

## Artykuły / Articles

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### The Topos of the Unborn in Early Islamic Predestination Debates: A Study of the *ḥadīṭ* of Ḥuḍayfa Ibn Asīd in *Ṣaḥīḥ* Muslim\*

#### Abstract

This article provides an *isnād cum matn* analysis of a *ḥadīṭ* transmitted by Ḥuḍayfa Ibn Asīd describing how an angel visits the unborn in the womb. During the visit, several things are predestined. The *ḥadīṭ* has a prominent position at the beginning of the chapter on predestination in the *ḥadīṭ* collection of Muslim. The article shows, how the arrangement of the material in that opening section, which has to be dated to the 9<sup>th</sup> century CE, had the effect of closing a debate whether the individual's destiny in the hereafter is predestined.

**Keywords:** *ḥadīṭ*, predestination, *isnād cum matn* analysis, *Ṣaḥīḥ* Muslim

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In his *Ṣaḥīḥ*, Muslim chose to open his chapter on *Qadar* with an arrangement of three *ḥadīths* describing prenatal human development (henceforth “the unborn”) and how an angel visits the unborn, whose fate is then predestined. I have labelled these three *ḥadīths* according to the names of their first transmitters: the Ibn Mas‘ūd, Ḥuḍayfa, and Anas Ibn Mālik *ḥadīths*, respectively. Parts of this material have been touched on or dealt with in the work of Wensinck, Watt, Ringgren, van Ess, and Cook.<sup>1</sup> Wensinck and Watt essentially provided translations of two *ḥadīths* in their larger overview of *ḥadīth* material relating to predestination. Ringgren drew attention to the fact that comparable material relating to the unborn and predestination also exists in other religious traditions written in Syriac and Hebrew. Van Ess focused most of his study on the Ibn Mas‘ūd *ḥadīth*, but also integrated a brief analysis of the Ḥuḍayfa *ḥadīth*. He referred only to parallels in Hebrew material, for which he was later criticised by Cook who focused more on the Syriac material.<sup>2</sup> Although his primary focus is on the Ibn Mas‘ūd *ḥadīth*, van Ess considered the Ḥuḍayfa *ḥadīth* as a sort of support tradition, bolstering the positions expressed in the Ibn Mas‘ūd material. A major finding was that the idea that all human deeds are predestined and was only added at a later stage of the transmission of the *ḥadīth* material on the unborn predestination.

In this article, I will focus on the Ḥuḍayfa *ḥadīth*, since it has not been the focus of attention in previous studies. First, I will give an overview of the topos of the unborn in the early Muslim *Qadar* debate until the 10<sup>th</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> century based on Sunni *ḥadīth* collections. This will help to identify the specificity of the arrangement Muslim chose in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*. A major element of this specificity is his inclusion of the Ḥuḍayfa *ḥadīth*. Due to the overarching importance which *Ṣaḥīḥ* Muslim eventually gained throughout Sunni Islamic intellectual history, this inclusion had a significant impact on the way in which Muslim religious scholars debated issues relating to the unborn. This became most obvious during the 1980s when scholars tried to answer the question of when human life began “according to the Islamic view”. In the course of these debates, some argued for the 120<sup>th</sup> day and others for the 40<sup>th</sup> day. While the former perspective essentially relied on a long-established reading of the Ibn Mas‘ūd *ḥadīth*, the latter focused more prominently on the Ḥuḍayfa *ḥadīth*, among other things.<sup>3</sup> A major part of this article will therefore provide an in-depth analysis of the Ḥuḍayfa *ḥadīth*. Then I will examine its relation to its two neighboring *ḥadīths*, the Ibn Mas‘ūd and Anas Ibn Mālik *ḥadīths* in Muslim’s *Qadar* chapter and thus provide a sound basis for assessing the effect of its inclusion in the collection.

In my analysis I combine two approaches: context analysis and *isnād cum matn* analysis (ICMA). The first approach has recently been flagged for Sunni *ḥadīth* collections

<sup>1</sup> Arent J. Wensinck, *The Muslim Creed. Its Genesis and Historical Development*, London 1965, pp. 54f; W. Montgomery Watt, *Free Will and Predestination in Early Islam*, London 1948, pp. 17–19; Helmer Ringgren, *Studies in Arabian Fatalism*, Uppsala-Wiesbaden 1955, pp. 117–119; Josef van Ess, *Zwischen Ḥadīth und Theologie: Studien zum Entstehen prädestinarianischer Überlieferung*, Berlin 1975, pp. 1–31; Michael Cook, *Early Muslim Dogma: a source-critical study*, Cambridge 1981, pp. 107–117, 145–152.

<sup>2</sup> Van Ess, *Zwischen Ḥadīth und Theologie*, p. 16 and Cook, *Muslim Dogma*, pp. 145–149 with Fn 37 on page 216.

<sup>3</sup> Mohammed Ghaly, ‘The Beginning of Human Life: Islamic Bioethical Perspectives’, *Zygon* 47.1 (2012).

by Burge.<sup>4</sup> This approach assumes that the authorial voice of *ḥadīṭ* collectors can be heard by analyzing the specific *ḥadīṭ* material they included in their collections, what they did not include, and in which specific arrangement they eventually chose to present that material. While this approach focuses more on the analysis of the *ḥadīṭ* collector as an author, i.e. in a relatively narrow point in time, ICMA analyses *ḥadīṭs* stemmatically in order to elaborate the processes of text development over several generations before their inclusion into certain collections. The method analyzes the two parts of a *ḥadīṭ*: the *matn*, i.e. the text of what the prophet Muḥammad (or one of his Companions) is remembered to have said, and the *isnād*, the chain of transmitters who are said to have related this text to each other over the generations. Both, *isnād* and *matn*, often show repetitious patterns. In the case of the *matn* this is often immediately obvious, while patterns in *isnāds* are often not immediately visible to the same extent and need to be visualized. Here the terminology of common link (CL) and partial common link (PCL) is crucial. The *isnād* could state that a person said that he or she had heard the prophet say something. That person A related this to B, and B in turn related this to two people, C and D. C might have related this to 5 different people, whereas D only related it to one person. The overall pattern of the *isnāds* would be that all lines converge in the person B, who would be the *common link* (CL). Since some of those lines converge in C before moving to B, this C would be termed a *partial common link* (PCL). Only one line goes through D and it does not get a specific label. It might be that in later times the person C became the target of criticism for some reason (e.g. his transmission practice might not have lived up to the standards of later generations or doubts about his personal integrity were voiced). In such a situation a later transmitter might have equipped the *matn* as he had received it in the transmission via PCL C with a different *isnād* which he considered more reliable. This would then become the transmission via D. In ICMA parlance such a redaction step is called a *dive*.

In order to achieve results as reliable as possible, factors need to be reduced which could distort the repetitious patterns. For example, if one would rely only on *ḥadīṭs* from a collection with a focus on Iraq, there would be a great likelihood that the *isnāds* would show Iraqi transmissions in a disproportionate ratio.<sup>5</sup> Therefore, in a first step it is necessary to gather material from a wide stretch of sources in order to reduce the likelihood and impact of confounding variables. For these reasons ICMA only produces good results in cases where a) the repetitious patterns can be established, which are b) derived from a considerable variety of collections. Once the repetitious patterns of *isnād* and *matn* are established, the question can be addressed if there is a form of correlation between the two.

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<sup>4</sup> Stephen R. Burge, 'Reading between the Lines: The Compilation of *Ḥadīṭ* and the Authorial Voice', *Arabica* 58 (2011); see also Robert Gleave, 'Between *ḥadīṭ* and *fiqh*: The "Canonical" Imāmī collections of *akhbār*', *Islamic Law and Society* 8.3 (2001).

<sup>5</sup> Andreas Görke, 'Eschatology, History, and the Common Link: A study in methodology', *Method and theory in the study of Islamic origins*, ed. Herbert Berg, Leiden 2003, p. 186.

An additional problem for the interpretation of the correlation between patterns is the available information on transmitters. Usually this is drawn from biographical dictionaries. However, this biographical material has to be assessed carefully. For example, it might be entirely based on *isnāds*, i.e. the entry merely states that X transmitted from Y and Z to A and B, information matching 100% with the *isnāds* one wants to analyze. In such a case the independence of the biographical entry is highly questionable and it is difficult to be used for an assessment of the *isnād*.<sup>6</sup>

This entire exercise aims at possible conclusions about the original *matn* as the CL transmitted it “and the one responsible for whatever changes have occurred in the course of the transmission after the common link.”<sup>7</sup> This way a diachronic, contextualized analysis of the *ḥadīṭ* material in question becomes possible. Early versions or text layers can be identified, which, together with tentatively safe dating, can help to position those versions or layers in their “original” *Sitz im Leben*.

In my application of ICMA to the Ḥudayfa *ḥadīṭ*, I will provide conclusions in this direction of research. However, the major aim of ICMA here is to combine it with an approach to context analysis: the ICMA of the Ḥudayfa *ḥadīṭ* provides material for the better assessment of the actual authorial choices Muslim made in the specific presentation of the Ibn Mas‘ūd, Ḥudayfa, and Anas Ibn Mālik *ḥadīṭs* at the beginning of his *Qadar* chapter.

### **The topos of the unborn in *Qadar*-related *ḥadīṭ* texts until the 10<sup>th</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> century**

When Muslim decided to include the unborn-angel-predestination topos into his *Qadar* chapter, he acted as practically any major Sunni *ḥadīṭ* collector of the 9<sup>th</sup> century CE/ 3<sup>rd</sup> century h.<sup>8</sup> An analysis of the earlier collections of Mālik Ibn Anas (d. 795/179) and Ma‘mar Ibn Rāšid (d. 770/153) shows that this was a new phenomenon at the time.

The chapter on *Qadar* in Mālik’s *Muwaṭṭa’* does not contain any reference to the unborn.<sup>9</sup> An initial examination of the *Kitāb al-Qadar* in Ma‘mar’s *Ġāmi’* presents a different picture:

<sup>6</sup> See Pavel Pavlovitch, *The Formation of the Islamic Understanding of Kalāla in the Second Century AH (718–816 CE). Between Scripture and Canon*, Leiden / Boston 2016, pp. 40–42.

<sup>7</sup> Harald Motzki, ‘Dating Muslim Traditions: A Survey’, *Arabica* 52.2 (2005), p. 251. ICMA does not aim at reconstructing the *matn* as the prophet would have said it. Rather “authentic *matn*” in ICMA means “as the CL transmitted it”. See Andreas Görke, Harald Motzki, ‘Tilman Nagels Kritik an der Isnad-cum-matn-Analyse. Eine Replik’ *Asiatische Studien – Études Asiatiques* 68.2 (2014).

<sup>8</sup> The collections differ as to how extensively the material is covered and where in the chapter it is positioned, i.e. the beginning of the chapter (Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, p. 991; Buḥārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, p. 1174; Ibn Māḡa, *Sunan*, I, p. 29 and Ibn Ḥibbān, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, XIV, p. 52f) or further on (Abū Dawūd, *Sunan*, VII, p. 93; Tirmidī, *Ġāmi’*, IV, p. 15; Ibn Abī ‘Ašim, *Sunna*, I, pp. 77–83). The *Sunan* of Nasā’ī do not have a comparable *Qadar* chapter.

<sup>9</sup> Mālik, *Muwaṭṭa’*, IV, pp. 277–285.

1. It contains a statement by ‘Abd Allāh Ibn ‘Umar (d. 693/73) referring to the *nasama*, which could mean the unborn.
2. It contains the Ibn Mas‘ūd *ḥadīṭ*.<sup>10</sup>

However, the first is likely an example of an early usage of *nasama* not referring to the unborn, while the second is a result of a later redaction process.

Ad 1: The opening part of *Kitāb al-Qadar* in the *Ĝāmi‘* contains a statement attributed to ‘Abd Allāh Ibn ‘Umar (d. 693/73), that says that during God’s creation of the *nasama*, sex and *ṣaqū/sa‘īd* are ordained after an angel asks about them.<sup>11</sup> Here, *nasama* very likely does not refer to the unborn. Around 800, the term was often used in contexts referring to the idea that all human souls had been created before the world began.<sup>12</sup> The context in Ma‘mar’s *Ĝāmi‘* suggests exactly this, since the statement is followed by two traditions about Moses criticizing Adam, to which Adam replies that his deed had been predestined, i.e. before the world began.<sup>13</sup> This context-based interpretation from the *Qadar* chapter of Ma‘mar’s *Ĝāmi‘*, where the term *nasama* originally referred to pre-eternal souls rather than embryos, becomes even clearer when compared to a similar passage composed roughly 100 years later by ‘Uṭmān ad-Dārimī (d. 894/280).<sup>14</sup> In this passage, the arrangement of the material clearly indicates that Ad-Dārimī must have understood *nasama* as referring to the unborn without any reference to concepts about pre-eternal existence.<sup>15</sup> By contrast, the arrangement of the material in Ma‘mar’s *Qadar* chapter strongly suggests that roughly one hundred years earlier, *nasama* was understood to refer to pre-created souls.

Ad 2: Other than the material referring to *nasama*, the Ibn Mas‘ūd *ḥadīṭ* clearly relates to prenatal life (a translation of the rather long *ḥadīṭ* is provided below). In the modern edition of Ma‘mar’s *Ĝāmi‘*, the Ibn Mas‘ūd *ḥadīṭ* occurs later on in the *Qadar* chapter. The *Ĝāmi‘* has the basic structure of teachings related by Ma‘mar to his pupil, ‘Abd ar-Razzāq, as is indicated in most of the *isnāds*. In his study on the transmission

<sup>10</sup> ‘Abd ar-Razzāq, *Muṣannaḥ*, XI, pp. 111–126, here p. 123.

<sup>11</sup> ‘Abd ar-Razzāq, *Muṣannaḥ*, XI, p. 112.

<sup>12</sup> Thomas Eich, ‘The term *nasama* in *ḥadīṭ* with a focus on material about predestination and the unborn’, *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes* 108, (2018), passim and 31–37 on the statement by ‘Abdallāh Ibn ‘Umar.

<sup>13</sup> On this topos, see also Van Ess, *Zwischen Ḥadīṭ und Theologie*, pp. 161–168. Admittedly, the statement is preceded by a story where someone is identified as “one of those for whom blessedness [in the afterlife] had already been written down while they were in the wombs of their mothers” (*ḥādā miman kutibat lahu as-su‘āda wa hum fī buṭūn ummahātihim*). However, “wombs of their mothers” (*buṭūn ummahātihim*) is likely to be a passing reference in the Qur’an (Q 16:78, 39:6, 53:32), which, in two of the three instances, uses the expression together with the creation of Adam (Q 39:6; 53:32).

<sup>14</sup> Dārimī, *Radd*, pp. 127–130.

<sup>15</sup> The passage opens with a reference to the fate in the hereafter of deceased children, followed by Qur’anic verses including Q 53:32 (*buṭūn ummahātikum*). A following quote by Muḥammad about the newborn (*mawlūd*) indicates unambiguously that the topic remains with the child. A statement by ‘Abd Allāh Ibn ‘Umar about *nasamas* follows (now related as a prophetic *ḥadīṭ*) and is immediately succeeded by the Ibn Mas‘ūd *ḥadīṭ* (see below), which unambiguously speaks about prenatal development. The passage closes with a prophetic statement about predestination triggered by a burying ceremony – arguably of a child.

history of ‘Abd ar-Razzāq’s work, Motzki has shown that Ma‘mar’s *Ĝāmi‘* was transmitted early on as an independent collection together with the *Muṣannaḥ* of ‘Abd ar-Razzāq.<sup>16</sup> Further, Motzki argues for the *Muṣannaḥ* that ‘Abd ar-Razzāq’s pupil, Ishāq ad-Dabarī (d. 898/285), was pivotal.<sup>17</sup> I assume the same for Ma‘mar’s *Ĝāmi‘*. Motzki states that while Dabarī had very likely received a book probably reflecting ‘Abd ar-Razzāq’s lectures, the transmission history of the text allowed for redactional processes until the early 10<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>18</sup>

In the *Ĝāmi‘*, the *isnād* authorisation structure is generally ‘Abd ar-Razzāq → Ma‘mar.<sup>19</sup> However, there are exceptions to this rule. I perused the *Ĝāmi‘* until the end of the *Kitāb al-Qadar*, a segment comprising 372 entries according to the edition’s numbering systems, i.e. 23% of the total 1614 *ḥadīths*. In this sample, 27 entries refer to authorities other than Ma‘mar.<sup>20</sup> Of these 27 entries, 13 appear at the end or close to the end of the respective chapter.<sup>21</sup> It would be possible to see this as a reflection of a ranking of authorities by ‘Abd ar-Razzāq or someone after him in the transmission history. However, the remaining other cases, where other *isnād* structures appear at the beginning or middle of a chapter, seem to contradict this.<sup>22</sup> The most likely explanation to me is that the material of *isnāds* other than Ma‘mar reflect a redaction history and were added to a core of Ma‘mar-traditions. This could have happened either through addition at the end of a chapter, where some empty space might have been left – a reasonably expected procedure for later insertions of shorter material. However, for later additions of larger material groups, a different path was likely necessary. Recent research on *ḥadīth* papyri has found that scribes could add larger amounts of material through writing it on the blank verso of the previous page.<sup>23</sup> In the *Ĝāmi‘*, one of the largest sets of material breaking away from the *isnād* structures of ‘Abd ar-Razzāq → Ma‘mar, is a group of four cases in the *Kitāb al-Qadar* which include the Ibn Mas‘ūd *ḥadīth*.<sup>24</sup> Against this background, I consider the Ibn Mas‘ūd *ḥadīth*

<sup>16</sup> Harald Motzki, ‘The author and his work in the Islamic literature of the first centuries: The case of ‘Abd ar-Razzāq’s *Muṣannaḥ*’, *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 28 (2003), pp. 180–181. The *Muṣannaḥ* of ‘Abd ar-Razzāq does not have a *Qadar* chapter.

<sup>17</sup> Motzki, ‘The author and his work’, pp. 193–196. The edition is mostly based on the recension of Aḥmad Ibn Ḥālīd al-Qurtubī (d. 934/322) (ibidem, 180–182).

<sup>18</sup> Motzki, ‘The author and his work’, pp. 193–196.

<sup>19</sup> Properly speaking it is pupil → Aḥmad Ibn Ḥālīd → Dabarī → ‘Abd ar-Razzāq → Ma‘mar.

<sup>20</sup> I include one case where the reference might have been lost (XI, p. 49).

<sup>21</sup> ‘Abd ar-Razzāq, *Muṣannaḥ*, XI, pp. 11 (2x), 21, 23 (2x), 24, 25, 26, 39, 40, 54, 84 (2x). Many of these cases occur in short chapters.

<sup>22</sup> ‘Abd ar-Razzāq, *Muṣannaḥ*, XI, pp. 3, 13 (2x), 17 (2x), 19, 42, 49, 77, 88, 122f (4x).

<sup>23</sup> Mathieu Tillier, Naïm Vanthieghem, ‘Une oeuvre inconnue de Wakī Ibn al-Ġarrāḥ (m. 197/812?) et sa transmission en Égypte au IIIe/IXe siècle’, *Arabica* 65 (2018), pp. 677f. show that the recto and verso of a *ḥadīth* papyrus were written at different times, i.e. the verso spaces which were left blank in the 8<sup>th</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> century were filled with additional *ḥadīth* material with a differing *isnād* structure in the 9<sup>th</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> century.

<sup>24</sup> ‘Abd ar-Razzāq, *Muṣannaḥ*, XI, p. 122f (one to ‘Abd ar-Razzāq’s father and three to Sufyān at-Ṭawrī (d. 777/161)).

as a later addition to the *Ġāmi'* and assume the lifetime of 'Abd ar-Razzāq's pupil Ishāq ad-Dabarī (d. 898/285) as the earliest safe date for this redaction process.<sup>25</sup>

Taken together with the entire absence of the topos in the *Qadar* section of the *Muwaṭṭa' Mālik*, the material strongly indicates that around 800, references to the topic of the unborn in the *Qadar* debate were not common, while almost all thematic *ḥadīṭ* collections of the later 9<sup>th</sup> century included these references in their respective *Qadar* chapters.

### Reference to the unborn in late antiquity's resurrection debates

A likely explanation for this phenomenon is that before roughly 800, reference to the unborn was linked to other topics, as is suggested in the semantical change of *nasama* briefly outlined above.

