ is the final word of a quote of Moses, and within that context must be considered clearly pausal: قال ذلك ما كنا نبغ "[Moses] said: 'That is what we were seeking.'"

The 1sg. direct object marker *-nī* mostly occurs in its shortened form in pause, and eleven cases cases occur either in front of a mid-verse pause (e.g. Q2:186 *daʿā-ni* دعان 'he called me'), or at obvious phrase boundaries (e.g. Q2:197 *wa-ttaqū-ni, yāʾulī al-ʾalbābi* واتقون ياولى الالبب "And fear me, O you of understanding"). A few cases can be considered context spellings in front of a CC-cluster, but a few remain without an obvious contextual explanation.

For the 1sg. possessive, we exclusively find the shortened form in pause, or in vocative phrases such as *yā-qawm-i* يقوم 'O my people!' or *yā-ʾabat-i* يابت 'O my father!', which, being interjections, should probably be considered to be followed

[20] This difference between Qurʾānic pause and Classical Arabic pause was already remarked upon by Birkeland (1940: 68). See also Blau (1977: 13, footnote 62).

[21] This explanation itself, of course, already challenges the concept of 'pausal spelling'.

by a minor pause, and thus take the pausal form.[22] There are a few cases of the long form in pause, which might suggest that the shortened form is not the exclusively pausal form. This however needs to be qualified. Most of these (17 of 21) occur in a single Surah (Q20), whereas the shortened form is found throughout the Qurʾān. Q39:14 *dīnī* is probably to be read as *dīn*, despite its spelling, as it stand in a ī/ūR rhyme. The remaining three example are all found in a single Surah (Q89:24,29,30) and none of them rhyme, which makes it difficult to evaluate whether these forms were pronounced with *ī* or Ø.

If we tabulate these four types of shortening of final *-ī* it because clear that the -Ø form is the pausal form, whereas the *-ī* is the context form. We must therefore conclude, even with the occasional exception, that these examples clearly contradict the pausal spelling principle. Instead, pausal forms occur in pause, and context forms occur in context. Considering the consistency of context spellings in these forms, it is unexpected that we never see other cases of nouns written in their context form, e.g. using a ن for nunation. In light of this distribution, and the clear presence of "pausal" forms in verse-internal position as shown in section 3.1, it becomes likely that the representation of the nouns, without nunation or case vowels and *-ā* in the indefinite accusative represent, not just pausal spellings, but closely represent the actual pronunciation of these forms in context.

	-Ø in context	-Ø in pause	*-ī* in context	*-ī* in pause
Direct object *-nī*	2 (_CC) + 9	59 (+ 11)	141	0
Possessive *-ī*	0	15 (+ 128)	531	21
Imperfective *-ī*	3 (_CC)	1 (+ 1)	295	0
Nouns *-ī*	9 (_CC) + 5	4 (+ 3)	12	0

Table 1: Pausal *-ī* shortening. Numbers between brackets represent mid-verse pauses. The number in front of (_CC) are the forms that can be explained as being context spellings in front of CC clusters.

5. Evidence for case vowel in *ā*ʾ -final nouns.

An oft-repeated argument in support of the presence of full case inflection in the Qurʾān is the fact that we see spelling of case vowels of nouns in construct that end in *āʾ*, e.g. Q3:87 *ǧazāʾu-hum* جزاوهم and Q6:87 *ʾābāʾi-him* ابايهم 'their fathers'

[22] The only two times that a vocative phrase is written with a final ى are found in Q29:56 and Q39:53 *yā-ʿibād-iya* يعبادى which in both is followed by a relative clause that is part of the vocative phrase, and therefore logically does not stand in pause.

(Zwettler 1978: 138, Fischer 1967: 60). This argument is indeed convincing inasmuch that it shows that some form of case is present in the Cairo edition of the Qurʾān.

The presence of case vowels in word-internal position, however, does not prove that the case system was fully functioning in all positions. We have shown that in word-final position nunation and final short vowels appear to have been lost regularly, not just in pause. The forms under discussion here are not cases of word-final case vowels, but rather word-internal case vowels. As these short vowels are not word-final, they are in principle expected to be retained. Such a system, which would only retain case in construct nouns, is obviously unstable, and it is not unexpected for such a system to collapse. But of course, any unstable system must go through a transitional period where the unstable system is still partially, or completely, present.

And in fact, contrary to the popular belief that the QCT perfectly retains case in nouns of this type, this is clearly contradicted when we examine the early Qurʾānic documents; We find that *ʾawliyāʾ*- is almost invariably found with caseless forms. And *ǧazāʾ*- likewise is primarily found with caseless forms. Moreover, there is a clear correlation between the early Qurʾānic documents that we have examined on which forms have case and which ones do not. For example, while *šurakāʾ*- is usually attested with the glides indicating case, Q6:137 *šurakāʾu-hum* is quite consistently attested *without*, and similar correlations are found for *ǧazāʾ, liqāʾ* and *duʿāʾ*. When we see such correlations, we must conclude that at the very least the shared ancestor that these Qurʾānic documents have in common also had these caseless forms. Considering the age of many of these documents, it is difficult to imagine the Urtext being very far removed from the Uthmanic Archetype. For a full discussion of these caseless variants, we refer to the Appendix.

The QCT thus seems to present exactly the unstable mixed picture that we would expect in the case of regular loss of word-final case vowels and nunation.[23] An interesting piece of information that seems to further corroborate the mixed picture of word-internal case marking, is found in the Psalm fragment. Al-Jallad (*forthcoming c*) argues that the – probably 9th century – Psalm Fragment shows vestigial traces of the genitive in construct when followed by a pronominal clitic, e.g. μιθλ αβαjὺμ ‘like their fathers’. Al-Jallad convincingly argues that this spelling represents something like /miṯl ʾābāy(i)-hum/. By virtue of the the alphabetical nature of the Greek script, it is also found in several other examples where

[23] Early Islamic Arabic as found in the Papyri likewise presents a mixed picture. Hopkins (1984: §24c.) shows that a surprisingly high number of early texts have a functioning case in nouns of this type, despite the fact that all other environments point to a loss of such case vowels (Hopkins 1984: §161). But, as in the Qurʾān, forms without the glide to mark the case are also attested. Rather than seeing this as a break with “Old Arabic”, this rather looks like a continuation of the linguistic situation as it is attested in the QCT.

we would not see it in the QCT, e.g. βη αυθάνιὺμ /bi-ʾawṯāni-hum/ ‘in their high places’ and βη μενχουτέτηὺμ /bi-menḫūtēti-hum/ ‘in their graven images’.