As recent research has shown, reference to the unborn had become an intrinsic component in late antiquity's Mediterranean eschatology debates by the 5<sup>th</sup> century CE at the latest. In particular, the question of whether *abortivi* would be resurrected and, if yes, in which form, had become "something of an eye-catching topic".<sup>26</sup> By the late 5<sup>th</sup> century, the issue had obviously become important enough to be highlighted in biographies about Augustine and some of his Donatist interlocutors.<sup>27</sup>

Also, in Syriac Christianity, the unborn became the subject of theological deliberations. For example, Aphrahat's (d. circa 345) gloss of Ezekiel 37, "The valley of the dry bones", with vivid descriptions of the resurrection of scattered bones, can be interpreted as an analogy for embryonic growth.<sup>28</sup> In the hymns of Ephraim (d. 373), the resurrection of embryos who died with their mothers in sexualised, grown-up bodies is endorsed – a concept possibly ascribed to Ephraim in textual developments during the 7<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>29</sup>

As Patricia Crone has convincingly argued, the Qur'an engages considerably with late Antique resurrection debates, and the Qur'an's interlocuting deniers of resurrection obviously used many arguments known from comparable discussions in monotheistic

<sup>25</sup> Of course, it is imaginable that the addition might have occurred during a later session of 'Abd ar-Razzāq teaching Ma'mar's *Ġāmi'*. However, such substantial additions would then raise the question of why the work was still spread as a work attributed to Ma'mar.

<sup>26</sup> Zubin Mistry, *Abortion in the early Middle Ages c.500–900*, York 2015, p. 271 Fn 39.

<sup>27</sup> Mistry, *Abortion*, pp. 266–272 focusing on Augustine. Excluding *abortivi* from bodily resurrection in the debate raised serious questions. What will then happen to the soul, that had already settled in that entity? And how should the scenario of a pregnant woman dying be dealt with? Basically, Augustine opined that the dead embryo would be resurrected in a perfect, i.e. a grown, body (he took the same stand in connection with infant death).

<sup>28</sup> Caroline Walker Bynum, *The resurrection of the body in Western Christianity, 200–1336*, New York 1995, p. 74.

<sup>29</sup> Bynum, *Resurrection*, pp. 76f. Since this passage in Sermo I, line 517–54 is in tension with other writings of Ephraem, Edmund Beck (the editor and translator) considers them as the work of a 7<sup>th</sup> century Syriac monk (see *Ephraem*, V–X). The resurrection of unborns who have died with the mother is also referred to in passing in Ephraem's *Carmina Nisibena (Des Heiligen Ephraem des Syrers Carmina Nisibena (Zweiter Teil))*, transl. by Edmund Beck, Louvain 1963, p. 92), which I take as an additional indication of how well-established the topic was.

communities in the time up to the 7<sup>th</sup> century when Muḥammad was preaching his message.<sup>30</sup> The Qur'an repeatedly refers to the unborn in these contexts.<sup>31</sup>

Thus, it can be seen that in the beginnings of Islamic history, reference to the unborn was a well-known phenomenon in debates relating to eschatology. The Ḥuḍayfa *ḥadīṭ* might also have been remembered first as an eschatological tradition. This is suggested to a certain degree by the structure and context in which this tradition was remembered in the earliest *Musnads*.

The first two transmitters in the different variants of the Ḥuḍayfa *ḥadīṭ* are always Ḥuḍayfa Ibn Asīd → Abū at-Ṭufayl. The chapters devoted to Ḥuḍayfa Ibn Asīd in the collection of Ṭayālīsī (d. 819/204), Ḥumaydī (d. 834/219), Ibn Abī Ṣayba (d. 849/235), and Ibn Ḥanbal (d. 855/241) exclusively record material transmitted via Abū at-Ṭufayl, while the later Ṭabarānī (d. 971/360) recalls three additional persons to have transmitted from Ḥuḍayfa. All of the respective chapters in the four early *Musnads* have an eschatological tradition relating to the signs of the last hour (*āyāt as-sā'a*), three of them relating to the tradition of the unborn, two relating to the prophet ordering a prayer on behalf of the deceased Negus of Ethiopia,<sup>32</sup> and one relating to an explanatory tradition about the beast (*dāba*) mentioned in the eschatological tradition.<sup>33</sup> In Ṭabarānī's *Musnad*, the list of topics had further grown, partly through the addition of decidedly pro-alid traditions.<sup>34</sup> Obviously, the early collectors only knew of Ḥuḍayfa Ibn Asīd's material transmitted via Abū at-Ṭufayl. In this transmission material, evident eschatological content (*āyāt as-sā'a*) had a strong presence. In this context, it is noteworthy that *ḥadīṭ* experts of the 9<sup>th</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> century preserved a memory of Abū at-Ṭufayl as somebody who participated in the revolt of Al-Muḥtār (685–687 CE/66–67 h), which was influenced by apocalyptic ideas.<sup>35</sup>

Given the fact that, by the 7<sup>th</sup> century, reference to the unborn had become a standard topic in theological resurrection debates throughout the Mediterranean, including in the Qur'an, I do not consider it a coincidence that early *ḥadīṭ* experts remembered the Ḥuḍayfa → Abū at-Ṭufayl link as transmitting overwhelmingly eschatological material and, to an only slightly lesser degree, the tradition of the unborn. Together with the memory

<sup>30</sup> Patricia Crone, 'The Quranic *Mushrikūn* and the resurrection (Part I)', *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 75 (2012); see also the ample discussion on Syriac anti-tritheist writings of the 6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> centuries in David Bertaina, 'Bodily resurrection in the Qur'an and Syriac anti-tritheist debate', *Journal of the International Qur'anic Studies Association* 3 (2018).

<sup>31</sup> See Crone, 'Quranic *Mushrikūn*', pp. 450f; Nicolai Sinai, *The Qur'an: A Historical-Critical Introduction*, Edinburgh 2017, p. 174.

<sup>32</sup> This is linked to "Basran, Qadarite discussions on funeral prayers over non-Muslims, which group included Christians, but also 'Muslims' whose conduct was considered un-Islamic." (Wim Raven, 'Some Early Islamic Texts on the Negus of Abyssinia', *Journal of Semitic Studies* XXXIII (1988), pp. 209f.).

<sup>33</sup> Unborn: Ḥumaydī, Ibn Abī Ṣayba, Ibn Ḥanbal; Negus: Ṭayālīsī, Ibn Ḥanbal; *dāba*: Ṭayālīsī, with one added alternative *isnād*.

<sup>34</sup> Ṭabarānī, *Kabīr*, III, pp. 189–202, followed by transmissions (until p. 204) from the three other transmitters, partly giving the eschatological material again.

<sup>35</sup> Ibn Qutayba, *Al-Ma'ārif*, pp. 341f.; idem, *Ta'wīl muḥtaliḥ al-ḥadīṭ*, 57; G.R. Hawting, 'al-Muḥtār b. Abī 'Ubayd', *EP*. In contrast to almost any other biographical information about Abū at-Ṭufayl (see below), I consider this piece of information to be reliable, since I see no reason why it should have been fabricated.



that Abū aṭ-Ṭufayl took part in the revolt of Al-Muḥtār, which followed apocalyptic ideas, I interpret the remembered transmission of the unborn material through Abū aṭ-Ṭufayl as pointing to a milieu discussing eschatology.<sup>36</sup>

This scenario receives further support through the strong presence of sex determination in the material – in fact, it is the only topic which is *always* present (see below). One of the core issues concerning resurrection in late antiquity (including resurrection of *abortivi*) was the question of whether it had to refer to gendered bodies or not.<sup>37</sup>

### Triangling with biographical material

Ḥuḍayfa Ibn Asīd is mentioned in the *Tārīḥ Ṭabarī* in two contexts.<sup>38</sup> The first is a change of administration staff in central Iraq during the time of ‘Umar Ibn al-Ḥaṭṭāb.<sup>39</sup> The second context is the conquest of Al-Bāb, a key pass and fortress for controlling the Caucasus, recorded as 22 hiġra (643 CE). From Al-Bāb, the chief commander sent out four leaders (*quwwād*) to Armenian regions for further conquests, but only one of them was successful. Ḥuḍayfa was sent to *Ġibāl al-Lān*, today’s Ossetia.<sup>40</sup> This is the last time he is mentioned in Ṭabarī’s *Tārīḥ* and the impression is that Ḥuḍayfa died during the campaign.

Among the biographical dictionaries of *ḥadīṭ* transmission, Ibn Ḥibbān states that Ḥuḍayfa Ibn Asīd would have died in Armenia in 42 hiġra (662 CE).<sup>41</sup> This is surprising, given the suggestion in Ṭabarī that his death was in Ossetia twenty years earlier. Ibn Ḥibbān does not give a source and the date can be further questioned by the entry for the following person (a Ḥabīb Ibn Maslama), which also posits 42 as year of death in Armenia. It seems likely that this is a mistake (a missed line) in the – possibly aural – transmission history of the text.

In addition, Ibn Ḥibbān’s two neighbouring entries on Ḥuḍayfa Ibn Asīd and Ḥuḍayfa Ibn al-Yamān suggest that *ḥadīṭ* experts sometimes had difficulties separating the two. Ibn Ḥibbān records the *kunya* Abū Sarīḥa for both of them and states that both would have

<sup>36</sup> Note also that the revolt started in central Iraq, an area with a strong presence of Jewish and Christian religious institutions at the time (M. Streck, M./Morony, ‘al-Madā’in’, in: *EP*). Intellectual encounters between different religious groups, including trained scholars, can be assumed, and in the specific case of Al-Muḥtār’s revolt are proven through the work of the 7<sup>th</sup> century Syriac monk, Bar Penkāyē, who was remarkably well informed about its social composition as well as about theological concepts. See Hawting, ‘al-Mukḥtār b. Abī ‘Ubayd’, *EP*; Lutz Greisiger, ‘John Bar Penkāyē’, in: *Christian-Muslim Relations. A Bibliographical History*. Vol. 1 (600–900), eds. David Thomas, Barbara Roggema, Leiden 2009; Sebastian P. Brock, ‘North Mesopotamia in the late seventh century. Book XV of John Bar Penkāyē’s Rīš Mellē’, *Jerusalem Studies of Arabic and Islam* XI (1987).

<sup>37</sup> Bynum, *Resurrection*, pp. 74f, esp. pp. 90f and p. 98 (about Augustine).

<sup>38</sup> Much of the material referenced in the following two sections has already been touched upon briefly in van Ess, *Zwischen Ḥadīṭ und Theologie*, pp. 23f.

<sup>39</sup> Ṭabarī, *Tārīḥ*, IV, pp. 23 and 139. Nearly identical events are recorded twice, for the years 16 and 21 hiġra (637 and 642 CE). The first refers to the *ḥarrāġ* and the building of bridges and the second to irrigation. In both cases, the course of events and exchange of staff is identical. Ḥuḍayfa’s transfer to Kufa is already mentioned in earlier sources such as Ḥalīfa Ibn Ḥayyāt, *Ṭabaqāt*, I, p. 32.

<sup>40</sup> Ṭabarī, *Tārīḥ*, IV, pp. 155–157. For the geography, see D.M. Dunlop, ‘Bāb al-Abwāb’ and ‘Bāb al-Lān’, *EP*.

<sup>41</sup> Ibn Ḥibbān, *Ṭīqāt*, III, p. 81, quoted as an example in Ibn Ḥaġr, *Tahdīb*, I, p. 367.

dwelt (*sakana*) at Kufa.<sup>42</sup> For Ḥuḍayfa Ibn Asīd, the latter statement is not supported by Ṭabarī's *Tārīḥ*: the administrative changes mentioned only indicate that he turned down an administrative position and was substituted by Ḥuḍayfa Ibn al-Yamān, who then stayed longer in the Kufa region.<sup>43</sup>

It is my opinion that for Ḥuḍayfa Ibn Asīd, the biographical data in the dictionaries is hardly reliable.<sup>44</sup> I presume that a historical person of that name possibly existed and likely played a role in the military expansion into Armenia in the early 640s, where he very likely died.

### Biographical material II: Abū aṭ-Ṭufayl

For Abū aṭ-Ṭufayl's biography, Aṭ-Ṭayyib al-ʿAšāš has already produced a critical synopsis<sup>45</sup> pointing out that the sources vary considerably with respect to Abū aṭ-Ṭufayl's exact name<sup>46</sup> and his year of death (ranging between 100 and 110 hiġra (718 and 728 CE)).<sup>47</sup> This considerably challenges the reliability of the biographical information about him. Additional caveats concern two regularly recurring pieces of information: first, that he was the last surviving *ṣahābī*, and second, that he had shared eight years of Muḥammad's lifetime.

Ad 1: In his *Al-Ma'ārif*, Ibn Qutayba produces a quote from Al-Wāqidī (d. 822/207) in which Abū aṭ-Ṭufayl's name is apparently added to a list of four "last surviving *ṣahāba*" who died during the 80s or early 90s of the hiġra era (ca. 700s and 710s CE) in Kufa, Medina, Basra and Šām. The passage does not identify the place where Abū aṭ-Ṭufayl died. Mecca can be inferred from the topical arrangement of the passage, of course, and several biographical dictionaries – including the comparatively early *Ṭabaqāt* of Ḥalīfa Ibn Ḥayyāt (d. 854/240) – state that Abū aṭ-Ṭufayl died there.<sup>48</sup> However, differing opinions existed as late as the lifetime of Ibn al-Aṭīr (d. 1233/630), who states that "some say" (*qīla*) that Abū aṭ-Ṭufayl actually died at Kufa.<sup>49</sup> The only unambiguous statement about Abū aṭ-Ṭufayl having died at Mecca in the topical form of "I was at

<sup>42</sup> For the *kunya*, the editor assumes this to be a mistake concerning Ḥuḍayfa Ibn al-Yamān (Ibn Ḥibbān, *Tiqāt*, III, p. 80 Fn13), but points out that the "erroneous" *kunya* is attested in both of his collated manuscripts. Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr, *Istīʿāb*, p. 335f writes that Ḥuḍayfa Ibn Asīd died in Kufa (like Ḥuḍayfa Ibn al-Yamān (p. 335)).

<sup>43</sup> Ṭabarī, *Tārīḥ*, IV, pp. 23 and 139. The latter passage in particular clearly establishes a connection between Kufa and Ḥuḍayfa Ibn al-Yamān and not Ḥuḍayfa Ibn Asīd. The two neighboring entries in Buḥārī, *Tārīḥ kabīr*, III, pp. 95f show no such confusion (the Abū Sarīḥa-*kunya* and Kufa are only mentioned for Ḥuḍayfa Ibn Asīd) but provide almost no biographical information and consist essentially of several *ḥadīṯ* - the Ḥuḍayfa Ibn Asīd entry of not more than the name, *nazala al-kūfa*, and one *ḥadīṯ* transmitted via Abū aṭ-Ṭufayl.

<sup>44</sup> Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr, *Istīʿāb*, p. 1667 also documents confusion about Ḥuḍayfa Ibn Asīd's genealogy.

<sup>45</sup> Aṭ-Ṭayyib al-ʿAšāš, "Abū aṭ-Ṭufayl ʿĀmir Ibn Wāʾila al-Kanānī. Aḥbāruhu wa ašʿāruhu", *Hawliyyāt al-Ġāmiʿa at-Tūnisīya* 10 (1973), pp. 176–184.

<sup>46</sup> See also Al-Ḥaṭīb al-Baġdādī, *Tārīḥ*, I, p. 198.

<sup>47</sup> See also Ḍahabī, *Siyar*, III, p. 470.

<sup>48</sup> Ḥalīfa Ibn Ḥayyāt, *Ṭabaqāt*, I, p. 68; Ibn Ḥibbān, *Tiqāt*, III, p. 291 and Ibn Ḥaġar, *Tahḏīb*, II, p. 272, for example.

<sup>49</sup> Ibn al-Aṭīr, *Usud*, p. 1351. The other entries at pp. 623 and 956 do not mention this.

X in the year Y and saw a funeral and asked who it was” goes back to Ğarīr Ibn Ḥāzim and was transmitted through his son Wahb (d. 822/206).<sup>50</sup> Of course, such statements are hardly reliable as historical sources because of their topical form. In the concrete case studied here, there are also strong indications that Ğarīr Ibn Ḥāzim or his son might have had an interest in making Abū aṭ-Ṭufayl “the last surviving *ṣahābī*”. Dahabī writes about Ğarīr:

Some say that he transmitted from Abū aṭ-Ṭufayl ‘Āmir Ibn Wāṭila. It is recorded that he saw his funeral in Mekka. I saw more than one who counted Ğarīr among the *ṣiġār at-tābi ‘in*. ‘Alī related to me that he heard from Abū aṭ-Ṭufayl, the seal (*ḥātima*) of the *ṣahāba* and he is the seal of the ones who were in touch (*laḥaqa*) with Abū aṭ-Ṭufayl.<sup>51</sup>

Obviously, it became desirable at some point to access the transmission from the last surviving *ṣahābī*. Maybe, not surprisingly, the only explicit and unambiguous source for Abū aṭ-Ṭufayl having died at Mecca in 110 hiġra (728 CE) was spread by persons from exactly such a transmission line. This piece of information thus cannot be considered independent information.

The overall picture is, then, that the information about Abū aṭ-Ṭufayl’s date and place of death is not remembered as such *unisono*. Rather, the claim that he died at Mecca between 100 and 110 hiġra (718 and 728 CE) had the effect of the city now also having a “last surviving *ṣahābī*”, even outcompeting the four other cities as the place with the definite and ultimate last dying *ṣahābī*. These temporal and spatial aspects give the story a strong topical flavor and I therefore consider it to be unreliable.<sup>52</sup>

Ad 2: The construct of Abū aṭ-Ṭufayl having been the last surviving *ṣahābī* logically implies an overlap between his and the prophet’s lifetime. Ibn Ḥanbal’s *Musnad* preserves clear traces that this was a contested issue for some time. Ibn Ḥanbal devoted an extra chapter to Abū aṭ-Ṭufayl in his own right, independently of Ḥuḍayfa. This consists of 24 entries which can be broken down into 9 lines of transmission after Abū aṭ-Ṭufayl.

<sup>50</sup> Dahabī, *Siyar*, III, p. 470; Aṣbahānī, *Ma’rifā*, IV, p. 2067.

<sup>51</sup> Dahabī, *Siyar*, VII, pp. 99f; see also Aṣbahānī, *Ma’rifā*, IV, p. 2067 (Ğarīr in the list of persons who transmitted from Abū aṭ-Ṭufayl).

<sup>52</sup> I can only point in passing to some interesting similarities in the development of the early memory of the collection of the Qur’an under ‘Uṭmān: in a group of depictions, there were four copies at Medina, Kufa, Basra, and Damascus, to which Mecca was later added. (Theodor Nöldeke, Friedrich Schwally, *Geschichte des Qorāns. Zweiter Teil: Die Sammlung des Qorāns: mit einem literarischen Anhang über die muhammedanischen Quellen und die neuere christliche Forschung*, Leipzig 21919, pp. 112f) It was remembered that it was Ḥuḍayfa Ibn al-Yamān who triggered ‘Uṭmān to order the establishment of a Qur’anic codex and Ḥuḍayfa was essentially remembered as “‘Uṭmān’s man” in Kufa (Balādurī, *Ansāb al-aṣrāf*, V, pp. 31, 46f, 62, 82, 92, in particular the topos of his standard biography that he died “40 days after the murder of ‘Uṭmān” (for example, Ibn Ḥaġar, *Tahḏīb*, I, p. 367)). The key/only informant in Buḥārī’s *Ṣaḥīḥ* for his presentation of the collection of the Qur’an is Mūsā Ibn Ismā’īl (Viviane Comerro, *Les traditions sur la constitution du muṣḥaf de ‘Uṭmān*, Beirut 2012, pp. 89–101), who was also pivotal in spreading certain elements of the biography of Abū aṭ-Ṭufayl.