However, in similar environments the Psalm Fragment also has forms that show no case at all, e.g. βη κουετὺ /bi-quwwet-uh/ ‘in his power’. A breakdown of the case system in this phonetically protected environment appears to be under way in the language of this text, and has advanced further than the situation we find in the QCT, where both the genitive and nominative are still occasionally present, besides caseless forms.

The presence of caseless form in early Qurʾānic documents stresses the importance referring to such documents when discussing the language of the Qurʾān. From the evidence presented here, it is clear that the Cairo edition has classicized the spelling of such nouns. Where early Qurʾān document unequivocally have caseless forms, the Cairo edition only has the Classical Arabic spelling.

6. Nominal inflection in the QCT

So far, we have problematized the notion that Qurʾānic orthography was based on the principle of pausal spellings and shown, contrary to traditional explanation, that differences between various contextual forms are represented consistently. We can now turn to an examination of the evidence for case inflection in the QCT. While case has often been reduced, primarily at least, to the short vowels (Owens 2006; Lancioni 2009), active case inflection is well attested in the dual and plural, as well as a limited number of nominal forms where case is represented with a long vowel.

6.1 Triptotic & Diptotic Nouns

In the orthography of the QCT, the indefinite accusative, which is *-an* in Classical Arabic (*-ā* in pause), is the only case ending deriving from an etymological short vowel that is represented orthographically, marked by ◌ٰ. In section 4.1 we saw that what are traditionally thought of as pausal forms are employed to form internal rhymes in several places in the Qurʾān. Moreover, in section 4.2 we showed that there are pausal forms that, when they occur, have different spellings in pause and context in the orthography. Thus unlike Classical Arabic, the evidence suggests that no pausal spelling principle was in place and that the indefinite accusative ending is /-ā/ in all contexts while all other case vowels are simply lost.

As we further noted above (section 4.1), evidence from internal rhyme suggests that nominative *-u* and genitive *-i* were not realized word-finally. In construct, however, either in front of a noun or a pronominal suffix, we would expect the case vowels to be retained, as they are not in word-final position. As we saw in section 5, indeed case vowels were retained in this position, but were already displaying caseless forms in analogy to the word-final forms that had lost this contrast. We can thus reconstruct the following case system based on the internal evidence:

	Definite	Indefinite	Construct
Nominative	*al-kitāb-Ø*	*kitāb-Ø*	*kitāb-(u)*
Genitive	*al-kitāb-Ø*	*kitāb-Ø*	*kitāb-(i)*
Accusative	*al-kitāb-Ø*	*kitāb-ā*	*kitāb-(a)*

Table 2: Triptote Inflection in the QCT

	Definite	Indefinite	Construct
Nominative	*al-mawāḍiʿ-Ø*	*mawāḍiʿ-Ø*	*mawāḍiʿ-(u)*
Genitive	*al-mawāḍiʿ-Ø*	*mawāḍiʿ-Ø*	*mawāḍiʿ-(i)*
Accusative	*al-mawāḍiʿ-Ø*	*mawāḍiʿ-Ø*	*mawāḍiʿ-(a)*

Table 3: Diptote Inflection in the QCT

It is important to note that this distribution of case agrees completely with the orthography of the QCT, though it was arrived at without relying on the orthography. In other words, the internal evidence of the QCT indicates that the orthography represents the linguistic reality behind the text remarkably well.

Despite the majority of the evidence presenting a relatively straightforward picture, there are a small minority of cases that present issues. Specifically, there are several places where evidence from the rhyme suggests that forms with etymological **-a* were used to rhyme with the indefinite accusative ending *-ā*.

For example, Q33 rhymes in ŪRā, but in several verses a definite noun in the accusative, with corresponding final *-a*, is written with an *alif*:

Q33:10 *aẓ-ẓunūna* الظنونا /aẓ-ẓunūnā/ ‘the assumptions’
Q33:66 *ar-rasūla* الرسولا /ar-rasūlā/ ‘the messenger’
Q33:67 *as-sabīla* السبيلا /as-sabīlā/ ‘the way’

A similar practice is attested in Q76, where the rhyme is also ūRā, this time with an indefinite diptote:

Q76:15 *qawārīra* قواريرا /qawārīrā/ ‘crystal-clear’

In the following Ayah, *qawārīra* is spelled once again as قواريرا. This is the only case of such a spelling, where it is not employed to form a rhyme with /-ā/: Q76:16 قواريرا من فضة قدروها تقديرا “crystal clear, from silver they determine its measure”

It is possible that the noun is repeated here for poetic balance, linking to the previous verse as well as with the ū/īRā at the end of the verse; However, syntactically it seems possible that this second case of قواريرا is the result of a dittography, present in the Uthmanic Archetype, which became a canonical part of the QCT.