Roughly in the middle of the chapter, there is a group of four entries, which, taken together, establish that Abū aṭ-Ṭufayl said of himself that 1) he saw the prophet but never spoke to him, 2) he was the last one to have *seen* the prophet, 3) that he *saw* the prophet perform a ritual, and 4) that he knew (*adraktu*) eight years of Muḥammad's lifetime and that he was born in the year of the battle of Uḥud, i.e. the year 3 hiġra (625 CE).<sup>53</sup> From this, I conclude that *ḥadīṭ* experts of Ibn Ḥanbal's time obviously debated the reliability of Abū aṭ-Ṭufayl as a source because of his assumed life dates and that there was a strong tendency to assume that he might be used, *not* for verbatim quotes of Muḥammad, but rather for things he might have *seen* when he was a child. A closer inspection of the material in Ibn Ḥanbal's Abū aṭ-Ṭufayl chapter supports this impression: there is only one instance of a tradition in this chapter where there are no indications that the early *ḥadīṭ* experts did not express their doubts about Abū aṭ-Ṭufayl being a reliable source, namely a tradition that he *saw* the prophet move quickly between two stones.<sup>54</sup>

Abū aṭ-Ṭufayl's statement of his birth in the year 3 hiġra (625 CE), reinforced by a reference to Uḥud, was spread by a certain Ṭābit Ibn al-Walīd, who had heard it from his father.<sup>55</sup> This family *isnād* is the only one for which Ṭābit was remembered.<sup>56</sup> This situation makes the information suspicious.

Additionally, Buḥārī's biographical dictionaries preserve variations of a tradition supporting this year of birth in four different places. In the – rather complicated – tradition, an aged Abū aṭ-Ṭufayl talks to a certain Sayf Ibn Wahb and makes statements about his age at the time of speaking (often 90.5 years) and asks his interlocutor about his age, which is given as 33 or 30 years. In two variants, he also refers to a story where he went together with a certain 'Amrū to a meeting with Ḥuḍayfa. He adds that 'Amrū

<sup>53</sup> Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, XXXIX, pp. 210–223; “middle group” at 214–217.

<sup>54</sup> Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, XXXIX, pp. 219 and 222. For the first *ḥadīṭ* in the chapter (related to the Ġazwat Ṭābūk), an alternative *isnād* exists, which makes one of the commanders of this razzia Ḥuḍayfa Ibn al-Yamān, the source from whom Abū aṭ-Ṭufayl would have later heard the story. The second entry is not a *ḥadīṭ* at all, but rather a statement about Abū aṭ-Ṭufayl himself, while the third (two versions on p. 213 and 218) relates a story about Muḥammad clearly before Abū aṭ-Ṭufayl's alleged birth. In the fourth, a variant exists that Abū aṭ-Ṭufayl would have said “it reached me about the prophet” (*balaġani 'an an-nabi*). The following four (pp. 214–217) are statements about Abū aṭ-Ṭufayl himself (the first of them has additional extensive material with quotes from Muḥammad, but for this part similar versions exist with totally different first informants). The next *ḥadīṭ* (p. 218) also exists in a *mursal*-version from Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, then follows the story of Muḥammad moving quickly between two stones (p. 219, 222), followed by a long tradition spread by Zuhrī in two versions, one with and the other without Abū aṭ-Ṭufayl. Finally, there is a story clearly related to the Ḥārīġīs, where it is shown that the contemporaries of Ibn Ḥanbal understood it as something that Abū aṭ-Ṭufayl had heard from a man (the father of the respective son in the story) who quoted Muḥammad. See the extensive footnotes by the editors.

<sup>55</sup> Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, XXXIX, p. 217 Fn 1 with the identification of three *isnāds* meeting in Ṭābit.

<sup>56</sup> Rāzī, Ġarḥ, II, p. 458; Ibn Ḥibbān, *Tiqāt*, VIII, p. 158. Besides information extracted from the *isnāds* the biographers knew nothing about him.

and himself were both the same age, equaling the age of the interlocutor at the time of speaking, and that ‘Amrū was one of the *ṣaḥābā*.<sup>57</sup>

The reference to Ḥuḍayfa in this story was later interpreted as meaning Ḥuḍayfa Ibn al-Yamān,<sup>58</sup> who died in Al-Madā’in in the year 36 hiġra (657 CE).<sup>59</sup> If we subtract 33 years from 36 hiġra, the story would support the information that Abū aṭ-Ṭufayl was born in 3 hiġra (625 CE). However, the reference to ‘Amrū is linguistically, semantically and stylistically clearly a secondary addition to the text with the function of establishing a certain age for Abū aṭ-Ṭufayl at a certain time, and that this age necessarily resulted in his *ṣaḥābī* status. Therefore, the redaction history of this story is a strong indication that Abū aṭ-Ṭufayl’s status as a *ṣaḥābī*, i.e. his year of birth, is severely disputed.<sup>60</sup>

I thus conclude that for Abū aṭ-Ṭufayl, much of the biographical material is also unreliable in the sense of hard historical information. Rather, it reflects several possibly separate processes surrounding his biography aimed at establishing that a) he was one of the *ṣaḥābā*, b) who was the last of them to pass away “after 100”, c) in Mecca. In summary, the Ḥuḍayfa Ibn Asīd → Abū aṭ-Ṭufayl link cannot be considered hard historical evidence for the transmission of the respective texts from the former to the latter. As mentioned above, the only element from the sporadic information on Abū aṭ-Ṭufayl, for which I cannot see a reason why it should have been invented later, is his participation in the revolt of Al-Muḥṭār, which saw an apocalyptic role for itself.

### Isnād cum matn analysis (ICMA)

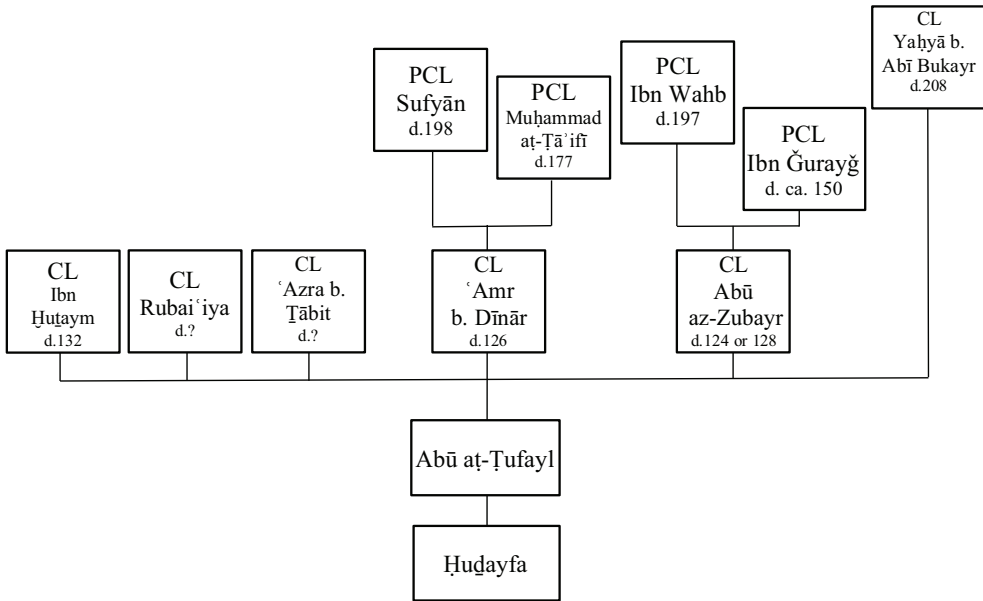
The structure of the *isnāds* of the Ḥuḍayfa *hadīth* can be gleaned from the accompanying tables. There is one *single strand* Ibn Lahī’a (Egyptian, d. 790/174) and the *common links* (CLs) ‘Abd Allāh Ibn ‘Uṭmān Ibn Ḥuṭaym (Meccan, d. 750/132), Rubay‘iya Ibn Kulṭūm (Basran, d. ?), and ‘Azra Ibn Ṭābit (Basran, d. ?). In a first step, I will show that that this material cannot be used meaningfully for a reconstruction of early transmission layers.

<sup>57</sup> Buḥārī, *Tārīḥ kabīr*, IV, p. 170 (only information about Abū aṭ-Ṭufayl’s and Sayf’s age); VI, p. 344 (reference to the visit, no mention of concrete ages) and 446f (the most elaborate version); Buḥārī, *Tārīḥ ṣaġīr*, I, p. 286 (here, Sayf is 30 years old).

<sup>58</sup> Al-Ḥaṣīb al-Baġdādī, *Ta’rīḥ*, I, p. 198.

<sup>59</sup> Ḍahabī, *Siyar*, II, pp. 361–370.

<sup>60</sup> The *isnād* of this story ends in Mūsā Ibn Ismā‘īl (Basran, d. 838/223), just like the *isnād* of the only tradition explicitly mentioning an act of transmission from Abū aṭ-Ṭufayl in Mecca in 107 hiġra (725 CE). In both cases, next to nothing is known about the first transmitters of the respective information. (Ibn Ḥibbān, *Ṭīqāt*, IV, p. 339 (Sayf Ibn Wahb) and V, p. 333 (Kaḥīr Ibn A’yūn) essentially only provide the information of the *isnāds* of the two traditions under study here.) Thus, I consider it very likely that this biographical information reflects attempts by Mūsā Ibn Ismā‘īl to bolster Abū aṭ-Ṭufayl’s position as the last surviving *ṣaḥābī*, possibly in order to tap into the resulting social capital as being connected to him.



Then I will address the CLs 'Amr Ibn Dīnār (Meccan, d. 744/126), Abū az-Zubayr (Meccan, d. 742/124 or 746/128), and Yaḥyā Ibn Abī Bukayr (d. 823/208). This material forms the bulk of the several variants of the Ḥuḍayfa *ḥadīth*, which Muslim chose to include in the *Qadar* chapter in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*. An in-depth analysis of these clusters will therefore lay the foundation for an assessment of the redactional choices Muslim made.

The *matn* of the Ḥuḍayfa *ḥadīth* consists of up to three elements:

- I) A framing story where Abū at-Ṭufayl hears Ibn Mas'ūd make a statement about predestination before birth, is bewildered and then meets Ḥuḍayfa, who supports the statement.
- II) A first part in the *ḥadīth matn* describing the angel and the physicality of the unborn.
- III) A second part in the *ḥadīth matn* describing the predestination of a set of things in the format of the angel asking God.

The *single strand via Ibn Lahī'a* (table 1) is recorded in the comparatively late collection of Ṭabarānī (d. 971/360).<sup>61</sup> The *isnād* is entirely Egyptian, before leading to 'Ubayd Ibn Abī Ṭalḥa al-Makkī, who connects to Abū at-Ṭufayl. I could not find a year of death for 'Ubayd, however, his Egyptian student in the *isnād*, Yazīd Ibn Ḥabīb, was recorded to have passed away in 746/128.<sup>62</sup> The dictionaries do not describe the 'Ubayd → Yazīd link, but rather a direct transmission Abū at-Ṭufayl → Yazīd. Ḍahabī

<sup>61</sup> Ṭabarānī, *Kabīr*, III, pp. 197f. I have decided to always provide the collector's dates of death to give the reader an impression of the time span between the demise of a CL and the demise of the collector eventually recording the transmission. I have decided not to label certain collections as "early" and others as "late", because of pragmatic difficulties to decide where to draw the line between the collections of Muslim (d. 875/261), Ibn Abī 'Āṣim (d. 900/287), Bazzār (d. 910/297), Al-Firyābī (d. 914/301), and Ṭahāwī (d. 933/321).

<sup>62</sup> For 'Ubayd see Ibn Ḥaḡar, *Tahdīb*, III, p. 38, for Yazīd see Ḍahabī, *Siyar*, VI, pp. 32–34.

records doubts about the latter link. Thus, it is possible that in the Ibn Lahī'a transmission being studied here, 'Ubayd was inserted into the *isnād* exactly to address these doubts.

The *matn* differs for element II and III from all the other transmissions of the Ḥuḍayfa material. It is likely that Ibn Lahī'a's transmission developed further *matn* material, which is otherwise known from a material cluster ascribed to 'Abd Allāh Ibn 'Umar.<sup>63</sup> In summary, the material cannot be used meaningfully to reconstruct early transmission layers.

The **CL 'Azra Ibn Thābit** (table 1) is recorded in the collections of Ibn Abī 'Āṣim (d. 900/287), Firyābī (d. 914/301), and Ṭabarānī (d. 971/360).<sup>64</sup> The biographical information does not record 'Azra's death date and mostly provides information extracted from *isnāds*. He is considered to be Basran.<sup>65</sup> The *isnāds* state that he received the transmission from a Ya'qūb and Yahyā Ibn 'Aqīl al-Makkī, neither of whom I could identify. After this, CL 'Azra, Ṭabarānī records three different *isnāds*. Two Basran *isnāds* grouped together have an entire *matn*. The third *isnād* only quotes the start of the *matn*. In this third *isnād* I am unable to unambiguously identify the first transmitter after 'Azra.<sup>66</sup> The transmitters after 'Azra in the two Basran *isnāds* died in 824/209 and 827/212 respectively.<sup>67</sup> On the other hand, the *isnād* recorded by Ibn Abī 'Āṣim and Firyābī has two successive transmitters after 'Azra, who died earlier in 792/176 and 803/187, respectively.<sup>68</sup> This renders the two Basran *isnāds* in Ṭabarānī highly suspicious. Ibn Abī 'Āṣim and Firyābī both received their material from Abū Mas'ūd and before him there is no place where transmissions meet in the *isnāds* apart from 'Azra. Thus, it cannot be ruled out that Ṭabarānī's single strands bypassing Abū Mas'ūd are inventions. As a result, this data suggests that the material in the CL 'Azra cluster, *as we have it*, is likely a late redaction, which can only be dated safely to the lifetime of Abū Mas'ūd al-Ġahdarī (Basran, d. 862/248).

In the *matn*, elements I and III in particular show phenomena of late redaction layers. In the framing story, it is specified that Ibn Mas'ūd spoke in the mosque (of Kufa)<sup>69</sup> and that Ḥuḍayfa insisted that Ibn Mas'ūd was right, adding that he heard the prophet

<sup>63</sup> The major two elements are the opening formula "If God wants to create the human" (*idā arāda Allāh an yaḥluq al-'abd*) and that among the things the angel writes down, "what is attached" (*mā huwa lāq*) is mentioned, which are well represented in the material from 'Abd Allāh Ibn 'Umar (see Eich, 'nasama', 31–37).

<sup>64</sup> Ṭabarānī, *Kabīr*, III, pp. 196f; Firyābī, *Qadar*, I, p. 114; Ibn Abī 'Āṣim, *Sunna*, I, p. 79.

<sup>65</sup> Buḥārī, *Tārīḥ kabīr*, VII, p. 66; Ibn Ḥibbān, *Tiqāt*, VII, p. 299; Ibn Ḥaḡar, *Tahḏīb*, III, p. 98.

<sup>66</sup> Ibrāhīm Ibn A'yan: Ibn Ḥibbān, *Tiqāt*, VIII, p. 57 differentiates between two Ibrāhīm Ibn A'yans: al-Ġlī, from the people of Basra, and Aš-Šaybānī, about whom he says "He transmitted from 'Urwa [sic] Ibn Ṭābit, Hišām Ibn 'Ammār al-Dimašqī transmitted from him. His being counted among the people of Ar-Ramla is surprising" (*'idāduhu fī ahl ar-Ramla yuḡrib*). Ibn Ḥaḡar, *Tahḏīb*, I, p. 60 treats them as one person. Buḥārī, *Tārīḥ kabīr*, I, p. 272 only knows of Al-Ġlī from Basra. The *isnād* under discussion here continues after Ibrāhīm with Hišām Ibn 'Ammār (Damascene, d. 859/245) as the transmitter (Ḍahabī, *Siyar*, XI, pp. 421–435; Ibn Ḥibbān, *Tiqāt*, IX, p. 233).

<sup>67</sup> On 'Awn Ibn 'Ammāra see Mizzi, *Tahḏīb*, XXII, pp. 461–463 on Uṭmān Ibn 'Umar Ibn Fāris see Ḍahabī, *Siyar*, IX, p. 558.

<sup>68</sup> On Abū 'Awāna and Mu'tamar Ibn Sulaymān see Dhahabi, *Siyar*, VIII, pp. 218f, 478f.

<sup>69</sup> *Masḡid*: Ibn Abī 'Āṣim, *Sunna*, I, p. 79; Firyābī, *Qadar*, I, p. 115; Kufa: Ṭabarānī, *Kabīr*, III, p. 176. Only the transmission from CL Rubai'ya in Ṭabarānī also has the specification of Kufa. For more, see below.

repeatedly<sup>70</sup> say. These are typical later additions to an earlier core of the narrative. In element III, the predestination of a list of things,<sup>71</sup> the phrasing after the questions is “so God ordains to it [what he wants] and [the angel] writes” (*fa-yaqđī Allāh ilayhi [mā yašā’] wa yaktub [al-malak]*), i.e. it uses a developed theological terminology (*yaqđī*) and disambiguates who is actually writing. The overall picture is therefore that this is a late redaction layer and it is not possible to push the dating to earlier than Mas‘ūd al-Ğahdarī (d. 862/248).

The **CL Rubai‘iya Ibn Kulthūm** (table 1) is recorded in the collections of Muslim (d. 875/261), Bazzār (d. 910/297), and Ṭabarānī (d. 971/360).<sup>72</sup> Muslim only records the beginning of the *matn*. All three mention that a process of elevation to the prophet (*raf‘*) has taken place with the material. The early biographical dictionaries only have information on Rubai‘iya extracted from *isnāds*, mentioning that he transmitted from his father (as in the material in this study) and Al-Ḥasan (al-Baṣrī). They record no death date.<sup>73</sup> For Rubai‘iya’s father, Kulthūm Ibn Ğabr, the early dictionaries do not mention that he transmitted to his son.<sup>74</sup>

The assessment of Rubai‘iya as a CL is further challenged by the *matns*.

Muslim does not record that the material had a framing narrative,<sup>75</sup> while the version in Bazzār shows miniscule traces of this.<sup>76</sup> In Ṭabarānī’s version, the framing narrative is much more extensive, constituting a pastiche of elements from several other transmissions, especially the Basran CL ‘Azra and the PCL Ibn Ğurayğ’s transmission.<sup>77</sup> In element III the phrasing after the questions is “your Lord ordains and the angel writes” (*yaqđī rabbuka wa yaktub al-malak*). The overall picture is therefore that this is late redaction layer. In

<sup>70</sup> *Marāran đāt ‘adad* (Ibn Abī ‘Āšim, *Sunna*, I, p. 79)/*marāran dhawāt ‘adad* (Firyābī, *Qadar*, I, p. 114; Ṭabarānī, *Kabīr*, III, p. 196).

<sup>71</sup> PCL Abū Mas‘ūd (d. 862/248): *đakar/untā, šaqī/sa’id, aṭar, ağal* (Firyābī, *Qadar*, I, p. 114; Ibn Abī ‘Āšim, *Sunna*, I, p. 79). Version Ṭabarānī, *Kabīr*, p. 196: *đakar/untā, šaqī/sa’id, rizq, ağal*.

<sup>72</sup> Ṭabarānī, *Kabīr*, III, p. 196; Bazzār, *Baḥr*, IV, p. 280; Muslim, *Şahīḥ*, 992.

<sup>73</sup> Ibn Ḥibbān, *Tiqāt*, VI, p. 301; Buḥārī, *Tārīḥ kabīr*, III, p. 291. Later dictionaries still do not give a death date (Ibn Ḥağar, *Tahđīb*, I, pp. 600f).

<sup>74</sup> Ibn Ḥibbān, *Tiqāt*, VII, p. 356; Buḥārī, *Tārīḥ kabīr*, VII, p. 227. In addition, they do not mention teachers for Kulthūm. Ibn Ḥibbān also states that he transmitted *mursal-ḥadīṡs*, i.e. he did not mention the *şahābī* from whom he received the *ḥadīṡ*, which ties in nicely with the *raf‘* statement by all three collectors concerning the present material. Only Ibn Ḥibbān records a death date for Kulthūm, which is the source for Ibn Ḥağar, *Tahđīb*, III, p. 472.

<sup>75</sup> Muslim, *Şahīḥ*, 992. He records only the *matn*’s beginning: “An angel assigned for the uterus. If God wants to create something with the permission of God, on 40 plus some nights ...” (*anna malakan muwakkalan bi-ar-rahim idā arāda Allāh an yaḥluq şay’an bi-igñ Allāh li-biđa’ wa arba’in Layla*). Two elements of this formulation – the specification for the angel and the expression “if God wants to ...” – are well attested in other Basran angel and unborn material via Anas ibn Mālik. See Eich, ‘*nasama*’, pp. 38–43.

<sup>76</sup> “The wretched is wretched in the womb of his mother” (*aş-şaqī man şaqiya fi baṭn ummihi* (Bazzār, *Musnad*, IV, p. 280)).

<sup>77</sup> Ṭabarānī, *Kabīr*, III, p. 196. The Basran ‘Azra’s transmission element is the specification that Ibn Mas‘ūd made his statement during the *ḥuṡba* (i.e. in the mosque) at Kufa, the element otherwise only to be found in the PCL Ibn Ğurayğ, is that Ḥudayfa is asking Abū aṭ-Ṭufayl “shall I inform you about ...” (*a-fa-lā uḥbiruka*). The statement by Ibn Mas‘ūd is now rendered as *aş-şaqī man şaqā fi baṭn ummihi wa as-sa’id man sa’ada fi baṭn ummihi*, i.e. the parallelism is now broadened to the entire structure.



addition, the incoherence of the parts of the material, together with the results of the biographical analysis, rule out using the CL Rubai'īya's material for a reconstruction of the earlier development of the material.

The CL 'Abd Allāh Ibn 'Uṭmān Ibn Ḥuṭaym (table 2) is recorded in the collections of Ibn Abī 'Āṣim (d. 900/287), Ṭabarānī (two different collections) (d. 971/360) and Rāzī (d. 1023/414).<sup>78</sup> For the CL 'Abd Allāh, the early biographical dictionaries already note that he transmitted from Abū aṭ-Ṭufayl. His death date is not clear, possibly in the 130s and surely before 761/144. The three men from the student generation after the CL 'Abd Allāh in this study, are not recorded among his students in the dictionaries.<sup>79</sup>

The names in the student generation are given in the *isnāds* as Wuhayb, al-Qāsim, and Ibn 'Iyāš. The latter two are only recorded in the later collections of Ṭabarānī and Rāzī, which raises the question of why the transmissions were not recorded anywhere else for centuries. These structural doubts are supported by the biographical record.<sup>80</sup> For the *isnād* via Wuhayb, at least two Wuhaybs from the dictionaries are possible candidates, since their death dates are relatively close to each other, ranging between roughly two to three decades after the CL's demise. Their biographical entries neither mention the CL as a teacher nor the following 'Abd al-A'lā in the *isnād* as one of their pupils. Only the entry on 'Abd al-A'lā (Basran, d. 851/237) in Ibn Ḥibbān disambiguates that he transmitted from Wuhayb Ibn Ḥālid (Basran, d. 782/165). However, Buḥārī only mentions "he heard a [certain] Wahb" (*sami'a Wahban*).<sup>81</sup> This obvious uncertainty in the sources about the Wuhayb (or Wahb?) → 'Abd al-A'lā link plus the considerable time span of 70 years between the two death dates make this *isnād* unreliable, and thus for the dating of the accompanying text material only 'Abd al-A'lā's lifetime can be used as a *terminus ante quem*.

This Wuhayb *isnād* only recounts the framing narrative, which is entirely lacking in the transmission via Al-Qāsim. Only the transmission via Ibn 'Iyāš recorded by Rāzī (d. 1023/414) has elements I, II, and III of the Ḥuḍayfa *ḥadīth*. In the versions with

<sup>78</sup> Ibn Abī 'Āṣim, *Sunna*, I, p. 78; Ṭabarānī, *Kabīr*, III, p. 198; idem, *Awsaṭ*, II, pp. 148f; Rāzī, *Fawā'id*, II, pp. 16f.

<sup>79</sup> Buḥārī, *Tārīḥ kabīr*, V, p. 146, Ibn Ḥibbān, *Tiqāt*, V, p. 34; Ibn Ḥaḡar, *Tahḏīb*, II, p. 383.

<sup>80</sup> The *isnād* via al-Qāsim [Ibn Yaḥyā al-Hilālī] from Wāsiṭ is a family *isnād* through his nephew Muqaddam, who is also the only source for his death date (Buḥārī, *Tārīḥ ṣaḡīr*, II, p. 259: "My Uncle al-Qāsim ... died 51 years and some months ago, as if it was the year [1]97" (*ka'annahū sana saba' wa tis'īn*)). Only later dictionaries record that he transmitted from the CL 'Abd Allāh Ibn 'Uṭmān (Ibn Ḥibbān, *Tiqāt*, VII, p. 336; Ibn Ḥaḡar, *Tahḏīb*, III, p. 423; Mizzī, *Tahḏīb*, XXIII, pp. 459f). For (Ismā'īl) Ibn 'Iyāš from Homs, early dictionaries already record the death date as 797/181, but not the transmission under discussion here. Also, the early dictionaries do not record the link to his student Marwān from Damascus in the present *isnād*. Ibn 'Iyāš was severely contested as a transmitter (Buḥārī, *Tārīḥ kabīr*, I, pp. 369f (Ibn 'Iyāš), VII, p. 373 (Marwān); Ḍahabī, *Siyar*, VIII, pp. 313–328 (Ibn 'Iyāš), IX, pp. 511–513 (Marwān); Ibn Ḥibbān, *Tiqāt*, IX, p. 179 (Marwān)).

<sup>81</sup> Buḥārī, *Tārīḥ kabīr*, VI, p. 74 ('Abd al-A'lā), VIII, p. 177 (Wuhayb Ibn Ḥālid (d. 165) and Wuhayb Ibn al-Ward (no death date); Ibn Ḥibbān, *Tiqāt*, VII, pp. 559f (Wuhayb Ibn Ḥālid (d. 782/165 or 786/169) and Wahib Ibn al-Ward d. 770/153), VIII, p. 409 ('Abd al-A'lā) Ḍahabī, *Siyar*, VIII, pp. 223ff notes for Wuhayb Ibn Ḥālid that he transmitted to 'Abd al-A'lā. In Ṭabarānī, *Awsaṭ*, II, p. 148, the earliest transmitters, Ḥuṭaym → Wuhayb, are collapsed into one person Wuhayb Ibn Ḥuṭaym.

element III, the formulation after the angel's questions is "so the Lord dictates and the angel writes" (*fa-yamlī ar-rabb wa yaktub al-malak*).<sup>82</sup> This is unique in the corpus and probably a climax of theological disambiguation processes, i.e. a mechanism to reiterate that the angel is merely God's execution tool and has no impact whatsoever on the process of predestination. The overall picture is, therefore, that there is a late redaction layer and it cannot be used for reconstructing the early transmission phases. For element I, the framing narrative, the earliest possible dating in this group is the lifetime of 'Abd al-A'ālā (d. 851/237).

### The Ḥudayfa material in Muslim's *Qadar* Chapter

I now turn to the CLs 'Amr Ibn Dīnār (Meccan, d. 744/126), CL Abū az-Zubayr (Meccan, d. 742/124 or 746/128), and Yahyā Ibn Abī Bukayr (d. 823/208), which constitute the bulk of the Ḥudayfa material in Muslim's chapter on predestination.

#### The *isnāds*

In the clusters of the first two abovementioned CLs, there are two *partial common links* (PCLs) that follow them. For the CL 'Amr Ibn Dīnār, these are Muḥammad Ibn Muslim aṭ-Ṭā'ifī (Meccan, d. 793/177) and Sufyān Ibn 'Uyayina (Kufan/Meccan, d. 814/198), and for the CL Abū az-Zubayr, these are Ibn 'Urayḡ (Meccan, d. 770/153) and 'Amr Ibn al-Ḥārīṭ (Meccan/Egyptian, d. 765/148) → Ibn Wahb (Egyptian, d. 813/197, the PCL).

As for the *CL* 'Amr Ibn Dīnār (Meccan, d. 744/126) (table 3), early sources already recount material which is not only extracted from *isnāds*, and that he was an important teacher for Sufyān Ibn 'Uyayina, whereas Muḥammad Ibn Muslim aṭ-Ṭā'ifī is not mentioned. Only the later dictionaries mention that 'Amr Ibn Dīnār heard from Abū aṭ-Ṭufayl.<sup>83</sup>

For the cluster of *PCL Muḥammad Ibn Muslim aṭ-Ṭā'ifī*, the following structural observations can be made. Only one rather late collection (Ṭabarānī, d. 971/360) disambiguates Muḥammad Ibn Muslim as *Aṭ-Ṭā'ifī* in an *isnād*.<sup>84</sup> The transmission is recorded in six collections, in five cases together with the transmission from PCL Sufyān Ibn 'Uyayina.<sup>85</sup> There are four transmitters after the PCL. Among these, the death date of the Kufan Ishāq Ibn Maṣṣūr (d. 820/205) stands out as considerably earlier than the other three. This Kufan *isnād* is already recorded in the collection of Abū Bakr Ibn Abī Šayba

<sup>82</sup> The version in Ṭabarānī, *Awsaṭ*, II, pp. 148f. Rāzī, *Fawā'id*, II, pp. 16f formulates using the past tense.

<sup>83</sup> Buḥārī, *Tārīḥ kabīr*, VI, p. 328f; Ibn Ḥibbān, *Tiḡāṭ*, V, p. 167; Ḍahabī, *Siyar*, V, pp. 301–307.

<sup>84</sup> Ṭabarānī, *Kabīr*, III, p. 195.

<sup>85</sup> Ṭabarānī, *Kabīr*, III, p. 195; Ibn Abī 'Āšim, *Āḥād*, II, p. 257 (*naḥwahu*); Ibn Baṭṭa, *Ibāna*, II, p. 26 (*naḥwahu*); Lālakā'ī, *Sharḥ*, IV, p. 592; Firiyābī, *Qadar*, I, pp. 115–117. The only one not to record the transmission via Sufyān is Ibn Abī Šayba, *Musnad*, II, p. 318.

(d. 849/235). The three other *isnāds* are only recorded in the much later collections of Ṭabarānī (d. 971/360), Ibn Baṭṭa (d. 997/387), and Lālakā'ī (d. 1027/418). This structure considerably challenges the position of Muḥammad Ibn Muslim aṭ-Ṭā'ifī as PCL, because the non-Kufan *isnāds* are possibly later constructions. This impression is strengthened by the fact that the time span between the death dates of the transmitters in the three non-Kufan *isnāds* is always in the range of 60 to 90 years, while the Kufan *isnād* has shorter periods. The biographical record for Muḥammad Ibn Muslim aṭ-Ṭā'ifī complements these doubts: the dictionaries only present material extracted from the *isnāds* and the early ones do not record further genealogical information about him or his year of death.<sup>86</sup> Later sources state that his more elaborate name was Muḥammad Ibn Muslim Ibn Sawṣan *or* Sūs *or* Sus *or* Sunayn *or* Šunayr and that he died in 793/177.<sup>87</sup> This year of death is likely gleaned from Ḥalīfa Ibn al-Ḥayyāt's entry on a Muḥammad Ibn Muslim aṭ-Ṭā'ifī Ibn Ḥayyān,<sup>88</sup> and it is not completely clear if this was really the same person. Against this background, I do not regard Muḥammad Ibn Muslim aṭ-Ṭā'ifī as a reliable PCL. As a consequence, the CL 'Amr Ibn Dīnār now loses its status as a *common link*. For the sake of clarity in referencing, however, I will continue to use the labels of (P)CL when referring to the three transmitters.

The *PCL Sufyān Ibn 'Uyayina* was a Kufan transferring to Mecca, where he transmitted to many students and died in 814/198. His link to 'Amr Ibn Dīnār (d. 744/126) is already attested to in early dictionaries.<sup>89</sup> However, the long time span between the deaths of Sufyān and 'Amr gives reason for some reservation and *ḥadīth* dictionaries noted Sufyān's practice of *tadlīs*, i.e. his habit of suppressing the names of his direct informants.<sup>90</sup> While Motzki considered this transmission line as basically reliable, Pavlovitch has challenged this view.<sup>91</sup> This debate relates to examples where parallel *isnāds* exist from 'Amr Ibn Dīnār to Sufyān and Ibn Ḡurayḡ. These parallels are central to Motzki's argument for the reliability of the 'Amr → Sufyān link. In the material being studied here, this parallel does not exist: while there is an *isnād* via Ibn Ḡurayḡ, it does not lead to 'Amr Ibn Dīnār but to Abū az-Zubayr. Therefore, I consider the 'Amr → Sufyān link to be questionable in the material being studied here.

The transmission from Sufyān to his student generation is recorded by the highest number of collectors in the sample, two of which are direct collectors (DCRs): Ibn

<sup>86</sup> Ibn Ḥibbān, *Tiqāt*, VII, p. 399; Buḥārī, *Tārīḥ kabīr*, I, pp. 223f.

<sup>87</sup> Ibn Ḥaḡar, *Tahḏīb*, III, p. 695; Mizzī, XXVI, p. 412. These later sources record many more students of Muḥammad Ibn Muslim than the earlier ones, which do not explicitly mention the transmission lines being studied here.

<sup>88</sup> Ḥalīfa Ibn al-Ḥayyāt, *Ṭabaqāt*, p. 275.

<sup>89</sup> Ibn Ḥibbān, *Tiqāt*, VI, pp. 403f; Buḥārī, *Tārīḥ kabīr*, VI, pp. 328f.

<sup>90</sup> See also Susan A. Sectorsky, 'Sufyān Ibn 'Uyayna', in: *EP*.

<sup>91</sup> Harald Motzki, *Die Anfänge der islamischen Jurisprudenz. Ihre Entwicklung in Mekka bis zur Mitte des 2./8. Jahrhunderts*, Stuttgart 1991, pp. 161–167; Pavlovitch, *Kalāla*, pp. 81f. See also Gautier H.A. Juynboll, *Encyclopedia of Canonical Ḥadīth*, Leiden 2007, p. 568f.

Ḥanbal and Ḥumaydī.<sup>92</sup> In its entirety, this material proves that a transmission via the historical Sufyān took place.

In summary, I consider the link Sufyān → students to be the earliest reliable transmission level in this cluster.

As for the **CL Abū az-Zubayr** (table 4), the early dictionaries only record material extracted from *isnāds*. Abū aṭ-Ṭufayl is not mentioned among his teachers or the students in the *isnāds* being studied here. The only teacher mentioned in the early dictionaries is Ġābir Ibn ‘Abd Allāh,<sup>93</sup> and we will return to this point. Interestingly, the early dictionaries only record that he died earlier than ‘Amr Ibn Dīnār, who passed away in 744/126. Later dictionaries claim that Abū az-Zubayr died in 746/128.<sup>94</sup>

After Abū az-Zubayr, one branch of the *isnād* connects ‘Amrū Ibn al-Ḥārith → **PCL Ibn Wahb**. This line, via four pupils after Ibn Wahb, is recorded in the collections of Muslim (d. 875/261), Ṭahāwī (d. 933/321), Ibn Ḥibbān (d. 965/354), Ṭabarānī (d. 971/360), Ibn Baṭṭa (d. 997/387), and Bayhaqī (d. 1066/458).<sup>95</sup> Note that all four students were Egyptian and their link to Ibn Wahb is already mentioned in early dictionaries.<sup>96</sup> After these, all but two transmissions of the material being studied here left Egypt through transmitters with a Central Asian background.<sup>97</sup> For Ibn Wahb’s teacher, ‘Amrū Ibn al-Ḥārith, the early dictionaries already provide material which is not only extracted from the *isnāds* and that he died in 765/148. He transferred from Medina to Egypt. The link to the PCL Ibn Wahb is already attested early on, while the link to the CL Abū az-Zubayr is not.<sup>98</sup> On the whole, I consider Ibn Wahb a reliable PCL and I see no immediate indications for challenging his link to ‘Amrū Ibn al-Ḥārith, who could have brought material from the Ḥiğāz to Egypt and would have passed it on to Ibn Wahb. The link between ‘Amrū and Abū az-Zubayr, however, can be challenged.

The material of the **PCL Ibn Ġurayğ** is recorded by Muslim (d. 875/261), Firyābī (d. 914/301), Ağurrī (d. 971/360), and Lālakā’ī (d. 1027/418), and consists of three *isnāds*, two Basran and one Syrian. For Ibn Ġurayğ, the early dictionaries do not note a transmission from Abū az-Zubayr.<sup>99</sup>

<sup>92</sup> Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, XXVI, pp. 64f; Ḥumaydī, *Musnad*, II, p. 75. For DCRs and their elevated position in the reconstruction of early text layers, see Pavlovitch, *Kalāla*, pp. 25f and 40.

<sup>93</sup> See also Juynboll, *Encyclopedia*, pp. 259f.

<sup>94</sup> Buḥārī, *Tārīḥ kabīr*, I, pp. 221f (mentions no teachers at all); Ibn Ḥibbān, *Ṭiqāt*, V, pp. 351f; Ḍahabī, *Siyar*, V, pp. 381–386.

<sup>95</sup> Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 991, Ṭahāwī, *Muṣkil*, VII, p. 93; Ibn Ḥibbān, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, XIV, p. 52; Ṭabarānī, *Kabīr*, III, p. 198; Ibn Baṭṭa, *Ibāna*, II, p. 24; Bayhaqī, *Asmā*, I, p. 350.

<sup>96</sup> Aḥmad Ibn Šāliḥ (Ibn Ḥibbān, *Ṭiqāt*, VIII, pp. 25f), Aḥmad Ibn ‘Amrū (ibidem, VIII, p. 29); Aḥmad Ibn ‘Īsā (ibidem, VIII, p. 15).

<sup>97</sup> I label the cohort “Central Asian” for the sake of simplicity, while comprised men from Central Asia as well as Northeastern Iran.

<sup>98</sup> Buḥārī, *Tārīḥ kabīr*, VI, pp. 320f; Ibn Ḥibbān, *Ṭiqāt*, VII, pp. 228f; Ḍahabī, *Siyar*, VI, pp. 350–354; Ibn Ḥağar, *Tahqīb*, III, pp. 261f. See also Juynboll, *Encyclopedia*, pp. 11f.

<sup>99</sup> Buḥārī, *Tārīḥ kabīr*, V, pp. 422f; Ibn Ḥibbān, *Ṭiqāt*, VII, pp. 93f; Ḍahabī, *Siyar*, VI, pp. 326–336 (entry on Ibn Ġurayğ) also does not mention Abū az-Zubayr as a direct teacher, while V, pp. 381–385 (entry on Abū

Muslim arranges his Basran *isnād* together with the PCL Ibn Wahb material, which he gives in extenso. For the *isnād* via the PCL Ibn Ğurayġ, he omits the respective *matn*.<sup>100</sup> The life dates of Ibn Ğurayġ (d. 770/153) → Abū ‘Āšim (d. 827/212) constitute a 60-year period for one transmission step, which is remarkable, but possible. The biographical information about Abū ‘Āšim goes well beyond *isnāds* only, and his transmission from Ibn Ğurayġ has already been recorded by Buĥārī.<sup>101</sup>

The Syrian *isnād* is recorded by Firyābī, from whom Aġurrī then received it. Ibn Ğurayġ’s pupil in this *isnād*, Al-Walīd Ibn Muslim (d. 811/195), became an object of considerable debate among *ḥadīth* scholars. Apparently, specifically for his Ibn Ğurayġ-transmission.<sup>102</sup>

The other Basran *isnād* (with *matn*) is only preserved in later collections: Aġurrī and Lālakā’ī. After two Basran transmitters, Muĥammad Ibn Abī ‘Adī (d. 810/194) → Abū al-Aš‘aṭ (d. 867/253), the transmission diverges to two Baġdādīs.<sup>103</sup> According to the dictionaries, among the many men from whom Muĥammad Ibn Abī ‘Adī transmitted, the name Ibn Ğurayġ is suspiciously absent.<sup>104</sup>

In summary, the link between Abū az-Zubayr and Ibn Ğurayġ can be challenged. The earliest recorded transmission line after Ibn Ğurayġ, the Basran *isnād* in Muslim, has reached us without *matn*. The earliest record for *isnād* plus *matn* in this bundle is the Syrian transmission recorded by Firyābī (d. 914/301). For this *isnād*, considerable debate is recorded making it very likely that the second Basran *isnād*, recorded only in later collections, is a *dive*. However, the splitting of transmission lines after Abū al-Aš‘aṭ (d. 867/253) allows for a safe dating within his lifetime. In summary, Ibn Ğurayġ’s position as a PCL is very difficult to assess, especially given the small number of *isnāds* leading to him. As in the case of the PCL Ibn Wahb, I will continue using the terminology PCL Ibn Ğurayġ for the sake of clarity.