The same spelling is found with another diptotic broken plural, which occurs in the middle of a verse in the same Surah: Q76:4 *salāsila* سلاسلا /salāsilā/. If we take Q76:16 قواريرا as a dittography, this would be the only example of such a spelling that does not occur in pause. However, one can make a reasonable case for the presence of an internal rhyme across the ayahs 3 and 4 in this case:

ʾannā	*hadaynā-h*	*as-sabīl*	*ʾimmā šārik**ā***	*wa-ʾimm**ā***	*kafūr**ā***
ʾannā	*ʾaʿtadnā*	*li-l-kāfirīn*	*salāsil**ā***	*wa-ʾaġlāl**ā***	*wa-saʿīr**ā***

The same usage of a noun ending in *-a* rhyming with indefinite accusatives, but spelled without final *alif*, is attested in Q4, Q25 and Q33. The rhyme, in all three cases ŪRā, suggests that they are to be read with a final long *ā*:

Q25:17 *as-sabīla* السبيل /as-sabīlā/
Q33:4 *as-sabīla* السبيل /as-sabīlā/
Q4:44 *as-sabīla* السبيل /as-sabīlā/

Neither *sabīl*, nor any other noun, ever uses uses a lengthened *u(n)* or *i(n)* for the nominative or genitive to create a rhyme, so this effect seems to be completely isolated to the accusative.[24]
Fischer (1967: 56) observes that the same phenomenon of rhyming of the etymological short **-a* with indefinite accusative *-ā* also occurs occasionally with subjunctive verbs:

Q74:15 *ʾan ʾazīda* ان ازيد stands in a ŪRā rhyme.
Q84:14 *lan yaḥūra* لن يحور stands in a ŪRā rhyme.

Unlike the nouns just discussed, however, there are no cases in which a subjunctive rhyming with an indefinite accusative *-ā* is spelled with a final *ʾalif*. Whatever the case may have been, all other verse-final nouns and verbs that end in ŪCa always simply rhyme in ŪC. This includes other examples of subjunctive verbs:

[24] Other instances of *as-sabīl* in rhyme include: Q2:108, Q5:12, 60, 77, Q28:22, Q60:1 in these, *as-sabīli* السبيل stands in a ī/ŪR rhyme. Q40:11, Q42:41, 44, 46 *sabīlin* سبيل *idem.*

Q35:29 *lan tabūra* لن تبور stands in a ŪR rhyme.
Q81:28 *ʾan yastaqīma* ان يستقيم stands in a ŪR rhyme

One interpretation of these examples is to assume that triptotic (as well as diptotic) nouns apparently retained not just a vowel /-ā/ for word-final **-an*, but also for the word-final short **-a*. Such an inflection is of course reminiscent of the poetic pause that we find in the Classical Arabic poetry, where all final vowels are retained, and nunation is lost (Fischer 2002: §57). And this is how these forms have been identified, e.g. by Nöldeke et al. (2013: 30). However, this is not quite convincing. If the Qurʾān could indeed freely use the poetic pausal form *-ā* in pause, rather than use the regular ending -Ø, we are at a loss to explain why the extremely common |ŪCā| rhyme (over 500 times) never employs the sound masculine plural endings **-ūna*, **-īna* or the homophonous imperfect endings to form the |ŪCā|. The absence of employment of these endings is especially surprising as they are the most frequent endings employed to form the more common |ŪR| rhyme. Moreover, the fact that **-i(n)* and **-u(n)* are never used to form rhymes in the Qurʾān clearly suggests that we are not dealing with poetic pause being, somewhat randomly, intermixed with the prose pausal system.[25]

Further, the internal rhyme pattern that we examined in section 3.1 in Q96:4 suggests that even verse-internally short *a* of *ʿallama* علم is to be read as /ʿallam/, suggesting that the forms with **-a* in verse final position treated as *-ā* should not be considered context forms being employed in pause either. These cases where short **-a* is treated as *-ā* must therefore be seen as true exceptions to the linguistic system of the QCT, and certainly do not prove that the QCT was intended to be read with the full case system.

We know from the evidence attested in Safaitic (Al-Jallad 2015: 49f.) that there certainly were Old Arabic varieties that lose nunation and all final short vowels except for *-a*. One wonders whether the composer of the Quran, or at least these Surahs, drew upon a dialect that had a system like Safaitic, to accommodate the rhyme.

To our mind, assuming the use of dialectal forms of which we have direct evidence in the Pre-Islamic period, is no-less parsimonious than assuming a sudden change in the pausal rules without further explanation. These forms cannot be taken as evidence that the language of the QCT had a fully Classical Arabic noun inflection. Indeed, by its most conservative interpretation, it only points to the fact that the definite accusative apparently was sometimes retained in pause, while other times not, creating a mixed nominal inflection.

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[25] Birkeland's (1940: 19) examples of rhymes with the case vowels *i* and *u* are unconvincing. Every single one of these examples also rhyme without the case vowels, and not once are the case vowels rhymed with final long vowels *ī* and *ū*.

6.2 Feminine Nouns

The conjugation of the feminine singular deserves special attention. As we already saw in section 4.1, Larcher has supplied some evidence of internal rhyme that suggests that the feminine ending was pronounced /-ah/ in context. Moreover, Van Putten (2017b) has argued that the feminine noun was originally diptotic in the language of the QCT. This explains why the indefinite accusative of the feminine ending is not spelled تا for /-atā/.

One of the hallmarks of Classical Arabic spelling is the spelling of the feminine ending as ـه, even when it is in construct, a position in which it would never be pronounced as /-ah/ in Classical Arabic. This innovation appears to be quite late. Even in Nabataeo-Arabic inscriptions of the 5th century AD, the construct feminine is still consistently spelled with a final *tav*, rather than with a *heh* (Nehmé 2017: 83ff.). This spelling must therefore be considered a fairly late orthographic innovation, and one that was not yet complete in the orthography of the QCT. In the QCT, we find many examples of feminine constructs that are spelled with a ـت. These make up 47 out of 218 total feminine constructs present in the QCT, which is about 22%. While in early Islamic Arabic inscriptions and papyri such *t*-constructs are still fairly common as well, they are almost completely restricted to the phrase رحمت الله ‘mercy of God’, a fixed phrase whose archaic spelling is even still in use today. In the QCT, however, the *t*-construct is clearly not purely restricted to archaic formulae, and also occurs in several other phrases.

سنت الاولين *sunnat[u/a] l-ʾawwalīna* ‘the way of the former people’ Q8:38, Q35:43
سنت الله *sunnat[a/i] llāhi* ‘the way of God’ Q40:85, Q35:34 (2x)
نعمت الله *niʿmat[a/i] llāhi* ‘the grace of God’ Q2:231, Q3:103, Q5:11, Q14:28, Q14:34, Q16:72, 83, 114, Q31:31, Q35:3
بنعمت ربك *bi-niʿmati rabbi-ka* ‘with the grace of your lord’ Q16:72
رحمت الله *raḥmat[u/i/a] llāhi* ‘the mercy of god’Q2:218, Q7:56, Q11:73, Q30:50
رحمت ربك *raḥmat[u/i/a] rabbi-ka* ‘the mercy of your lord’ Q19:2, Q42:32, Q43:32
لعنت الله *laʿnata llāhi* ‘the curse of God’ Q3:61, Q24:7
كلمت ربك *kalimatu rabbi-ka* ‘the word of your lord’ Q6:115, Q7:137, Q10:33, 96, Q40:6.
امرات نوح *imraʾata nūḥin* ‘the wife of Noah’ Q66:10
امرات لوط *imraʾata lūṭin* ‘the wife of Lot’ Q66:10
امرات فرعون *imraʾat[u/a] firʿawna* ‘the wife of Pharaoh’ Q28:9, Q66:11
امرات عمرن *imraʾatu ʿimrān* ‘the wife of Imran’ Q3:35
امرات العزيز *imraʾatu l-ʿazīzi* ‘the wife of Al-ʿazīz’ Q12:30, 51
غيبت الجب *ġayābati l-ǧubbi* ‘the bottom of the well’ Q12:10, 15
مصيدت الرسول *maʿṣiyati r-rasūli* ‘the disobedience to the messenger’ Q58:8, 9
بقيت الله *baqiyyatu llāhi* ‘the remnant of God’ Q11:86
فطرت الله *fiṭrata llāhi* ‘the nature of Allah’ Q30:30
سجرت الزقوم *šaǧarata z-zaqqūmi* ‘the tree of Zaqqūm’ Q44:43
جنت نعيم *ǧannatu naʿīmin* ‘a garden of pleasure’ Q56:89

قرت عين *qurratu ʿayni* ‘the comfort of the eye’ Q28:9
ابنت عمرن *ibnata ʿimrāna* ‘the daughter of ʿimrān’ Q66:12

As can be seen from the list above, the *t*-construct is fairly common, and even occurs in rather mundane phrases in meaning such as غيبت الجب and معصيت الرسول. Besides that, quite a few of the phrases that appear to be more like ‘fixed phrases with archaic spelling’, the innovative spelling with ـه is also commonly attested, رحمه الله, for example, occurs twelve times in the Qurʾān, versus only seven of رحمت الله.

What is important here, however, is the places where ـت is not written. They occur *only* in construct, where they would be pronounced /at/ regardless of the presence or absence of case vowels. If the language of the QCT had full case inflection, then *every* non-pausal feminine ending would have potentially been spelled with a ـت, as the feminine ending would be pronounced as /-at/ in all but pausal position. This, however, is not what we find. In the thousands of attestations of non-construct feminines, they are invariably written ـه.[26] The best way to understand these spellings then, is as inconsistencies of orthography by the scribe, who would occasionally write the construct feminine the way he pronounced it, rather than the non-phonetic orthographic practice to write it with ـه.[27]

The only way to account for the fact that the spelling with ـت is common in the construct and completely absent outside of construct, is by assuming that these morphemes were pronounced differently, despite their identical spelling in the standard orthography; that is, the construct feminine was pronounce /-at/ and the non-construct feminine was pronounce /-ah/, the exact distribution that we find in most modern forms of Arabic today.

The paradigm of the feminine noun must therefore be reconstructed for the language of the QCT as follows:

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[26] Diem (1981: §195-6) argues that بينت (Q35:40) and جملت (Q77:33), read in the Ḥafṣ reading tradition as *bayyinatin* and *ǧimālatun*, are certain examples of a context spelling with feminine ending *-at-*. In our opinion, these are not at all certain examples. Ibn Muǧāhid reports the reading as plurals *bayyinātin* (Ibn Muǧāhid n.d.: 535) for the traditions of Nāfiʿ, Ibn ʿĀmir, al-Kisāʾī and ʿĀṣim’s other transmitter, Šuʿbah, and *ǧimālātun* (Ibn Muǧāhid n.d.: 666) for Ibn Kaṯīr, Nāfiʿ, Ibn ʿĀmir and Šuʿbah after ʿĀṣim. We see no reason why the reading of Ḥafṣ should be given precedence here.

[27] It is unlikely that this innovative orthographic practice is a symptom of ‘pausal spelling’, which is the way it is often interpreted. As our colleague Dr. Ahmad Al-Jallad points out, other words that have a different form in construct than they do in pause are never spelled with their ‘pausal form’, e.g. *ʾabū* ‘the father of’ is consistently spelled ابو, not اب, and *ḥāḍirī* ‘those who are in the presence of’ is spelled حاضرى, not حاضرين.

	Definite	Indefinite	Construct
Nominative	*al-madīn-ah*	*madīn-ah*	*madīn-at(u)*
Geninitive	*al-madīn-ah*	*madīn-ah*	*madīn-at(i)*
Accusative	*al-madīn-ah*	*madīn-ah*	*madīn-at(a)*

Table 4: Feminine noun inflection in the QCT

This exact distribution of ـت in construct but ـه in context has been taken, and rightfully so, to confirm the presence of a construct *-at* non-construct *-ah* distribution of the feminine ending for early Islamic Arabic (Hopkins 1984: §47) and early Christian Arabic (Blau 1966: §24.1). Despite observing this same distribution for the QCT, Blau (1977: 4) does not take it to confirm this situation for the language of the QCT.[28]