The **CL *Yaḥyā Ibn Abī Bukayr*** (table 4) is recorded in Muslim (d. 875/261), Ṭabarānī (d. 971/360), and Bayhaqī (d. 1059/451).<sup>105</sup> There are three transmitters between the CL and Abū aṭ-Ṭufyal. It is not possible to identify the first two after Abū aṭ-Ṭufyal beyond

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az-Zubayr) mentions Ibn Ğurayġ among the students. A frequent *isnād* spread through Ibn Ğurayġ is Ğābir Ibn ‘Abd Allāh → Abū az-Zubayr → Ibn Ğurayġ (Juynboll, *Encyclopedia*, pp. 212f). For more, see below.

<sup>100</sup> Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, pp. 991f.

<sup>101</sup> Buĥārī, *Tārīḥ kabīr*, IV, p. 336 and Ḍahabī, *Siyar*, IX, pp. 481–485. On Aĥmad Ibn ‘Uṭmān (d. 246) in this *isnād* see Ibn Ḥaġar, *Tahqīb*, I, p. 37.

<sup>102</sup> Ibn Ḥaġar, *Tahqīb*, IV, pp. 325f; Ḍahabī, *Siyar*, IX, pp. 212–221. Ḍahabī defends Al-Walīd against this criticism. Early dictionaries do not mention this transmission line (Buĥārī, *Tārīḥ kabīr*, VIII, pp. 152f).

<sup>103</sup> Muĥammad Ibn Abī ‘Adī (Basran, d. 810/194) → Abū al-Aš‘aṭ Aĥmad Ibn al-Miqdām (Basran, d. 867/253) → Abū ‘Ubayd Allāh (Baġhdad, d. 931/319) (Aġurrī) and Aĥmad Ibn ‘Alī (Baġhdad, d. 940/328) (Lālakā’ī). On them, see Ḍahabī, *Siyar*, IX, pp. 221f, XII, pp. 219–221, XV, pp. 249f; Ibn Ḥaġar, *Tahqīb*, III, pp. 153f (Abū ‘Ubayd Allāh).

<sup>104</sup> Ibn Ḥaġar, *Tahqīb*, III, p. 492; Ḍahabī, *Siyar*, IX, pp. 221f.

<sup>105</sup> Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, p. 992; Bayhaqī, *Qadar*, I, p. 149; Ṭabarānī, *Kabīr*, III, p. 194.

any doubt.<sup>106</sup> The last person before Yaḥyā Ibn Abī Bukayr in the *isnād* is Zuhayr Ibn Mu‘āwiya from Kufa. Additional biographical information on Zuhayr Ibn Mu‘āwiya exists, which shows that the dictionaries did not only rely on *isnāds*, and there is a death date already recorded in the earlier dictionaries. The early dictionaries do not record the link from Zuhayr to Yaḥyā Ibn Abī Bukayr.<sup>107</sup>

The CL Yaḥyā Ibn Abī Bukayr was Kufan and became the *qāḍī Kirmān*. Early biographical dictionaries record neither the student names of the transmission line being studied here nor his exact death date, while later sources give this as 208 or 209 *hiġra* (823 or 824 CE).<sup>108</sup>

For the three students of the *common link* in this bundle the biographical record is at times meagre and there is a considerable distance in time between the available death dates of two of these students.<sup>109</sup> This means that the link between Yaḥyā Ibn Abī Bukayr to his teacher Zuhayr is possibly reliable, while the link to his students went undocumented for some time. As a result, this transmission needs to be analysed together with the *matn* before a reliable statement about Yaḥyā’s position as a CL can be made.

The analysis of the *isnāds* thus provides the following picture<sup>110</sup>:

<sup>106</sup> There are several possibilities for ‘Ikrima Ibn Ḥalīd (Ibn Ḥibbān, *Tiqāt*, V, p. 231, VII, p. 49 and VII, p. 294) and ‘Abd Allāh Ibn ‘Aṭā (ibidem, VII, p. 29 and 41; VIII, p. 331 or maybe even V, p. 33). Concerning the latter, Ibn Ḥaġar, *Tahdīb*, II, p. 386 says that for ‘Abd Allāh Ibn ‘Aṭā’, at-Ṭā’ifī al-Makkī is sometimes called al-Kūfī, al-Wāsiṭī or al-Madanī, and that he was equated with two different *Mawlās* who in turn would sometimes be treated as three persons. He was said to have also transmitted directly from Abū at-Ṭufayl, but also from ‘Ikrima, among others.

<sup>107</sup> Buḥārī, *Tarīḥ kabīr*, III, p. 427; Ibn Ḥibbān, *Tiqāt*, VI, p. 337; Ḍahabī, *Siyar*, VIII, pp. 182–187 has the link. Note that Ḍahabī also writes that Zuhayr would have transmitted from Ibn Ġurayġ and Ibn Iṣḥāq and adds that the two are among his *shayḥs*. I read this as an indication that Ḍahabī noted the phenomenon that Zuhayr (d. 789/173 or 790/174) would have survived his teacher Ibn Ġurayġ, for example, by more than 20 years.

<sup>108</sup> Buḥārī, *Tarīḥ kabīr*, VIII, p. 264; Ibn Ḥibbān, *Tiqāt*, IX, p. 257; Ḍahabī, *Siyar*, IX, p. 498f also does not mention the persons in the *isnād* being studied here, who might be subsumed under the “and many others” he uses twice.

<sup>109</sup> For ‘Abd Allāh Ibn Abī Ya‘qūb al-Kirmānī (recorded by Ṭabarānī) see Ibn Ḥibbān, *Tiqāt*, VIII, p. 368, who notes that he heard transmissions in Tustar going back to him and records a link to Yaḥyā Ibn Abī Kaḫīr (sic). Ibn Ḥaġar, *Lisān*, V, p. 43 collapses this biography with ‘Abd Allāh Ibn Ya‘qūb al-Kirmānī (instead of Ibn Abī Ya‘qūb), which I consider a mistake. None record a death date. For Abū Bakr Muḥammad Ibn Iṣḥāq aṣ-Ṣaġānī (recorded by Bayhaqī), see Ḍahabī, *Siyar*, XII, p. 593, which records a death date of 884/270. For Muḥammad Ibn Aḥmad Ibn Abī Ḥalaf (recorded by Muslim,) Ibn Ḥibbān, *Tiqāt*, IX, p. 91 already records 851/237 as a death date, but not the transmission line being studied here, which contrasts with later dictionaries (e.g. Mizzī, *Tahdīb*, XXIV, pp. 347–349) possibly extracting this piece of information from *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*.

<sup>110</sup> Muslim’s composite presentation of the Ḥuḍayfa *ḥadīṭ* combines material and *isnāds* from the following: the CL Yaḥya Ibn Abī Bakīr, the CL Rubaiyī’a Ibn Kulṭūm (only the start of the *matn*), the CL ‘Amrū Ibn Dīnār via the PCL Sufyān Ibn ‘Uyayina, the CL Abū az-Zubayr via the PCL Ibn Wahb (in extenso) and the PCL Ibn Ġurayġ (only *naḥwahu*).

<i>CL ‘Amr Ibn Dīnār</i>	Position as CL rejected
<i>PCL Muḥammad Ibn Muslim at-Ṭā’ifī</i>	Link to CL ‘Amr Ibn Dīnār rejected, position as PCL for cluster challenged
<i>PCL Sufyān Ibn ‘Uyayina</i>	Link ‘Amr → Sufyān → students reliable
<i>CL Abū az-Zubayr</i>	Position as CL challenged
<i>PCL Ibn Wahb</i>	Transmission to students reliable, link to teacher ‘Amrū reliable, link between ‘Amrū and Abū az-Zubayr challenged
<i>PCL Ibn Ġurayġ</i>	Transmission to students difficult to assess, earliest safe dating before 253, link to Abū az-Zubayr challenged
<i>CL Yaḥyā Ibn Abī Bukayr</i>	Position as CL challenged

### The *matns*

I will now analyse the *matns* in the respective clusters in order to test, substantiate, and, where necessary, refine the findings of the *isnād* analysis. As already mentioned, three parts can easily be distinguished in the material of the Ḥuḍayfa-*ḥadīth*:

I) A framing story.

II) A first part in the *ḥadīth matn* describing the angel and the physicality of the unborn.

III) A second part in the *ḥadīth matn* describing the predestination of a set of things.

I will first analyse I. This section will show that the frame was first developed independently of the Ḥuḍayfa *ḥadīth* and was later added to it. The overall development of this originally independent frame was an expansion of a statement about the wretched/unlucky (*ṣaqī*) to a dichotomous formulation about the wretchedness and the blessedness in the hereafter (*ṣaqī/sa’īd*). I will then approach III, the list of predestined things, among which the *ṣaqī/sa’īd* dichotomy is prominent. I will show that at a certain stage of development of the material, the question of whether fate in the hereafter is predestined, was a major bone of contention. Finally, I will turn to II and show how different phrasings of the descriptions of the unborn’s physicality bolstered the respective position in the *ṣaqī/sa’īd* debate.

#### Element I: The Frame

The framing story is represented in Ḥuḍayfa PCL Ibn Wahb in Muslim’s *Qadar* chapter:

“... from Abū az-Zubayr al-Makkī that ‘Āmir Ibn Wāṭila narrated to him (*haddaṭahu*) that he heard ‘Abd Allāh Ibn Mas‘ūd say: The wretched is the one who is wretched in the womb of his mother and the blessed is the one who is warned by [the example of] somebody else. Then he met a man from the *aṣḥāb* of the messenger of God, who was called Ḥuḍayfa Ibn Asīd al-Ġifārī, and he told him that from what Ibn Mas‘ūd

had said and said: How is a man wretched regardless of his acts? So he [Ḥuḍayfa] said: Are you bewildered by that? I heard the messenger of God say [then follows the *ḥadīṭ*]”.<sup>111</sup>

There are strong indications that the framing story was added to the Ḥuḍayfa material in a later transmission phase. It is entirely absent in the PCL Sufyān Ibn ‘Uyayna, the cluster containing relatively early documentation,<sup>112</sup> while it is well represented in material which is unquestionably late.<sup>113</sup> Also, several transmissions record the story independently from the angel and unborn *ḥadīṭ*.<sup>114</sup> These observations strongly suggest that the framing story and the Ḥuḍayfa *ḥadīṭ* were put together in a secondary process.

In a previous study on predestination and the unborn in *ḥadīṭ* material, Josef van Ess interpreted this frame as an exegetical mechanism in order to disambiguate the material as speaking about the hereafter. This would have been necessary, because *ṣaqī* and *sa‘īd* in 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> century Arabic would have referred to earthly (un)happiness.<sup>115</sup>

It is true that in the Qur’ān the root *ṣ-q-ya* often clearly refers to inner-worldly “unprosperity” (Arberry translation) rather than wretchedness in the hereafter (e.g. Q 19:4, 32, 48; 20:2, 117, 123). However, in Q 11:103–109, it clearly refers to the hereafter in a unique Qur’anic passage with the systematic use of *ṣ-q-ya* together with the root *s-‘d*, which is only used here in the entire Qur’an.<sup>116</sup> Against this background, I assume that the reference to the word-pair *ṣaqī/sa‘īd* is a deliberate step to reference this specific Qur’anic usage relating to the hereafter rather than inner-worldly things.

In a critical engagement with the work of van Ess, Michael Cook has suggested that the statement attributed to Ibn Mas‘ūd had its origin in Psalm 58:3: “The wicked are estranged from the womb”. Reference to this biblical verse is documented in predestination

<sup>111</sup> ‘an Abī az-Zubayr al-Makkī anna ‘Amir Ibn Wāṭila ḥaddaṭahu annahu sami‘a ‘Abd Allāh Ibn Mas‘ūd yaqūl aṣ-ṣaqī man ṣaqiya fī baṭn ummihi wa as-sa‘īd man wu‘īza bi-ḡayrihi fa-atā raḡulan min aṣḡhab rasūl Allāh yuqāl lahu Ḥuḍayfa bn Asīd al-Ġifārī fa-haddaṭahu bi-dhalika min qawl Ibn Mas‘ūd fa-qāla wa kayfa yaṣqā raḡul bi-ḡayr ‘amal fa-qāla lahu ar-raḡul a taḡab min dālīka fa-innī sami‘tu rasūl Allāh yaqūl.

<sup>112</sup> This is especially so because of the two direct collectors (DCRs) in this cluster (see above).

<sup>113</sup> For example, the CL ‘Azra, where only the transmission via Ibrāhīm Ibn A‘yan (Ṭabarānī, *Kabīr*, III, p. 197) lacks the frame.

<sup>114</sup> Ibn Abī ‘Āṣim, *Sunna*, I, p. 78; Ṭabarānī, *Kabīr*, III, p. 198. This is the transmission of the CL ‘Abd Allāh Ibn Ḥuṭaym → Wuhayb already dealt with above.

<sup>115</sup> This meaning is still witnessed in a *ḥadīṭ* ascribed to ‘Abdallāh Ibn ‘Umar (see also above), which speaks about the angel approaching the *nasama* and adds, with reference to *ṣaqī/sa‘īd*, that it would be written on the *nasama*’s forehead “even the [earthly] misfortune that reaches it” (*hattā an-nakba yankabuhā*). Van Ess, *Zwischen Theologie und Ḥadīṭ*, pp. 24–26. As I have shown in a previous study (Eich, ‘*nasama*’, pp. 35f.), this final addition to the *ḥadīṭ* is entirely Egyptian and I suggest refraining from generalizing this regional phenomenon.

<sup>116</sup> In some 9<sup>th</sup> century collections, material about the unborn is explicitly linked to Q 11:105. Nasā‘ī, *Sunan*, X, p. 130 (Ibn Mas‘ūd); Ibn Abī ‘Āṣim, *Sunna*, I, p. 81 has a clear reference between a cluster of versions of the *ḥadīṭ*s transmitted via Ḥuḍayfa- and ‘Abd Allāh Ibn ‘Umar respectively. Here, it is an explicit repetition of a *ḥadīṭ* mentioned previously in a slightly different context which does not speak about the angel and the unborn (ibidem, I, p. 74).



debates of Syriac Christianity from around 700.<sup>117</sup> Cook's linking of the narrative frame to Psalm 58:3 is rather speculative insofar as Ibn Mas'ūd refers *šaqī/sa'īd* and the Psalm only to the wretched. A rare tradition transmitted via Awzā'ī as preserved in the *Musnad* of Ṭayālīsī (d. 819/204) now provides the missing link, showing that the statement, later generally attributed to Ibn Mas'ūd in an earlier version, consisted only of the first half, *aš-šaqī man šaqiya fī baṭn ummihi*, and did not refer to the root *s-'d*.<sup>118</sup>

Thus, the extension of the statement through the addition of *as-sa'īd man wu'iza bi-ğayrihi* indicates a process of orienting the statement towards the dichotomous *šaqī/sa'īd* of Q 11:105. The resulting sentence is quite remarkable, and states that humans are born in a wretched state and can gain *sa'īd* status only through the acts of other people. Of course, such a view fits well with the self-perception of a proselytizing religion. However, it might also considerably smack of the pessimistic anthropology of Augustine Christianity, for example. Most importantly, it expresses a position diametrically opposed to the *fiṭra* concept as it became the dominant dogma during the first centuries of Islamic history, i.e. that humans are born into a state of perfect religion and are only led into aberration through the education of their non-Muslim parents.<sup>119</sup> How was one supposed to make sense of all of this without disposing of the idea of God's justice? Connecting the Ḥuḍayfa *hadīṭ* to the statement can thus be seen as an attempt to solve these considerable problems: *everything*, whether one was the blessed or wretched, was predestined.<sup>120</sup> This direction in the development of the material can additionally be witnessed in later versions, rendering the dichotomy in a fully fledged parallelism with definitions of the *šaqī-* and *sa'īd* groups, respectively.<sup>121</sup>

In order to analyse the transmission of the narrative in the three CLs, Yaḥyā Ibn Abī Bukayr, 'Amr Ibn Dīnār, and Abū az-Zubayr, I will now break the narrative frame into

<sup>117</sup> Cook, *Muslim Dogma*, pp. 145–148.

<sup>118</sup> Ibn al-Daylamī said to 'Abd Allāh Ibn 'Amrū [al-'Ās]: "It has reached me that you say that the wretched is wretched in the womb of his mother. He said: I do not allow anybody to lie about me. I heard the messenger of God say: God created his creation in darkness then he threw towards it a light from his light. Who is hit by some of that light is rightly guided, and who is missed by it goes astray. *Innahu balağānī annaka tuḥaddītu anna aš-šaqī man šaqiya fī baṭn ummihi fa-qāla ammā innī lā uḥill li-aḥad an yakḏib 'alayya inni sami'tu rasul Allāh ṣallā Allāh 'alayhi wa sallam yaqūl inna Allāh 'azza wa ğalla ḥalaqa ḥilqahu fī ḫulma ṭumma alqā 'alayhim nūran min nūrihi fa-man ašābahu šay' min ḡalika an-nūr ihtadā wa man aḥṭa'ahu ḡalla. Ṭayālīsī, *Musnad*, IV, p. 47; Ibn Hibbān, *Šaḥīḥ*, XIV, p. 43f. Shortly after Ṭayālīsī's lifetime (d. 819/204), the tradition had already undergone a considerable redaction process (Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, XI, pp. 291f). Versions of the Ḥuḍayfa *hadīṭ* with only the first half of the Ibn Mas'ūd statement are rare and late (see e.g. Rāzī, *Fawā'id*, II, pp. 16f).*

<sup>119</sup> See, for example Camilla Adang, 'Islam as the inborn religion of mankind: the concept of *fiṭra* in the works of Ibn Ḥazm', *al-Qantara* XXI (2000).

<sup>120</sup> My interpretation differs from van Ess, *Zwischen Hadīṭ und Theologie*, p. 27, who saw its function in creating a connection between Ibn Mas'ūd and the material of the Ḥuḍayfa-*hadīṭ* with the aim of bolstering the transmission via Ḥuḍayfa with a reference to the much more prominent Ibn Mas'ūd. My reconstruction sees an opposite direction of the process aimed at re-directing the framing statement's content.

<sup>121</sup> Ṭabarānī, *Kabīr*, III, p. 196 (PCL Rubai'īya): *aš-šaqī man yašqī fī baṭn ummihi wa as-sa'īd man sa'ada fī baṭn ummihi*. See also Aḡurrī, *Šarī'a*, I, pp. 368f with an identical independent transmission of only the statement as prophetic speech via Abū Hurayra.

its composite parts and relate them to the clusters. The story consists of three elements: (A) Abū aṭ-Ṭufayl hears Ibn Mas‘ūd make a statement, (B) he reacts critically, and (C) he speaks to Ḥuḍayfa, who says that he heard the prophet say XYZ. Element B can either be an immediate reaction and occur earlier in the narrative, or it could be part of the exchange with Ḥuḍayfa. In all cases it has the form of a critical question or rephrasing of the statement.

In the *CL Yaḥyā Ibn Abī Bukayr* material, the frame is preserved in two extensive versions by Bayhaqī and Ṭabarānī, and there are strong indications that in *Ṣaḥīḥ* Muslim most of the framing story was cut away.<sup>122</sup> The two extensive versions have these three exclusive characteristics: (1) Ḥuḍayfa is additionally identified as Abū Sarīḥa; (2) Abū aṭ-Ṭufayl in his bewilderment *leaves* the place and *enters* (*ḥaraḡtu ... wa daḡaltu ‘alā*) at Ḥuḍayfa’s, who says, that (3) he heard *with his own ears* (*bi-udḡnay hātayn*) the prophet say ... Elements 1 and 3 are documented in Muslim’s version. The second half of element 2 is present, i.e. Abū aṭ-Ṭufayl enters but he never exited anywhere. I interpret this as a strong indication of a redaction process of cutting something away. Bayhaqī’s and Ṭabarānī’s versions are almost identical and match the segments of the material preserved in Muslim. Thus, I conclude that the version that Muslim received originally also contained the framing story and this was cut away. All three elements are typical later additions to or extensions of an earlier core of the narrative. This matches with the results of the *isnād* analysis that the *CL Yaḥyā Ibn Abī Bukayr* (d. 824/209) represents a late transmission layer.

The versions with the frame in the material of the *PCL Muḥammad Ibn Muslim aṭ-Ṭā’ifī* do not show anything exclusive to this cluster and the two specific arrangements differ from each other. They are recorded in only two out of six collections: Firyābī (d. 914/301) and Ṭabarānī (d. 971/360).<sup>123</sup>

The *isnād* of Firyābī’s version with the frame meets with another, earlier recorded *isnād* in the transmitter Ishāq Ibn Maṣṣūr (d. 819/204, Kufa).<sup>124</sup> This earlier recorded version lacks the frame. It is unlikely that such a significant difference in the transmission can be attributed to the same source and I conclude that the frame in the transmission via ‘Uṭmān was added later.