6.3 The Five Nouns

There are five nouns (*al-ʾasmāʾ al-xamsah*) in Arabic whose forms in the construct differ from those in the absolute. This group includes *ʾax* 'brother', *ʾab* 'father', *ḥam* 'father-in-law', *ḏū* 'possessor of', and *fam* 'mouth'. When a noun of this type occurs in the absolute, its orthography is unremarkable. When in construct, however, the case vowel is long and is represented by the corresponding *mater lectionis* (cf. Fischer 2002: §150). Four of these nouns (*ʾab*, *ʾax*, *ḏū*, and *fam*) are attested in the Qurʾān in construct. In each instance, case inflection is exactly as we see in Classical Arabic:

ʾab

Nominative	*ʾabū-ka* ابوك	/abū-k/ (Q19:2)
Accusative	*ʾabā* ابا	/abā/ (Q33:40)
Genitive	*ʾabī-kum* ابيكم	/abī-kum/ (Q22:78)

ʾax

Nominative	*ʾaxū-hu* اخوه	/axū-h/ (Q12:8)
Accusative	*ʾaxā-hum* اخاهم	/axā-hum/ (Q7:85)
Genitive	*ʾaxī-hi* اخيه	/axī-h/ (Q80:34)

[28] In fact, the argument is much stronger for the QCT than for the Early Islamic Papyri, where the only clear evidence for this distribution is the clearly archaic formula رحمت الله (Hopkins *loc. cit.*).

ḏū

Nominative	*ḏū* ذو /ḏū/ (Q65:7)
Accusative	*ḏā* ذا /ḏā/ (Q5:106)
Genitive	*ḏī* ذى /ḏī/ (Q14:37)

fam

Accusative	*fā-hu* فاه /fā-h/ (Q13:14)

The examples reviewed above suffice to confirm that full case inflection represented by long vowels was retained and functional as in Classical Arabic, and with precisely the same distribution that can be safely reconstructed for proto-Semitic (Al-Jallad & van Putten 2017).

	Definite	Indefinite	Construct
Nominative	*al-ab*	*ab*	*ab-ū*
Geninitive	*al-ab*	*ab*	*ab-ī*
Accusative	*al-ab*	*ab-ā*	*ab-ā*

Table 5: Inflection of the Five Nouns in the QCT

6.4 Sound Masculine Plural and Dual nouns

Inflection of the dual and sound masculine plural in Classical Arabic is diptotic, declining for two cases, nominative (du. *-āni* / pl. *-ūna*) and oblique (du. *-ayni* / pl. *-īna*). Both the dual and sound masculine plural paradigms are attested in the Qurʾān, inflecting for both cases as they do in Classical Arabic. As the final short vowels **i* and **a* are normally lost, we expect them to have been lost for these endings as well. In pause, this loss is confirmed with certainty.

	Definite	Indefinite	Construct
Nominative	*al-muslim-ūn*	*muslim-ūn*	*muslim-ū*
Oblique	*al-muslim-īn*	*muslim-īn*	*muslim-ī*

Table 6: Inflection of the sound masculine plural

	Definite	Indefinite	Construct
Nominative	*al-kitāb-ān*	*kitāb-ān*	*kitāb-ā*
Oblique	*al-kitāb-ayn*	*kitāb-ayn*	*kitāb-ay*

Table 7: Inflection of the dual

6.5 Sound Feminine Plural Nouns

The sound feminine plural nouns in Classical Arabic are diptotic, inflecting for two cases, the nominative *-ātu(n)*, and the oblique, *-āti(n)*. As we have argued that the short vowels **u* and **i* have been lost along with nunation, we would expect them to be absent word-finally, with their status when non-word final unclear. We include a table with a reconstruction.

	Definite	Indefinite	Construct
Nominative	*al-muslimāt-Ø*	*muslimāt-Ø*	*muslimāt-(u)*
Oblique	*al-muslimāt-Ø*	*muslimāt-Ø*	*muslimāt-(i)*

Table 8: Inflection of the sound feminine plural

7. Consequences

In the above section we have argued that in the language of the QCT nunation and word final short vowels have been lost, only leaving word final *-ā* for the indefinite accusative. In essence, what are considered the 'pausal forms' in the traditional reading of the QCT, appear to be not just pausal, but also context forms. These developments allow us to make sense of some of the oddities of the QCT orthography, which previously scholars felt compelled to reconcile with the supposed classical-like nature of the language. Our interpretation of the evidence, which, though supported by the orthography, is not based upon it, allows us to understand several of these issues more naturally. Two of these orthographic peculiarities deserve special attention: absence of word-final *n* and the synchronic absence of the purported pausal rules. We will address each in turn.

7.1 Loss of word-final *n*

With one exception (*ka-ʾayyin min*; discussed below), nunation is not represented in the orthography of the QCT. The absence of written nunation is often taken to be the result of pausal spelling. As we have shown above, however, pausal forms are attested in non-pausal contexts, and we have argued that we can understand the distribution of case in the language of the QCT as (for the most part) one in

which pausal forms occur everywhere. Thus, in our analysis, the absence of written nunation is not due to a generalized pausal spelling practice; rather, nunation had simply been lost. That this loss was part of a regular phonetic change in the language of the QCT is supported by other evidence.

If we understand the loss of nunation as a phonetic process that deletes the final *n*, we can subsequently understand why several other cases with word-final that are not a form of nunation have also been lost in the QCT. This would not be easily explained within the view that nunation was only lost in pause.

The most obvious example of this is found in the apocopate of *kāna* 'to be'. Arabic grammar tells us that the apocopates of medial weak verbs lose the final vowel of the imperfect, and subsequently shorten the long stem vowel (Fischer 2002: §244):

Imperfect	Apocopate	
yakūnu	*yakun*	'to be'
yazīdu	*yazid*	'to grow'
yaxāfu	*yaxaf*	'to fear'

The apocopate of *kāna* is interesting in this respect, as it ends in *-un*, and therefore has the exact same word-final sequence as an indefinite nominative nouns, e.g. *rağulun*. If nunation is lost in the indefinite nominative through a regular sound law, one would expect nunation to be lost in the apocopate of *kāna* as well. Indeed, besides the regularized *yakun* stem, the form spelled without the final *n* is quite common.