Ṭabarānī reproduces the frame with a composite *isnād*, i.e. the Basran/Meccan and the Syrian/Egyptian *isnāds* together.<sup>125</sup> It is thus impossible to know to which of the two exactly he ascribes the specific text. In addition, the Basran/Meccan *isnād* overlaps with

<sup>122</sup> Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 992; Bayhaqī, *Qadar*, I, p. 149; Ṭabarānī, *Kabīr*, III, p. 194.

<sup>123</sup> Firyābī, *Qadar*, I, p. 117; Ṭabarānī, *Kabīr*, III, p. 195.

<sup>124</sup> The *isnād* is Ishāq Ibn Maṣṣūr (d. 819/204, Kufa) → ‘Uṭmān Ibn Abī Ṣayba (d. 853/239, Kufa) → Firyābī (Firyābī, *Qadar*, I, p. 117). The other, earlier *isnād* is Ishāq → Abū Bakr Ibn Abī Ṣayba, the collector and brother of ‘Uṭmān (Ibn Abī Ṣayba, *Musnad*, II, p. 318). Ḍahabī, *Siyar*, XI, pp. 152–154 (‘Uṭmān); Mizzi, *Tahḏīb*, II, p. 480; Ibn Ḥaḡar, *Tahḏīb*, I, p. 128; Ibn Ḥibban, *Tiqāt*, VIII, p. 112; Buḡārī, *Tārīḥ kabīr*, I, p. 403 (Ishāq).

<sup>125</sup> Al-Qa‘nabī (d. 836/221, Basra to Mecca) → ‘Alī Ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz (d. 899/900/286/7, Basra to Mecca) (Ḍahabī, *Siyar*, X, pp. 258–264; XI, pp. 349f.); ‘Abd Allāh Ibn Yūsuf (d. 833/218, Shām to Tinnīs in the Nile Delta) → Yaḥyā Ibn ‘Uṭmān Ibn Ṣāliḥ (d. 895/282, Egypt) (Ḍahabī, *Siyar*, X, p. 358; XIII, p. 355).

another entirely Basran *isnād* recorded by Ṭabarānī (PCL Rubai‘iya), which also has the narrative frame.<sup>126</sup> It is thus possible that we have in front of us a Basran development which was later added to the material and cannot be ascribed to the PCL Muḥammad Ibn Muslim aṭ-Ṭā’ifi.

In summary, the narrative frame was clearly a later addition to the transmission of the PCL Muḥammad Ibn Muslim aṭ-Ṭā’ifi. The two versions in this cluster were very likely added to the material in two independent processes, which would also explain their differences. Structural observations support this, namely that the link from Aṭ-Ṭā’ifi to the CL ‘Amr Ibn Dīnār can be rejected and that the transmission CL ‘Amr → PCL Sufyān is entirely lacking the narrative frame.

In the *PCL Ibn Wahb* material, there are four *isnāds* containing the narrative frame and two lacking it.<sup>127</sup> Here, the frame has two exclusive characteristics: (1) the person Abū aṭ-Ṭufayl meets is introduced as: “*he was called (yuqāl lahu) Ḥuḍayfa Ibn Asīd*” and (2) the entire narrative is related in the third person singular, rather than the first person. I assume the material represents a redactionally reworked version of others in the first person. It is likely that this version is represented in the CL Yaḥyā Ibn Abī Bukayr. The most important witness in this regard is the specific way in which Abū aṭ-Ṭufayl expresses the reason for his bewilderment and how Ḥuḍayfa responds:

PCL Ibn Wahb	CL Yaḥyā
<i>kayfa yašqī raḡul bi-ḡayr ‘amal<sup>a</sup></i>	<i>a-yašqī aḥad bi-ḡayr ‘amal</i>
<i>a-ta ‘ḡab min dālika<sup>b</sup></i>	<i>min ay dālika ta ‘ḡab<sup>c</sup></i>

<sup>a</sup> Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 992 and Bayhaqī, *Asmā*, p. 351f. Ibn Ḥibbān, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, XIV, p. 52 and Ibn Baṭṭa, *Ibāna*, p. 24 have slightly different phrasings. All contain the decisive expression *bi-ḡayr ‘amal*, which could theoretically also mean “without having acted, yet”, but at least in the versions having “an adult man” (*raḡul*) (Bayhaqī and Muslim), this would clearly not make any sense.

<sup>b</sup> Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 991, Bayhaqī, *Asmā*, p. 351f. Ibn Baṭṭa, *Ibāna*, p. 24 drops the question particle *a.*, while Ibn Ḥibbān, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, XIV, p. 52 does not have the question. The PCL Ibn Ḡurayḡ does not have this section at all and the CL ‘Azra has clearly different phrasings (*mā ankarta* (Ṭabarānī), *lā ta ‘ḡab* (Ibn Abī ‘Āšim), *limā ta ‘ḡab aw lā ta ‘ḡab* (Firyābī)).

<sup>c</sup> Bayhaqī, *Qadar*, I, p. 149. Ṭabarānī, *Kabīr*, III, p. 194 has *‘aḡabta*.

There are also noticeable differences between the two presentations. In the PCL Ibn Wahb, the person is consistently called ‘Āmir Ibn Wāṭila, not Abū aṭ-Ṭufayl as in the CL Yaḥyā. Ḥuḍayfa’s eponym Abū Sarīḥa from the CL Yaḥyā is dropped in the PCL Ibn Wahb, where he appears as somebody obviously in need of introduction to the audience (specific element 1 mentioned above). However, these differences can still be understood

<sup>126</sup> The overlap is in ‘Alī Ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz.

<sup>127</sup> Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 992; Bayhaqī, *Asmā*, pp. 351f; Ibn Ḥibbān, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, XIV, p. 52; Ibn Baṭṭa, *Ibāna*, p. 24. Exceptions: Ṭabarānī, *Kabīr*, III, p. 198, Ṭaḥāwī, *Muškil*, VII, p. 93.

as a redactor's work, in addition to the switch from the first to third person perspective, and therefore do not outweigh the similarities.<sup>128</sup>

As noted above, the shortened version of the CL Yaḥyā in Muslim indicates that a large part of the story was cut away. It seems likely that Muslim himself moved it to the CL Ibn Wahb, for two reasons. First, within the Ibn Wahb cluster, only the *isnāds* with a central Asian transmitter after Ibn Wahb's Egyptian student generation have the story, while the two *isnāds*, which remained Egyptian, do not.<sup>129</sup> This suggests that the addition of the story to the *ḥadīṭ* was carried out in the Central Asian cohort. Second, among the Central Asian transmitters, Muslim (d. 875/261) has the earliest death date,<sup>130</sup> which makes him the most likely candidate among the four to have carried out the redactional changes and then have influenced the others. I thus conclude that in its earlier redaction layers, the material from the PCL Ibn Wahb also did not contain the narrative frame. Rather, it was added in the second generation of transmitters after Ibn Wahb, when the *isnāds* left Egypt, i.e. at the latest 250 hiġra (864 CE), when the last Egyptian transmitter linking to a Central Asian transmitter died.<sup>131</sup>

The *PCL Ibn Ğurayġ* material shows two exclusive characteristics: (1) Abu aṭ-Ṭufayl expresses his bewilderment immediately upon hearing Ibn Mas'ūd's speech, before meeting Ḥuḍayfa and (2) before Ḥuḍayfa gives the *ḥadīṭ* there is the following dialogue: he [Ḥuḍayfa] said: Shall I tell you about what I heard from the prophet?<sup>132</sup> I said: Yes. He said: I heard the prophet say ... Element 2 is a typical example of a redactional expansion. On the other hand, the unique feature of element 1 in this group possibly reflects a redaction layer earlier than the other versions, i.e. Abū aṭ-Ṭufayl expresses his bewilderment immediately upon hearing Ibn Mas'ūd's statement. The narrative arrangement leaves one with the impression that Abū aṭ-Ṭufayl exclaimed his counterposition immediately. Later, when he meets Ḥuḍayfa, he does not need to explain his concerns to him at all (through repeating his sentence). In all the other (P)CLs, this slight incoherence in the staging ("How could Ḥuḍayfa know what exactly troubled Abū aṭ-Ṭufayl so much?") is smoothed by allowing Abū aṭ-Ṭufayl to ask his critical question *after* quoting Ibn Mas'ūd's statement to Ḥuḍayfa. This phenomenon suggests that the arrangement of the framing narrative in the Ibn Ğurayġ transmission represents an earlier redaction stage than the material in all the other (P)CL transmissions.

For a better assessment of the peculiarities of the frame in the PCL Ibn Ğurayġ, a broader look at comparable material is necessary. Mostly, the frame develops around the

<sup>128</sup> Van Ess, *Zwischen Hadīṭ und Theologie*, p. 23 interprets element 1 as an indication that Ḥuḍayfa Ibn Asīd was not well known beyond Iraq.

<sup>129</sup> These are Ṭaḥāwī, *Muškil*, VII, p. 93 and Ṭabarānī, *Kabīr*, III, p. 198. On their transmitters Yūnis 'Abd al-A'lā al-Aylī (Ṭaḥāwī) and Aḥmad Ibn Šāliḥ → Aḥmad Ibn Rušdīn (Ṭabarānī), see Ḍahabī, *Siyar*, XI, pp. 349–351, XII, p. 160; XV, pp. 240f.

<sup>130</sup> Abū Dawūd as-Siġistānī (d. 888/275), Muḥammad Ibn Ismā'īl al-Naysābūrī (d. 908/295), 'Imrān Ibn Mūsā al-Ġurġānī (d. 917/305) (Ḍahabī, *Siyar*, XIII, pp. 204ff, XIV, pp. 118 and 136f).

<sup>131</sup> On this Abū aṭ-Ṭāhir Aḥmad Ibn 'Amrū see Ibn Ḥibbān, *Tiqāt*, VIII, p. 29.

<sup>132</sup> *a-fa-lā uḥbiruka* in the transmissions meeting in Abū al-Aš'at and *a-fa-lā uḥaddīṭuka* in the line Firyābī → Aġurrī.

core element that Ibn Mas‘ūd would have said: the wretched is wretched in the mothers womb and the blessed is the one who lets himself be warned by somebody else (*aš-šaqī man šaqīya fī baṭn ummihi wa as-sa‘īd man wu‘īza bi-ğayrihi*). The central dichotomy in this statement is clearly the word pair *šaqī/sa‘īd* with differing definitions for the *šaqī*- and the *sa‘īd*-groups. In the PCL Ibn Ğurayğ material, Abū aṭ-Ṭufayl exclaims immediately after hearing Ibn Mas‘ūd’s statement: “Shame on Satan! Is the human (*al-insān*) blessed or wretched before having acted?”<sup>133</sup> Note that parts of the Arabic rhyme: *ħizyān li-aš-šayṭān! yas‘ad al-insān wa yašqī qabla an ya‘mal*, which puts emphasis on *al-insān*.

The word *insān* allows for two different interpretations of the meaning of the entire passage. Interpretation 1 takes it as simply referring to “the human”. The clear temporal perspective of the formulation “before having acted” (*qabla an ya‘mal*) indicates that Abū aṭ-Ṭufayl’s concern was about humans who died before having acted at all or having reached an age at which they could be held responsible for their acts. The debate is then clearly about neonatal and infant death.<sup>134</sup>

However, for earlier stages of this material, it should be kept in mind that a) the framing narrative developed independently of the *ħadīṭ matn*, and b) it did not have the *šaqī/sa‘īd* dichotomy but only referred to the wretched (*šaqī*), which might then not refer to the hereafter at all, but rather inner-worldly unhappiness.

This leads us to interpretation 2. As noted above, the version in the PCL Ibn Ğurayğ highlights the term *al-insān*, which is only used in this cluster. In Qur’anic usage, *al-insān* very often clearly refers to Adam (e.g. 15:26, 23:12, 55:14).<sup>135</sup> A reference to the example of Adam as a critical reaction to predestinarian views is far from uncommon in theological debates in the 7<sup>th</sup> century in the Eastern Mediterranean.<sup>136</sup> The point of the example: Adam first had to sin of his own will and *then* he was punished. What if all this had been predestined? For this, I suggest reading an earlier text layer of Abū aṭ-Ṭufayl’s exclamation: “Was Adam wretched even before he had sinned?!”. Against this background the *ħazyān li-aš-šayṭān* would then be more than a mere curse, but for an additional statement in an old theological debate: “The blame for the original sin is on Satan”.<sup>137</sup> A very slight phenomenon in the material of the CL Yaħyā Ibn Abī Bukayr supports this interpretation. Here, Abū aṭ-Ṭufayl only asks about *sh-q-ya* and not *sa‘īd*, thus indicating

<sup>133</sup> Version in Firyābī, *Qadar*, p. 119.

<sup>134</sup> This ties in very well with the Basran material under the PCL ‘Azra where Abū aṭ-Ṭufayl explicitly asks “What about the (little) child?”. The safe dating of the PCL ‘Azra before 248 and of the PCL Ibn Ğurayğ before 253, both at Basra, thus strongly indicates that in the first half of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century ħiğra (9<sup>th</sup> century CE), Basran circles highlighted the problem of neonatal/infant death within the predestination debate. The Ĥudayfa ħadīṭ then clearly addressed exactly this issue: it is all predestined at an early stage of pregnancy. The two versions under the PCL ‘Azra and the PCL Ibn Ğurayğ differ so much to make it likely that they represent different stages of a redactional reworking of the same or at least similar material.

<sup>135</sup> See also Theodor Frankl, *Die Entstehung des Menschen nach dem Koran*, Prag 1930, p. 13.

<sup>136</sup> See, for example, Cook, *Early Muslim Dogma*, 145.

<sup>137</sup> Lane, Edward William, *An Arabic-English Lexicon*, Edinburgh 1874–1893, II, p. 735 has for *ħazyān*, among other things, “with much shame, on account of a bad, or foul, deed that he has done”.

that an earlier version of the story did not have the *ṣaqī/sa'īd* dichotomy.<sup>138</sup> In other words, the earlier layer likely did not speak about the fate in the hereafter, but rather an inner-worldly punishment such as Adam's.

I consider this to be a likely reconstruction of the earlier *Sitz im Leben* of the material in the narrative frame. In the version that we have in front of us today, this was already lost, especially through the introduction of the *ṣaqī/sa'īd* dichotomy, moving the meaning away from the specific question of Adam's sin to the issue of humans in general, predestination and the hereafter. The link to the Ḥuḍayfa *ḥadīṭ* finalised this development, since reference to pregnancy does not make sense in connection with Adam. Unfortunately, the material does not allow us to narrow down the time span of when these changes were carried out.<sup>139</sup>

### Element III: The predestined things<sup>140</sup>

The previous analysis has shown that earlier material referring only to *ṣaqī* was expanded through the introduction of the *ṣaqī/sa'īd* dichotomy as a deliberate move to orientate the discussion towards the Qur'an and the issue of predestination and fate in the hereafter. This leads us to the list of the predestined things in the Ḥuḍayfa *ḥadīṭ*, where the *ṣaqī/sa'īd* dichotomy is very prominent. As a representative example, I quote the entire *ḥadīṭ* via the PCL Sufyān in Muslim's version:

“The angel enters upon the semen after it has established itself in the uterus within 40 or 45 nights. Then he says: Oh Lord! Wretched or blessed? And the two are written down. Then he says: Oh Lord! Male or female? And the two are written down. And his deeds, his work, time of death and his sustenance are written, then the pages are folded and nothing is added and nothing is taken away.”

In its entirety, the material shows traces of a redaction process in which a first set of things to be predestined was later expanded through an additional list of things: as can be witnessed here, in some versions the angel asks first about *ṣaqī/sa'īd* and *ḍakar/untā* before the answers to these questions are written down, and after this a summary list of other things is noted without the angel even having asked.<sup>141</sup> The arrangement

<sup>138</sup> Text as it is in Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 992 and Bayhaqī, *Asmā*, I:350.

<sup>139</sup> This is because of the following reasons: 1) The narrative frame developed independently of the *ḥadīṭ matn* for some time, 2) only three extensive variants of the material survive, all of them through comparatively later collectors (the earliest being Firyābī (d. 914/301)), and 3) the structure of the *isnāds* only allows for using Abū Aṣ'at al-Miqdām (d. 867/253) as the lynchpin for a safe dating.

<sup>140</sup> As noted above, I will now jump from element I to III, because both refer to the *ṣaqī/sa'īd* dichotomy.

<sup>141</sup> For example, in the PCL Sufyān: Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, XXVI, pp. 64f; Ḥumaydī, *Musnad*, II, p. 75; in the PCL Muḥammad Ibn Muslim aṭ-Ṭā'fī: Ṭabarānī, *Kabīr*, III, p. 175; in the PCL Ibn Ḡurayḡ: Firyābī, *Qadar*, pp. 119f.

and phrasing of the material make it plausible that the first group was earlier and the second was added to it in a redaction process.

The studies of van Ess and Cook on this *ḥadīṭ* material have placed different emphasis on different aspects of the second, later-added list. Cook saw the major emphasis on the date of death (*aḡal*), while van Ess mostly focused on *'amal*, i.e. the question of whether all deeds are predestined.<sup>142</sup> A look at the entirety of the Ḥudayfa material suggests that in this corpus, *aḡal* was likely a much less contested issue than *'amal*: *aḡal* is present in all the (P)CL clusters,<sup>143</sup> while *'amal* is missing entirely in several clusters and especially in the PCL Sufyān.<sup>144</sup> All in all, the items on the second, added list were likely influenced by different factors, such as changes in the word order that occur naturally in the transmission process,<sup>145</sup> aspects of internal coherence in the arrangement,<sup>146</sup> or substitution of terms.<sup>147</sup> Some of these movements, especially concerning the terms *'amal* and *aṭar*, could constitute cases where the items were meant as explanatory reasonings in the exact way that the predestination of *ṣaqī/sa'īd* should be understood.

Now, I analyze *element III: The predestined things* with respect to three characteristics. (1) Are there traces of two lists? Or have these traces already been erased? The latter will then be considered a later redaction layer? (2) Does the *ṣaqī/sa'īd* formula appear at the beginning of the predestined things or at the end? I will show that the final position likely represents a later redaction layer. (3) What vocabulary does the phrasing use that

<sup>142</sup> The question of *aḡal* was a major item among authors of different denominations at that time (additionally to Cook, *Early Muslim Dogma*, 145–152 see Van Ess, Josef, *Theologie und Gesellschaft im 2. und 3. Jahrhundert Hidschra. Eine Geschichte des religiösen Denkens im frühen Islam*, Berlin-New York 1997, IV, pp. 494f with references), while debate about the predestination of deeds is documented in Jewish circles (van Ess, *Zwischen Ḥadīṭ und Theologie*, 16, and critical comments in Cook, *Early Muslim Dogma*, 148 with Fn 37). Note that both authors mostly focus on the Ibn Mas'ūd *ḥadīṭ*, but also touch on the Ḥudayfa *ḥadīṭ*.

<sup>143</sup> What's more, in the CL 'Azra and the CL Yaḥyā Ibn Abī Bakīr groups, *aḡal* is present in all variants, in the PCL Ibn Ġurayḡ, it is missing in only 1 out of 4 (Lālakā'ī, *Sharḥ*, IV, p. 543, which is the latest collector in this cluster and the version lacks all of the predestined things except *ṣaqī/sa'īd*), and in the PCL Ibn Wahb it is missing in only 1 out of 6 (Ṭabarānī, *Kabīr*, III, p. 198).

<sup>144</sup> Entirely missing in the CL 'Azra, the PCL Ibn Wahb and the CL Yaḥyā Ibn Abī Bukayr. Examples are in the PCL Sufyān: Ibn Abī 'Āšim, *Āḥād*, II:257 and *Sunna*, I, p. 80 and especially Ṭabarānī, *Kabīr*, II, p. 176, depending on Ḥumaydī, *Musnad*, II, p. 75, who has *'amal*. These are possibly examples for *aṭar* substituting *'amal*, but it has to be noted that comparatively early collectors already recorded lists containing both terms (e.g. Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, XXVI, pp. 64f). The two DCRs in this cluster, Ḥumaydī and Ibn Ḥanbal, use *'amal*, which means that it was probably early. Among the clusters lacking *'amal*, several are late (the CL 'Azra and the CL Yaḥyā Ibn Abī Bakīr). For this reason, I will refrain from stating that a successive growth of *aḡal* is an earlier addition than *'amal*.