1sg.	اك	(Q19:20)
3sg.m.	يك	(Q8:53; Q9:74; Q16:120, Q19:67; Q40̈:28, 85; Q75:37)
3sg.f.	تك	(Q4:40; Q11:17, 109; Q16:127; Q19:9; Q31:16; Q40:50)
1pl.	نك	(Q74:43, 44)

As there is no other process within the language of the QCT that would cause the loss of a final /n/, it is attractive to equate the loss of the /n/ in these forms as connected to the loss of nunation. The forms with the stem *-akun* – which with 58 examples are in the majority – should be considered analogical restorations. These two forms were seemingly in free variation in the language of the QCT.

Likewise, several other words that end in *-an*, that are written with a ن in Classical Arabic are spelled with a final ا in the QCT, exactly mirroring the development of the unstressed word-final *-an* of the indefinite accusative. The first example of this is the 'energic' ending **-an*, as was already observed by Larcher (2014: §7):

Q96:15 *la-nasfaʿan* لنسفعا /la-nasfaʿā/ 'We will surely drag'
Q12:32 *la-yakūnan* ليكونا /la-yakūnā/ 'he will surely be'

To this we may add, the adverb *ʾiḏan* ‘therefore; then, in that case’ is consistently spelled اذا in the QCT rather than اذن as in Classical Arabic orthography.

There is one case where we find an example in the QCT where nunation is spelled with a ن, namely in the fixed expression *ka-ʾayyin min* [noun] ‘how many a [noun]’ which is always spelled as: كاين من. This expression is attested 7 times. This spelling seems to reflect a form which has retained its nunation. The reflex of nunation is only attested in this fixed expression, and it seems reasonable to assume that the expression formed an accentual unit, which caused the nunation to not be word-final, and thus be retained.[29] Diem (1981: §176) suggests that *ka-ʾayyin min* is an isolated example of context form with nunation being written. However he fails to explain how to interpret this within the context of the pausal spelling principle that he envisions.

If *ka-ʾayyin min* was simply a slip of the pen where the scribe forgot to use the pausal spelling of *ʾayyin* and nunation was accidentally written, then it becomes impossible to interpret the fact that this happened seven out of seven times that this phrase is attested. Moreover, we would not be able to explain why we never see similar slip-ups in any of the other thousands of cases. One would have to assume that spelling this word with a written nunation would have become conventionalised, but there seems to be no obvious motivation for this. However, following our explanation that this is a case of non-final nunation and therefore could be retained, while in regular environments it was lost, we can understand why the spelling of nunation in this phrase is consistent and not elsewhere.

7.2 Synchronic absence of the pausal rules

Assuming that the Qurʾān does not use ‘pausal’ spelling, but simply writes the language in the way it was pronounced in that context, also allows us to explain more naturally why the pausal rule **-at* > *-ah* does not always seem to function in the language of the Qurʾān.

As we saw in section 3.2, the pausal form of the 1sg. possessive ending *-ī* is simply -Ø, due to rule that drops this vowel in pause. A pausal effect which is in fact expressed in the orthography. This point already showed that the idea that all words are spelling in their ‘pausal’ form in the orthography of the QCT is clearly not true. However, this also has another implication: The vocative يابت *yā-ʾabat-i* ‘o my father’, occurs 9 times in the Qurʾān with the pausal 1sg. possessive suffix, as is normal in vocative phrases. As such, its pronunciation must have been /yā-abat/. As this creates a word-final *-at* sequence, we would expect that the pausal *-at* > *-ah* shift would have applied, e.g.

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[29] A similar retention of nunation within a fixed expression is found in modern Arabic dialects for the reflex of **ʾayyu šayʾin huwa/hiya* “which things that is…” which grammaticalized to mean “what?”, e.g. Tunis *ašnūa, ašnīa*; Hassaniya *šənhu, šənhi*; Siirt *əšnūwe, əšnīye* etc. (Fischer & Jastrow 1980: 85f.).

al-jannati 'heaven (gen.)'	> *al-jannat*	> *al-jannah* الجنه
yāʾabati	> *yāʾabat*	> ***yāʾabah* **يابه

However, this is not the attested spelling. Instead, we find يابت, which seems to suggest that the *at* > *ah* shift was no longer phonologically active. This is best understood as the result of several subsequent historical developments, rather than active pausal rules. First, loss of final short vowels has taken place; After that the newly created *-at* sequences shifted to *-ah*; Only after this second development was complete, the loss of pausal *-ī* happened, creating a new *-at* in word-final (and pausal) position. As the *-at* > *-ah* shift had stopped operating by that time, this new *-at* sequence in /yā-abat/ was simply retained.[30]

7.3 Spelling of context forms

In light of our theory that the orthography of the QCT is a lot closer to a phonetic spelling, we can also understand many examples of "context spellings" that occur in the Qurʾān that do not necessarily pertain to the case vowels. Nöldeke et al. (2013: 409ff.) has a rather extensive catalogue of context forms and assimilations, which would be rather surprising to see if the scribes were indeed sounding out each word individually, and writing down this form (the form it would take in pause), such spellings can be summed up as follows:

Shortening of a long vowel before a CC-cluster, e.g.
*īCC > iCC: سوف يوت الله /sawf yūti llāh/ (Q4:145).
*ūCC > uCC: صلح المومنين /ṣāliḥu l-mūminīn/ (Q66:4), سندع الزبانيه /sa-nadʿu z-zabāniyah/ (Q96:18).
*āCC > aCC: يايه الساحر /yā-ayyuha s-sāḥir/ (Q43:49)
Assimilation of particles, e.g. مما besides morpho-phonemic من ما /mim-mā/; الا besides ان لا /al-lā/.
Phonetic spelling of /aṣḥāb-al-ayka/ as اصحب ليكه rather than اصحب الايكه.
Phonetic spelling of /al-ān/ 'now' as الن besides morpho-phonemic الان (Q72:9).

While such phonetic context spellings could of course also appear in an orthography that spells all words pausally, it is very difficult to understand that if such rather common 'slips of the pen' occur, we would never encounter nunation spelled with a ن.

8. Conclusion

We have argued in this paper that the language of the QCT was characterized by a reduced case system, with cases marked by long vowels functional, but case

[30] Ibn Kaṯīr and Ibn ʿĀmir in fact apply the pausal rule and read this as /yā ʾabah/ in pause (Ibn Muǧāhid n.d.: 344).

marked by short word-final vowels absent due to a regular loss of final short vowels. We further examined the instances where short case vowel marking occurs in non-word final position. We showed that the evidence from early manuscripts is quite ambiguous, though the evidence seems to suggest that case was still optionally marked with short vowels in construct position. This situation was unstable, and caseless variants occurred in identical contexts.

This distribution correlates very closely with the orthography, but is based on, and supported by, a close examination of internal evidence as well, especially evidence from the rhyme. We showed that evidence from the rhyme demonstrates that 'pausal' forms occur throughout the Qurʾān in non-pausal position. Further, we have argued that classical 'evidence' for the presence of full *ʾiʿrāb* is, upon closer examination, rather unsatisfying, especially when considered in light of early Qurʾānic manuscripts, which present a much less clear picture than the Cairo edition.

Additionally, we have argued that our reconstruction of a reduced case system, and the related point that the orthography matches this system much more closely, helps us understand several oddities of the QCT orthography that were previously more difficult to explain, including: a) the dialectal distribution of the feminine ending, where ه spellings are regular for non-construct contexts, and ت spellings only occur in construct (besides the conventional ه); b) the loss of *(u)n* on *lam yak(u)* forms; and c) the synchronic absence of pausal rules, evidenced by يابت /yā-abat/ "o my father!"

Finally, we have argued, contrary to prevailing scholarly discussions of the language of the QCT, that we should hardly find it surprising to find a variety of Arabic with a reduced case system in the beginning of the 7th century. Indeed, Old Arabic as attested in the epigraphic material show signs of a number of dialects with reduced or absent case, the distribution reconstructed here would fit at least as naturally in the Old Arabic dialectal ecology as a Classical Arabic-like variety.

There are various and sundry implications, many of them major, that flow naturally from our conclusions. One of the most significant to our minds is that it seem clear that after the standardization of the Qurʾānic text, the recitation traditions must have been 'classicized' – that is, they must have been fitted with full *ʾiʿrāb* to bring them more into line with the emerging classical standard. Other evidence for such a classicization of the reading traditions can be found. This can be seen, for example, in the inconsistent treatment of the *Hamzah* in the reading traditions (Van Putten 2018), and the treatment of *Ṯamūd* as a diptote, despite the QCT suggesting it to be a triptote (Van Putten *forthcoming*).

Appendix

As pointed out in section 5, the nouns with the glides in word-internal position, often posited as evidence of the linguistic reality of the case vowels, are much

more problematic than it is often posited. It is clear that a minority, but nevertheless significant number of nouns of this type are quite consistently spelled without the glide that marks the case vowel in the early Qurʾānic manuscripts. This appendix gives an overview of the exceptions and forms that generally agree with this pattern.

All the early Qurʾānic documents consulted here, were accessed through the Corpus Coranicum website (www.corpuscoranicum.de) unless stated otherwise.

***ʾawliyāʾ* 'relatives'**

From the Qurʾānic documents examined, and many more available on the Corpus Coranicum website, it is absolutely clear that *ʾawliyāʾ* simply did not have case marking. It is consistently spelled اوليـ or اوليا. We have identified only a single document (the fairly late Samarkand Codex) that has the Classical spelling with the glide in Q6:121, 128. The Uthmanic Archetype should certainly be reconstructed without case for this noun.

	BL[31]	S[32]	W[33]	K[34]	CP[35]	P[36]	M[37]	T[38]
Q2:257 *āʾu-hum*		-	-	-		-		
Q6:121 *āʾi-him*		+	-	-	-		-	
Q6:128 *āʾu-hum*		+	-		-		-	
Q8:34 *āʾu-hū*	-		-	-		-	-	
Q33:6 *āʾi-kum*				-			-	-
Q41:31 *āʾu-kum*	-	-	-	-			-	

[31] London, British Library: Or. 2195 (http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=Or_2165).

[32] Berlin, Staatsbibliothek: Kodex Samarkand (Faksimiledruck Sankt petersburg 1905).

[33] Berlin, Staatsbibliothek: Wetzstein II 1913 + Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France: Arabe 6087. The identification of these two documents as belonging to the same codex was done by Corpus Coranicum.

[34] Kairo, al-Maktaba al-Markaziyya li-l-Maḫṭūṭāt al-Islāmiyya: Großer Korankodex.

[35] Codex Parisino-Petropolitanus (Déroche 2009).

[36] Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France: Arabe 331.

[37] Gotthelf-Bergsträßer-Archiv: 'Saray Medina 1ª' (= Istanbul, Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi: M 1)

[38] Tübingen, Universitätsbibliothek: Ma VI 165

***Ǧazāʾ* 'recompense'**

The majority of the instances of *ǧazāʾ* in construct are attested without the expected glide. These caseless forms for the first six attestations are so widespread that they must be reconstructed for the Uthmanic Archetype.

	BL	S	W	K	CP	P	M	T
Q3:87 *āʾu-hum*		-	-	-	-			
Q3:136 *āʾu-hum*		-	-	-	-			
Q4:93 *āʾu-hū*		-	-	-	-			
Q12:74 *āʾu-hū*	-		-	-			-	
Q12:75 *āʾu-hū*	-		-	-			-	
Q12:75 *āʾu-hū*	+		-	-			-	
Q17:63 *āʾu-kum*	+	+	+	+			-	-
Q17:98 *āʾu-hum*	+	+	+	+		+	-	-
Q18:106 *āʾu-hum*	+		+[39]	+			+	+
Q98:8 *āʾu-hum*				+			+	

***Liqāʾ* 'encounter'**

The first two attestations of this noun clearly point to a archetypical form that lacked case.