<sup>145</sup> For example, *rizq* followed by *aṭar* in Ibn Abī 'Āšim, *Sunna*, I, p. 80 and inverted in idem, *Āḥād*, II, p. 257 with the identical *isnād*.

<sup>146</sup> E.g. *aḡal* (i.e. the death date) moved into the final position on the list in Ṭabarānī, *Kabīr*, III, p. 176 as compared to Ḥumaydī, *Musnad*, II, p. 75 on which the *isnād* depends.

<sup>147</sup> In addition to the possible *'amal* ↔ *aṭar* example mentioned above, *aḡal* might sometimes have been substituted with *muṣība*, i.e. calamity/misfortune as in Q 64:11, for example (see for e.g. Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, XXVI, pp. 64f, Ṭaḥāwī, *Muṣkil*, VII, p. 92). Again, there are several cases where both terms occur together on the list (see e.g. Ibn Abī 'Āšim, *Sunna*, I, p. 80).

describes what happens after the angel asks God what to do? Some versions insist on clarifying that God ordains (*yaqḏī*) what he wants (*mā shā'a*) and it is the angel (*al-malak*) who writes, while others do not. I interpret versions showing such characteristics as later redactional layers, because they use specific theological terminology (*qaḏā'*) and disambiguate material, which otherwise might blur the lines between God and the angel in the description.

The *CL Yahyā Ibn Abī Bukayr*<sup>148</sup> (1) has traces of there once having been two lists in the version recorded by Muslim: several items in the middle (*rizq*, *aḡal*, *ḥalq*) are asked in summary fashion. (2) It has *ṣaqī/sa'īd* in the final position. Generally, the three versions open with the *ḏakar/unṭā* question, which is followed by other questions before arriving at the *ṣaqī/sa'īd* question. The versions in Muslim and Bayhaqī finish with “then he makes him wretched or blessed” (*tumma yaḡ'aluhu ṣaqiyan aw sa'īdan*) without the angel asking about it, whereas Ṭabarānī's version inserts a question here. Muslim clearly has the earliest version in this cluster and I interpret the material as a strong indication that *ṣaqī/sa'īd* was moved to the final position as a deliberate redaction for a more inherent coherency: the fate of the hereafter is predestined only after all the other things.<sup>149</sup> (3) After the questions it states: “so God makes it XYZ” (*fa-yaj'aluhu Allāh ...*).<sup>150</sup> This formulation already considers it obviously necessary to indicate that it is God who does the respective things. On the other hand, the formulation does not use standard theological vocabulary from the *Qaḏā' wa l-qadar* debate. The specific characteristics 1 and 3 of the *CL Yahyā Ibn Bukayr* (d. 823/208) in particular make it possible for us to have a version in front of us reflecting an earlier stage, i.e. his teacher's level.

The *PCL Muḥammad Ibn Muslim aṭ-Ṭā'ifī*<sup>151</sup> (1) has traces of two lists. (2) *Ṣaqī/sa'īd* always appears early on, mostly at the start.<sup>152</sup> (3) The formulation after the questions is: “so God ordains and the angel writes” (*fa-yaqḏī Allāh wa yaktub al-malak*). Characteristics 1 and 2 reflect early redaction layers, whereas 3 shows that the material has gone through a deliberate redaction process. As noted above, the earliest recorded version in this cluster is Ibn Abī Shayba's (d. 849/235), who received it from Iṣḥāq Ibn Maṣṣūr (d. 820/205), while the PCL Muḥammad Ibn Muslim is rejected as a historical transmitter. I consider

<sup>148</sup> Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 992: *ḏakar/unṭā*, *sawī/ḡayr sawī*, *rizq*, *aḡal*, *ḥalq*, *tumma yaḡ'aluhu Allāh ṣaqī/sa'īd*. Ṭabarānī, *Kabīr*, III, p. 194: *ḏakar/unṭā*, *sawī/ḡayr sawī*, *aḡal*, *wa yaḡ'aluhu Allāh ṣaqī/sa'īd*. Bayhaqī, *Qadar*, pp. 149f: *ḏakar/unṭā*, *sawī/ḡayr sawī*, *aḡal*, *rizq*, *tumma yaḡ'aluhu ṣaqī/sa'īd*. The dichotomy *sawī/ḡayr sawī* is unique to the corpus.

<sup>149</sup> The other direction (*ṣaqī/sa'īd* in the final position, from earlier and later moved to the beginning) is contradicted by the first recorded versions, which have it at the beginning (for example Ḥumaydī, *Musnad*, II, p. 75).

<sup>150</sup> This is so for the three dichotomous questions in the list, the single items in between *aḡal*, *rizq*, *ḥalq* are asked in a cluster and are not followed by this formula.

<sup>151</sup> Identical summary of the second list *aḡal*, *rizq*, *'amal* (Ibn Abī Shayba, *Musnad*, II, p. 318; Firyābī, *Qadar*, I, p. 117; Ṭabarānī, *Kabīr*, III, p. 195 (the order varies between versions)). The version in Firyābī, *Qadar*, I, pp. 115f only has *ṣaqī/sa'īd*, *ḏakar/unṭā*.

<sup>152</sup> The exception is the version in Ṭabarānī, *Kabīr*, III, p. 195: *ḏakar/unṭā*, *ṣaqī/sa'īd*.



the specificities in the *matn* sufficient grounds to hypothesise that it at least partly represents an earlier layer, i.e. on the level of Ishāq Ibn Manṣūr.

The **PCL Sufyān Ibn ‘Uyayina**<sup>153</sup> has (1) traces of the two lists. (2) *Šaqī/sa ‘īd* always appears early on, mostly at the beginning.<sup>154</sup> (3) The formulation after the questions varies considerably, ranging from “so he writes/it is written” (*fa-yaktub/yuktab*)<sup>155</sup> to “so God says and the two are written” or “he writes/it is written” (*yaqūl Allāh wa yuktabān/yaktub/yuktab*)<sup>156</sup> to “and the angel writes” (*yaktub al-malak*).<sup>157</sup>

This substantiates the previous assessment that we have an early layer in front of us, and the material provides sufficient ground to hypothesise that the material from the PCL Sufyān represents the earliest traceable redaction layers of the entire Ḥuḍayfa material. I find it plausible to assume that the PCL Sufyān material served as a sort of template for the later material attributed to the PCL Muḥammad Ibn Muslim aṭ-Ṭā’ifī, where element 3 was adjusted.

The **PCL Ibn Wahb**<sup>158</sup> (1) does not have traces of two lists. (2) *Šaqī/sa ‘īd* is entirely lacking. This is unique to the corpus. (3) The formulation after the questions is always: “So your Lord ordains what he wants and the angel writes” (*fa-yaqḏī rabbuka mā shā’a wa yaktub al-malak*). These characteristics suggest a secondary redaction layer which is later than the material under PCL Sufyān. The *isnād* analysis shows a reliable transmission at the level of Ibn Wahb (d. 813/197) to his students, which is the same time frame as for the PCL Sufyān. I interpret the uniformity of the material under PCL Ibn Wahb as an indication that writing was assigned a strong role in this transmission process. Elements 1 and 3 in particular show that Ibn Wahb subjected the material to a deliberate redaction process. Besides these two elements, did Ibn Wahb also erase *šaqī/sa ‘īd* from the list? In other words: was *šaqī/sa ‘īd* already on the list early on or not?

I will address this question in two steps. First I will analyse the material under the PCL Ibn Ğurayġ, which has the *šaqī/sa ‘īd* and technically shares the CL Abū az-Zubayr with the PCL Ibn Wahb. I will show that the similarities in the *matn* of the two groups do not prove that they developed from the same source. Second, I will scrutinise traces in the material under the PCL Sufyān which suggest that *šaqī/sa ‘īd* was added at some point to an earlier version.

The **PCL Ibn Ğurayġ**<sup>159</sup> (1) shows traces of the list and (2) has *šaqī/sa ‘īd* in the initial position. The phrasing after the questions is always: “So your Lord ordains what he wants and the angel writes” (*fa-yaqḏī rabbuka mā šā’a wa yaktub al-malak*), i.e. it

<sup>153</sup> In order not to overburden the text with large footnotes, I do not recount all the lists in detail here.

<sup>154</sup> The only exception: Ibn Baṭṭa, *Ibāna*, II, pp. 25f, with *ḏakar/untā* first.

<sup>155</sup> Muslim, *Šaḥīḥ*, 991.

<sup>156</sup> First version e.g. in Ḥumaydī, *Musnad*, II, pp. 75, second version in Dūlābī, *Asmā*, I, p. 223.

<sup>157</sup> For example, Ibn Abī ‘Āšim, *Sunna*, I, p. 80.

<sup>158</sup> Muslim, *Šaḥīḥ*, 991f; Bayhaqī, *Asmā*, I, p. 350; Ibn Ḥibbān, *Šaḥīḥ*, XIV, p. 52; Ṭabarānī, *Kabīr*, III, p. 198; Ṭaḥāwī, *Muškil*, VII, p. 93; Ibn Baṭṭa, *Ibāna*, II, p. 24.

<sup>159</sup> Firiyābī, *Qadar*, I, pp. 119f; Aġuriī, *Šarī’a*, I, pp. 365f (2 versions); Lālakā’ī, *Šarḥ*, IV, p. 593. Muslim, *Šaḥīḥ*, 991f skips the *matn* after indicating the framing story.

is identical to the PCL Ibn Wahb. Theoretically, this phenomenon could be explained in two ways. First, that it developed from a common source, which here would be the CL Abū az-Zubayr (d. 746/128). If this were the case, the material of the PCL Ibn Ğurayġ would clearly reflect an earlier layer than the PCL Ibn Wahb because it shows traces of the two lists. As a consequence, the PCL Ibn Ğurayġ would strongly suggest that the list of predestined things originally contained *ṣaqī/sa'īd* and therefore it would have been erased in the transmission of the PCL Ibn Wahb. However, in addition to the results of the *isnād* analysis, two *matn*-related arguments make this scenario unlikely. To start with, the fully fledged phrasing of element 3, which is identical in both the PCLs, would be a clear anachronism if already ascribed to the time of the CL Abū az-Zubayr when these theological debates had surely not yet developed to such a stage.<sup>160</sup> Furthermore, such identical phrasing would be highly surprising in a scenario of two independent transmission processes over a time span of more than 100 years.

Based on this information, I consider another explanation much more likely: that the PCL Ibn Ğurayġ was redacted before 867/253 (death date of Abū al-Aš'aš) and given this *isnād*. This brings us back to the above-mentioned observation that the dictionaries do not mention Abū aṭ-Ṭufayl among the teachers of Abū az-Zubayr, but rather Ğābir Ibn 'Abd Allāh.<sup>161</sup>

There is a rare *ḥadīṭ* about the angel, the unborn, and predestination from the *isnād* Ğābir → Abū az-Zubayr → CL Ḥaṣīf (Ibn 'Abd ar-Raḥmān, d. 130s (mid 740s–mid 750s CE)).<sup>162</sup> Ḥaṣīf was remembered as belonging to the *murġi'a* and his transmission was later rejected.<sup>163</sup> It is thus possible that material from this transmission might have used a different *isnād*. The transmission Ğābir → Abū az-Zubayr is already recorded in Ibn Ḥanbal's *Musnad* (d. 855/241), and the earliest recording of the transmission Abū aṭ-Ṭufayl → Abū az-Zubayr is in Muslim (d. 875/261), who has both the PCLs Ibn Wahb and Ibn Ğurayġ. I rule out that a switch in the *isnād* from Ğābir to Abū aṭ-Ṭufayl occurred in the PCL Ibn Wahb transmission for the following reason: as has been shown above, the transmission of the PCL Ibn Wahb → student generation is reliable. This would leave us only with PCL Ibn Wahb himself as a possible originator for the switching of *isnāds* and therefore his death date 197 hiġra (813 CE) would be the *terminus ante quem*. However, this would occur very early<sup>164</sup> and would make it difficult to explain why the transmission via Ḥaṣīf could still spread over such a considerable period of time after

<sup>160</sup> This critique is also supported by the fact that the PCL Sufyān (d. 814/198), reflecting the earliest reliable redaction layers, does not yet use any of these techniques of clarification and disambiguation.

<sup>161</sup> Ibn Ḥibbān, *Ṭiqāt*, V, pp. 351f; Ḍahabī, *Siyar*, V, pp. 381–386.

<sup>162</sup> Firyābī, *Qadar*, I, pp. 121f; Ṭaḥāwī, *Muṣkil*, VII, pp. 94f (two versions); Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, XXIII, pp. 413f.

<sup>163</sup> This was especially the case for the transmission through his pupil 'Atāb Ibn Baṣīr (d. 804/188 or 806/190) (Ibn Ḥaġar, *Tahdīb*, I, p. 543 (Ḥaṣīf) and III, p. 48 ('Atāb)), who is in all the *isnāds* being studied here except for that of Ibn Ḥanbal. In the edition used here, Ṭaḥāwī records *isnāds* to Ḥaṣīf via Ġiyāṭ Ibn Baṣīr, while Firyābī has 'Atāb Ibn Baṣīr. This can be explained through the writing of the *rasm* without dots. Confusion about the transmitter's name might have added to the critique.

<sup>164</sup> Only ten years would lie between the death date of 'Atāb Ibn Baṣīr (d. 804/188 or 806/190), Ḥaṣīf's contested pupil, and of Ibn Wahb.

Ibn Wahb. As a result, I rule out that a switch in the *isnād* from Ġābir to Abū aṭ-Ṭufayl occurred in the PCL Ibn Wahb transmission.

A different scenario seems much more likely: over the course of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century hiġra (9<sup>th</sup> century CE), the transmission of Ġābir → Abū az-Zubayr → Ḥaṣīf was increasingly frowned upon, because of the transmitter Ḥaṣīf. A much more commonly known transmitter of material from Ġābir → Abū az-Zubayr was Ibn Ġurayġ.<sup>165</sup> At the same time, the version from the *isnād* Abū aṭ-Ṭufayl → Abū az-Zubayr → PCL Ibn Wahb became increasingly known outside of Egypt: all the three Egyptian transmitters after the PCL Ibn Wahb that related the *ḥadīth* to non-Egyptian students had passed away by 250 hiġra (864 CE). As has been repeatedly shown, the lack of *ṣaqī/sa'id* in the *matn* as transmitted via PCL Ibn Wahb is a unique and outstanding phenomenon within the corpus. One way to address this problem was the addition of the narrative frame to the *ḥadīth*, probably an action carried out by Muslim. Another way was to create a pastiche of the Ḥaṣīf material and the PCL Ibn Wahb, not so much as a means of outright forgery, but rather a work of redaction criticism starting from the assumption that both sets of material could be traced back to Abū az-Zubayr. This would exactly match the time frame of the first safely datable layer in the PCL Ibn Ġurayġ material: before 253 hiġra (867 CE) (death date Abū al-Aš'ath).

The following chart shows the elements in the *matns* which support this scenario (see below for further explanations):

	Ḥaṣīf	PCL Ibn Ġurayġ	PCL Ibn Wahb
Opening verb <i>istaqarrat</i>	X	X	
Opening verb <i>marrat</i> e.g.			X
40 nights	X		
42 nights/mornings <sup>a</sup>		X	X
Reference to unborn's body		X	X
Traces of two lists	X <sup>b</sup>	X	
Theological formulation		X	X
Angel leaves afterwards		X	X

<sup>a</sup> The Ibn Ġurayġ material has *ṣabāh*, which indicates a later redactional stage, because it exchanges a period (night) for a specific point in time (morning), thus possibly reacting to the question of what "42 nights" exactly means.

<sup>b</sup> Version in Ṭahāwī, *Muṣkil*, VII, p. 94.

I consider it hardly a coincidence that all elements in the PCL Ibn Ġurayġ can be found either in the PCL Ibn Wahb or the material via Ḥaṣīf. In both cases, there are structural overlaps (the PCL Ibn Ġurayġ and Ḥaṣīf: traces of two lists; the PCL

<sup>165</sup> Juynboll, *Encyclopedia*, 212f.

Ibn Ğurayġ and the PCL Ibn Wahb: reference to the unborn's body and angel leaving afterwards) as well as verbatim matches (the PCL Ibn Ğurayġ and Ḥaṣīf: opening verb *istaqarrat*; PCL Ibn Ğurayġ and PCL Ibn Wahb: 42 days/mornings and the theological formulation).

Against this overall background, I find it much more convincing to assume a redaction process amalgamating material from the PCL Ibn Wahb with material via Ḥaṣīf until approximately 250 hiġra (864 CE), rather than the scenario of two transmission processes via the PCL Ibn Wahb and the PCL Ibn Ğurayġ going back to a common source, Abū at-Ṭufayl → CL Abū az-Zubayr. This means that the material from the PCL Ibn Ğurayġ cannot be used to argue that the *šaqī/sa'īd* dichotomy was part of an earlier layer of the material and would have been erased in the transmission via the PCL Ibn Wahb.

Rather, a very slight phenomenon in the PCL Sufyān material suggests that *šaqī/sa'īd* was added at some early point to the material: the alternative questions “wretched or blessed?” and “male or female?” are followed in the two earliest recordings by “and so the two are written”, i.e. a dual verb form. Of course, this can be interpreted to mean that each of the questions receives one (word) as an answer, which explains the dual. However, this is evidently not how the transmitters perceived this, as indicated by versions having the dual form after every single question of the two<sup>166</sup> and others changing the verb to singular.<sup>167</sup> This suggests a scenario that an earliest layer would have had one alternative question and the angel would have written down any of the two possible answers. Through adding a second question allowing two alternative answers, the verb in dual became confusing and the transmitters developed different redactional strategies to resolve this. In the light of all the previous analysis, I find it much more plausible that *šaqī/sa'īd* was added to an earlier layer having *ḍakar/untā* rather than the other way around.

In summary, this section argues that the PCL Sufyān and the PCL Ibn Wahb are the two earliest layers in the material being studied here. Both show traces of redaction, which overall indicate that *šaqī/sa'īd* was added to an earlier version. From this, one could conclude that the PCL Ibn Wahb material represented the earlier version more closely than the version spread by PCL Sufyān. However, other elements (lack of traces of two lists; more developed theological formulation) put the PCL Ibn Wahb material later than PCL Sufyān. How can this apparently contradictory situation be solved? In my eyes, the most convincing explanation is that the two versions reflect a debate on whether *šaqī/sa'īd* should be added to the list or not. This leads us to the first half of the *matn*, element II.

<sup>166</sup> Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 991; Ṭabarānī, *Kabīr*, III, p. 176; Ṭaḥāwī, *Muškil*, VII, p. 92; Bayhaqī, *Qadar*, p. 150 and *l'ūqād*, I, p. 172 (identical *isnād*).

<sup>167</sup> Ibn Abī 'Āšim, *Sunna*, I, p. 80 and *Āḥād*, II, p. 257 (identical *isnād*), Dūlābī, *Kunā*, I, p. 223; Ibn Baṭṭa, *Ibāna*, II, pp. 25f; Aġurrī, *Šarī'a*, I, p. 365; Firyābī, *Qadar*, pp. 115f.

**Element II: The embryo<sup>168</sup>**

The version under PCL Sufyān always begins with:

“The angel enters upon the semen after it has solidified in the uterus in 40 or 45 nights. So he says: Oh Lord ...”<sup>169</sup>

The version under PCL Ibn Wahb is as follows:

“When 42 nights have passed over the semen God sends to it an angel. He then shapes it and creates his hearing, seeing, skin, flesh and bones. Then he says: Oh Lord ...”<sup>170</sup>

The passage about the shaping of the unborn in the PCL Ibn Wahb is a significant extension and, together with the arguments presented above, strongly suggests that it has to be situated chronologically after the version under the PCL Sufyān.

It is tempting to interpret the list of “hearing, seeing, skin, flesh and bones” as being first about capabilities – i.e. the capability to perceive the religious message – and thereafter about bodily creation, effectively from the outside in: skin, flesh, bones. Such a specific embryology is attested in Job 10:11.<sup>171</sup> However, I find it much more convincing that the tradition makes a reference to Q 41:19–21 (Arberry translation):

“Upon the day when God’s enemies are mustered to the Fire, duly disposed, till when they are come to it, their hearing, their eyes and their skins (*sam’uhum wa absāruhum wa ġulūduhum*) bear witness against them concerning what they have been doing, and they will say to their skins, ‘Why bore you witness against us?’”