	BL	S	W	K	CP	P	M	T
Q18:105 *āʾi-hī*	-	-	لقيه	-			+	-
Q29:23 *āʾi-hī*	-			-			-	-
Q32:23 *āʾi-hī*			+	+			+	+

[39] *Wāw* may be an addition in this text. It is smaller than the rest, and floats above the baseline, but this page has been retouched with ink, making it difficult to evaluate whether this wāw was originally there or not.

***Duʿāʾ* 'invocation'**

Q19:4 has quite a few attestations without the glide, and may have originally lacked the glide. The other two attestations only have isolated examples of the glide.

	BL	S	W	K	CP	P	M	T	19[40]
Q19:4 *āʾi-ka*	-	+	-	+			+	-	-
Q25:77 *āʾu-kum*	+		+	+	+	+	+	-	
Q46:5 *āʾi-him*			+	+	+	-	+		

***Šurakāʾ* 'companions'**

šurakāʾ (14 attestations) is usually spelled with a glide. The only clear point of contention is Q6:137 where many documents lack the glide.

B -[41]; K -; CPP -[42]; M -; DAM 01-21.3 -. W has شركايهم, this reflects the reading of Ibn ʿĀmir of this word with the genitive case (Ibn Muǧāhid n.d.: 270). The other reading traditions have the nominative here. It is probably not a coincidence that the point of contention of the reading traditions concerning the case vowel, which could not be determined due to the absence of the glide.

There are several other cases where this noun in isolated Qurʾān documents is spelled without the glide, but where a glide spelling is clearly the majority. Examples are:

Q6:22 *šurakāʾu-kum* شركاكم in Wetzstein II 1913.[43]
Q10:28 *šurakāʾu-kum* شركاكم in Arabe 330(e).[44]
Q10:35 *šurakāʾi-kum* شرككم in Arabe 330(e).

Remainder

The remainder of the nouns do not show any consistent examples of glideless spellings, but occasional documents that have it (especially DAM 01-29.1).

nisāʾ 'women' occurs 12 times, Q65:4 *nisāʾi-kum* is spelled as نساكم in Großer Korankodex. And Q33:55 is spelled نساهن in DAM 01-29.1.

māʾ 'water' occurs twice, Q18:41 *māʾu-hā* is spelled ماها in MA VI 165.

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40 Sankt Petersburg, Russische Nationalbibliothek: Marcel 19.

41 *Wāw* added in red ink. B = Birmingham, Cadbury Research Library (University of Birmingham): Islamic Arabic 1572b.

42 Déroche (2009) marks this as having damage period. However, we only see a rather large gap and certainly no *yāʾ* (http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b8415207g/f63. item). In light of the other documents, the absence of a glide seems intentional.

43 There is a *wāw* in this document, but it was clearly added later with a different ductus.

44 There is a *wāw* in this document, but it was clearly added later with a different ductus.

Q6:119 *bi-ʾahwāʾi-him* ‘with their desires’ is spelled as باهواهم in Birmingham, Cadbury Research Library (University of Birmingham): Islamic Arabic 1572b.

The following words are always spelled with a glide: *ʾabnāʾ* ‘sons’ (6 occurrences), *warāʾ* ‘behind’ (6 occurrences), *ʾasmāʾ* ‘names’ (2 occurrences), Q2:61 *qiṯṯāʾi-hā* ‘its cucumbers’, Q4:45 *bi-ʾaʿdāʾi-kum* ‘with your enemies’, Q5:18 *ʾaḥibbāʾu-hū* ‘his beloved’, Q10:18 *šufaʿāʾu-nā* ‘our intercessors’, Q22:37 *dimāʾu-hā* ‘its blood’, Q24:32 *ʾimāʾi-kum* ‘your female slaves’, Q30:23 *ibtiġāʾu-kum* ‘your seeking’, Q33:37 *ʾadʿiyāʾi-him* ‘their adopted sons’, Q38:39 *ʿaṭāʾu-nā* ‘our gift’, Q69:17 *ʾarǧāʾi-hā* ‘its edges’.

ʾābāʾ ‘fathers’, which with 42 attestations is by far the most common noun of this type, in the vast majority of the cases is spelled with the glide. DAM 01-29.1 has quite a few attestations of this word written without the glide, for which see the section below. Besides this I have only identified Q6:91 *ʾabāʾu-kum* spelled as اباكم in Birmingham, Cadbury Research Library (University of Birmingham): Islamic Arabic 1572b.

DAM 01-29.1

Van Putten (2018) shows that DAM 01-29.1 is an anomalous document in its spelling of the *hamzah*. It is also anomalous in its spelling of nouns with word-final *āʾ* in construct. It seems to have an unusually high number of spelling without the glide, even for nouns that in other documents are never spelled without the glide, i.e. *ʾābāʾ, nisāʾ*. One may imagine that in this document these spellings may be intended to spell the *hamzah* with *ʾalif* in the same way as we find it in other places of this document. The list below are all nouns of this type in this document. It should be noted that no images are available of this document, and only a transcription on corpuscoranicum.de, so it is difficult to evaluate if all readings are accurate. The glideless forms have been marked in bold.

Q2:170 *ʾābāʾu-hum* اباهم
Q6:87 *ʾābāʾi-him* اباهم
Q6:91 *ʾābāʾu-hum* [وكم]ابا *wāw, kāf* and *mīm* are marked as unclear.
Q8:34 *ʾawliyāʾu-hū* اولياه
Q22:37 *dimāʾu-hā* دماوها
Q33:55 *ʾābāʾi-hinna* ابيهن
Q33:55 *ʾabnāʾi-hinna* ابنيهن
Q33:55 *nisāʾi-hinna* نساهن
Q37:17 *ʾābāʾu-nā* ابانا
Q40:8 *ʾābāʾi-him* ابيهم
Q44:8 *ʾābāʾi-kum* اباكم
Q46:5 *duʿāʾi-him* دعـ]ـاهم
Q53:23 *ʾābāʾu-kum* ابـ]ـاوكم.

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