In its composite use of *s-m-*, *b-s-r* and *ġ-l-d*, this passage is unique in the Qur’an.<sup>172</sup> With this reference, the material from the PCL Ibn Wahb bolsters the position that

<sup>168</sup> For the sake of clarity, I will now mostly focus on the PCL Sufyān and the PCL Ibn Wahb.

<sup>169</sup> *Yadhul al-malak ‘alā an-nuṭfa ba’damā tastaqīr fī ar-raḥim bi-arba’īn aw ḥams wa arba’īn layla fa-yaqūl yā rabb...* (Version in Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 991).

<sup>170</sup> *Idā marra bi-an-nuṭfa tnatān wa arba’ūn layla ba’ata ilayhā malakan fa-ṣawwarahā wa ḥalaqa sam’ahā wa baṣrahā wa ġildahā wa laḥmahā wa ‘izāmahā tumma qāla yā rabb...* (Version in Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 991).

<sup>171</sup> I thank Reuven Kiperwasser for alerting me to this possible parallel.

<sup>172</sup> The Qur’an has nominally used the root *ġ-l-d* in the following contexts: *ġilda* for counting lashes (24:2 and 4), the skins of those punished in the fire are boiled or melted (4:56, 22:20), animal skins used for housing (16:80), the skin of those fearing God reacts upon hearing the message (39:23). The nominal usage of the roots *s-m-* and *b-s-r*, mostly occurring together and often extended with *qalb* or *fu’ād* (or their plurals, often meaning “intellect/apprehension”), is semantically more stable and usually refers to the capacity to be perceptive of the religious message *in this world* without specific reference to judgement day. See especially Tilman Seidensticker, *Altarabisch ‘Herz’ und sein Wortfeld*, Wiesbaden 1992, pp. 63–114.

*šaḳī/sa ʿīd* are not on the list of the predestined things. It will be decided on behalf of the record of the deeds at the end of days. The continuation of “its flesh and bones” (*lahmahā wa ʿizāmahā*) in the material is then a generic reference to bodily existence without a specific intertext just like its equivalent in English or German.

I situate this discussion at a layer before the two PCLs Sufyān (d. 814/198) and Ibn Wahb (d. 813/197) for the following reasons. As shown above, the PCL Sufyān material has considerable traces of an earlier layer, whereas the PCL Ibn Wahb material reacts to this with a considerable addition of an entire segment, probably deliberately arguing against including the *šaḳī/sa ʿīd* dichotomy, which was recently added and was therefore still debatable. Such redactional work and the theological debates underlying them need time. In order to allow these debates to have taken place, one needs to move them some time away from the death dates of the two PCLs. Also, adding an entire segment to a *ḥadīṭ* through insertion, as was probably the case in the material under the PCL Ibn Wahb, is a phenomenon which I find more difficult to imagine the further one moves over time towards the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century hiġra (8<sup>th</sup> century CE) and the demise of the two PCLs. In light of my above finding that the link ʿAmrū Ibn al-Ḥārith (d. 765/148) → Ibn Wahb is reliable and that ʿAmrū probably was a historically attested person who relocated from Mecca to Egypt, I find it plausible that he would have brought this tradition with him. This makes his year of death a *terminus ante quem* for the time when the addition of the *šaḳī/sa ʿīd* dichotomy was still a recent phenomenon and was thus possible to contest. Given the ultimately wide spread of the dichotomy within all *ḥadīṭ* material about the angel, the unborn and predestination topos,<sup>173</sup> I find it reasonable to assume that the further one moves over time, it become more difficult, and ultimately impossible, to question the *šaḳī/sa ʿīd* dichotomy on the list of things to be predestined. This also suggests the earlier dating, and I thus find it plausible to position the contestation of *šaḳī/sa ʿīd* in the material in the first half of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century hiġra (8<sup>th</sup> century CE).

This early dating of the debate in the first half of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century hiġra (8<sup>th</sup> century CE) is further substantiated through the CL Yaḥyā Ibn Abī Bukayr. The analysis of the second half of the *matn* has shown that this material likely contains early redaction layers. Another example is found in the the first half:

“the drop falls into the uterus 40 nights, then the angel *yataṣawwar ʿalayhā*, Zuhayr said: I think he [his informant] said: [the angel] which creates it (*h-l-q*), so he says: Oh Lord ...”<sup>174</sup>

<sup>173</sup> See Eich, ‘*nasama*’ and ‘Patterns in the history of the commentation on the so-called *ḥadīṭ Ibn Mas ʿūd*’, *Journal of Arabic and Islamic Studies* 18 (2018).

<sup>174</sup> Version in Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 992 (*inna an-nuṭfa taqaʿ fī ar-rahīm arbaʿin layla tumma yataṣawwar ʿalayhā al-malak qāla zuhayr ḥasabtuḥu qāla allaḳī yaḥluquhā fa-yaqūl ya rabb...*), see also Bayhaqī, *Qadar*, I, p. 149. Tabarānī, *Kabīr*, III, p. 194 drops the reference to Zuhayr.

Here, the CL Yaḥyā Ibn Abī Bukayr recorded an instance where his teacher Zuhayr Ibn Mu'āwiya (d. 789/173 or 790/174) was uncertain about a part of the *matn*.<sup>175</sup> I see no reason why this should have been invented<sup>176</sup> and therefore take the reference to Zuhayr in the *matn* as reflecting a historical transmission process which allows the dating to be pushed to before 173/4 hiġra (789/90 CE) for those elements in the *matn* representing earlier redaction layers according to form critical considerations. This is particularly the case for the passage rendered above, in which I deliberately left a section untranslated. The expression *yataṣawwar* 'alayhā does not make sense: the combination of stem V of ṣ-w-r with 'alā is not lexicalised<sup>177</sup> and the possible meanings of “it was formed” or its derivative “he imagined” would demand a different construction.<sup>178</sup> Later commentaries struggled considerably to make sense of this expression, for example suggesting a writing *yatasawwar* 'alayhā, i.e. a writing with *sīn*, which would then mean that the angel descends upon the drop.<sup>179</sup> While this *ṣād* ↔ *sīn* exchange is attested in Arabic papyri until the 10<sup>th</sup> century CE,<sup>180</sup> I consider a mistake in the transmission process much more likely. The only thing which can be safely gleaned from this material is that somehow the verbal root ṣ-w-r and ḥ-l-q was understood by Zuhayr to have been part of the *matn*. The transmission under the PCL Ibn Wahb is the only place in the corpus being studied here where this is the case. This strongly suggests that in Zuhayr's transmission (i.e. before 789/90/173/4) we can already see an echo of the *ṣaqī/sa'īd* debate discussed above. This is in accordance with a dating of the respective material in the first half of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century hiġra (8<sup>th</sup> century CE).

The PCL Ibn Ġurayġ material later glossed over this debate, not only by adding *ṣaqī/sa'īd*, but also through a careful rearrangement of the *matn*'s first half: while the PCL Ibn Wahb has “hearing, seeing, skin, flesh and bones”, the PCL Ibn Ġurayġ has “flesh, bones, hearing, seeing”, i.e. the skin is not mentioned and the unborn's bodily existence precedes the creation of the capability to see and hear. In the first place, this a redactional process that rearranges the material in a more intuitive order: the bodily existence intuitively precedes the hearing and seeing facilities. The reference to the skin then possibly did not make sense anymore, since it is not mentioned in Qur'anic embryology, or it was deliberately deleted in order to erase the link to Q 41:19–21. Eventually, a later redaction

<sup>175</sup> Zuhayr was Kufan and lived in the Ġazīra, where he possibly died a violent death. Among other things, he was later remembered to have transmitted clearly 12er *shī'i* material (Buḥārī, *Tārīḥ kabīr*, III, p. 427; Ibn Ḥibbān, *Tiḳāt*, VI, p. 337; Ḍahabī, *Siyar*, VIII, pp. 182–187).

<sup>176</sup> As pointed out above, the *isnād* analysis questioned Yaḥyā Ibn Abī Bukayr as the CL, while the *matn* analysis showed traces of early redaction layers.

<sup>177</sup> Lane, *Lexicon*, IV, p. 1744.

<sup>178</sup> Either *tataṣawwar* (“[the drop] is formed”) without 'alayhā and a connecting particle introducing the angel would then be necessary, or *yataṣawwaruhā* (no 'alayhā) *al-malak* (“the angel imagined it”, but what does this mean?).

<sup>179</sup> Qāḍī 'Iyād, *Ikmāl*, VIII, p. 128.

<sup>180</sup> Simon Hopkins, *Studies in the Grammar of Early Arabic. Based upon papyri datable to before A.H. 300 / A.D. 912*, Oxford 1983, p. 38.

changed “flesh and bones” to “bones and flesh”,<sup>181</sup> the order in which the terms appear in Q 23:12–14, the only place in the Qur’an where the word pair is mentioned in the context of speaking about the unborn.<sup>182</sup>

### The different numbers in the transmissions

A final major difference between the material groups lies in the numbers indicating when the angel comes to the unborn. These differences are not related to the *Qadar* debate or the *šaḡī/sa’id* dichotomy. The PCL Sufyān has “40 or 45 nights” and the PCL Ibn Wahb has 42 nights.

In the PCL Sufyān material, one variant uses only 40, while the wording of others is “40 or he said 45”.<sup>183</sup> Ibn Ḥanbal disambiguates this as “40 and once Sufyān said (*qāla Sufyān marra*): or 45 nights”.<sup>184</sup> The PCL Muḥammad Ibn Muslim aṭ-Ṭā’ifi material (earliest reliable layer with Ishāq Ibn Maṣūr (d. 820/205, Kufa)) uniformly mentions 45 nights only.<sup>185</sup> This overall picture suggests that the two numbers, 40 and 45, had independent origins and were collated in the PCL Sufyān cluster, maybe during one specific teaching session, as the variant of Ibn Ḥanbal seems to suggest.

This scenario is strongly supported – maybe surprisingly – by the 7<sup>th</sup> century writings of the so-called school of Canterbury. The influential teacher in that school was Theodorus of Tarsus (d. 690). Probably born in 602, he had been raised and educated in Syria (Antiochia and Edessa). By the 630s at the latest, he relocated to Byzantium and then

<sup>181</sup> Firyābī, *Qadar*, I, pp. 119f and Aḡurrī, *Šarī’a*, II, p. 780 compared to ibidem, II, p. 781 and Lālakā’ī, *Šarḥ*, IV, p. 593.

<sup>182</sup> The material under the CL ‘Azra broadens the description of the unborn’s features to “so [the angel] shapes his bones, flesh, blood, hair, skin, hearing and seeing and says ...” (*fa-ṣawwara ‘aẓmahu wa laḥmahu wa damahu wa ša’rahu wa bišrahu wa sam’ahu wa baṣarahu*). The gender of the pronoun –*hu* referring back to *nutfā* does not fit *nutfā*. Again, this expansion, particularly by adding hair and skin, is a feature of a later redaction layer and possibly reflects descriptions of embryonic development in variants of *ḥadīṭ* material ascribed to Ibn Mas‘ūd, which were spread by Abū Ḥudayfa Mūsā Ibn Mas‘ūd (d. 825/210), a Basran transmitter (see Eich, ‘Patterns’, pp. 144f). This ties in with the dating before 248 hiġra (862 CE). Note that the CL ‘Azra material with extensive *matns* is entirely Basran, and the earliest datable material under the PCL Ibn Ġurayġ goes back to Abū al-Aš‘aṭ (d. 867/253), a Basran transmission line. I consider the redaction processes interlinked, and this is strengthened by the fact that only these two clusters of the Ḥudayfa *ḥadīṭ* identify the angel as *malak al-arḥām* (the PCL Ibn Ġurayġ) or *malak ar-raḥīm* (the CL ‘Azra), respectively. This term might be a contamination of similar *ḥadīṭ* material first ascribed to ‘Abd Allāh Ibn ‘Umar (see Eich, “*nasama*”, 31–37).

<sup>183</sup> Ṭaḥāwī, *Muškil*, VII, p. 92 (only 40). Examples of the ambiguous formulation include Ibn Abī ‘Āšim, *Sunna*, I, p. 80 and especially Ḥumaydī, *Musnad*, II, p. 75, the earliest DCR.

<sup>184</sup> Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, XXVI, pp. 64f.

<sup>185</sup> Also, while PCL Sufyān uses the verb *istaqarrat* [*an-nutfā*] (“has established itself”), PCL Muḥammad Ibn Muslim always uses different verbs, variants possibly owing to ambiguities of script: *iqā maḍat* ‘*alā an-nutfā* (Ṭabarānī, *Kabīr*, III, p. 175) or *Inna an-nutfā iqā makanat* (Ibn Abī ‘Āšim, *Āḥād*, II, p. 257)/*makaḍat* (the rest). In unpunctuated script, the latter two cannot be discerned. A confusion between *maḍat* and *makanat/makaḍat* is also perceivable for scripts not using an additional diagonal stroke to disambiguate the *kāf*. In this setting, a collapsing of the two letters *kāf* – *nūn/ta* into one undotted letter *ḍād* (or the reverse) might occur.



moved to Rome, probably by the late 640s. In 668 he was consecrated Archbishop of Canterbury where he finally arrived in 669. The research on Theodorus generally agrees that his writings testify to his academic training in the Eastern Mediterranean.<sup>186</sup> Two writings attributed to Theodorus are of interest here: his penitentials, a genre of collecting statements on how certain misdeeds should be sanctioned, and his *Laterculus Malalianus*, an exegetical treatise consisting of a world history and an exegetical account of the life of Jesus. In his penitentials, when dealing with abortion Theodorus made the 40<sup>th</sup> day of pregnancy the central criterion for deciding whether the act should be considered murder or not, equating the 40<sup>th</sup> day with ensoulment. This view stands out in writings on abortion in late Antique/early Medieval Western Europe and is an example of the Eastern Mediterranean training background of Theodorus.<sup>187</sup>

In his *Laterculus*, Theodorus has a passage on Mary's pregnancy which depends heavily on a section in a tractate of Augustine of Hippo (d. 430). Late Antique Galenic medicine had developed a concept in which pregnancy duration was calculated in a specific ratio of three distinct phases, the overall duration depending on the length of the first phase.<sup>188</sup> In order to establish the extraordinary position of Jesus, Augustine posited that in the case of Mary's pregnancy with Jesus, the first phase had been one day longer than in usual pregnancies, where it would last 45 days.<sup>189</sup>

The writings of Theodorus of Taurus thus prove that in learned circles of Syria and Iraq in the first half of the 7<sup>th</sup> century, the numbers 40 and 45 circulated as an intrinsic element of the way prenatal life was imagined. The material also shows that the two numbers ranged in different sets of material, i.e. independently of each other. This structural description exactly fits the record of the *ḥadīṭ* material: the two pivotal transmitters Sufyān Ibn 'Uyayina and Ishāq Ibn Maṣṣūr were both from Kufa, and the two numbers very likely entered the *ḥadīṭ* material independently of each other and were only later collated into one tradition. Therefore, I consider the explanation of the two different numbers in the *ḥadīṭ* material from the writings of Theodorus

<sup>186</sup> Michael Lapidge, 'The career of Archbishop Theodore', in: idem. ed., *Archbishop Theodore. Commemorative Studies on his life and influence*, Cambridge 1995.

<sup>187</sup> Mistry, *Abortion*, 145–148. It is likely that the underlying ensoulment concept was influenced by the Greek idea of three consecutive manifestations of the soul (vegetative, animal, rational soul). The 40<sup>th</sup> day could refer to the animal soul through which the embryo acquired the faculty to feel, react and move (Henri Hugonnard-Roche, 'La question de l'âme dans la tradition philosophique syriaque (VI<sup>e</sup>–IX<sup>e</sup> siècle)', *Studia Graeco-Arabica* 4 (2014), p. 48 for Jacob of Edessa (d. 708); see also Marie-Hélène Concourdeau, 'Debating the Soul in Late Antiquity', in: *Reproduction: Antiquity to the Present Day*, eds. N. Hopwood et al., Cambridge 2018, pp. 113f; Eich, Thomas, 'Zur Abtreibung in frühen islamischen Texten', *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 170.2 (2020), pp. 351–354).

<sup>188</sup> Ursula Weisser, *Zeugung, Vererbung und Pränatale Entwicklung in der Medizin des arabisch-islamischen Mittelalters*, Erlangen 1983, pp. 344–356.

<sup>189</sup> Mistry, *Abortion*, 148–150; Jane Stevenson, *The 'Laterculus Malalianus' and the school of Archbishop Theodore*, Cambridge 1995, pp. 138f (text with translation), pp. 196f (commentary with quote from Augustine). The exegetical aim of Augustine was to establish a numeric parallel between Mary's pregnancy and the building of the temple of Solomon which would have taken 46 years.

justified. The 40 relates to the idea of a major shift in status for the unborn, which was mostly familiar from deliberations about the ethico-legal assessment of abortion, and that shift was related to ensoulment in at least some writings.<sup>190</sup> The 45 came from medical writings and had been popularised in circles of religious learning since the early 5<sup>th</sup> century.

The number 42 is specific to the Ibn Wahb material, i.e. the Egyptian transmission. In late Antique medical writings about the unborn, 42 is a specific number in the Hippocratic corpus, which posited gender-specific durations before the unborn acquired human shape, 30 days for male and 42 days for female embryos.<sup>191</sup> In the context of the Ḥuḍayfa *ḥadīṭ*, I read the 42 as a redactional process to create inner coherence: if the first and most prominent question of the angel is about sex (“is it male or female?”), the question makes most sense only on the 42<sup>nd</sup> day, according to the Hippocratic model. Given the importance of Alexandria in late antiquity as a major intellectual center where, among other things, medical knowledge was promoted and developed, I find it unsurprising that the number 42 appears in the Ḥuḍayfa material first spread in Egypt.<sup>192</sup>

<sup>190</sup> In Jewish material in late Antiquity, the 40<sup>th</sup> day and the motive of the soul-infusing angel were also prominent. However, it is not so clear whether ensoulment was imagined on this very day of pregnancy (Doru Doroftei, ‘When the Angel infuses the Soul... Some aspects of Jewish and Christian embryology in the cultural context of Late Antiquity’, *Judaica. Beiträge zum Verstehen des Judentums* 74.1–2 (2018); Daniel Schiff, *Abortion in Judaism*, Cambridge 2002, pp. 36f, 56). The version of the CL ‘Azra material preserved by Ibn Abī ‘Āṣim, *Sunna*, I, p. 79 has “when the semen has fallen into the uterus for 40 nights – and my companions said 45 nights – the soul is blown into him” (*inna an-nuṭfa idā waqa‘at fī ar-rahīm arba‘in Layla wa qāla aṣḥābī ḥamsa wa arba‘in layla nuṭfiha fīhi ar-rūḥ*). Clearly, the 45 is a later insertion and the ensoulment was originally perceived to happen on the 40<sup>th</sup> day. This is the only instance in the Ḥuḍayfa material where the soul is explicitly mentioned. The version in Firyābī, *Qadar*, I, p. 114 depending on the same informant Mas‘ūd al-Ġaḥḍarī (d. 862/248) does not have the ensoulment passage. Therefore, I consider it an explication added by Ibn Abī ‘Āṣim (d. 900/287) in the early half of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century *hiġra* (9<sup>th</sup> century CE).

<sup>191</sup> Weissner, *Zeugung, Vererbung und Pränatale Entwicklung*, pp. 325–327; Wilhelm Heinrich Roscher, *Die Tessarakontaden und Tessarakontadenlehren der Griechen und anderer Völker. Ein Beitrag zur vergleichenden Religionswissenschaft, Volkskunde und Zahlenmystik sowie zur Geschichte der Medizin und Biologie*, Leipzig 1909, pp. 91–93.

<sup>192</sup> Two out of three versions in the CL Rubai‘iya have the expression “40 and some nights”, which I interpret as an awareness of the different numbers in the various transmissions. Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 992; Ṭabarānī, *Kabīr*, III, p. 196; Bazzār, *Baḥr*, IV, p. 280 (no number). The other *isnād* clusters mostly have the number 40, while the single strand via Lahī‘a (Ṭabarānī, *Kabīr*, III, pp. 197f) has no number at all. The CL Yahyā Ibn Abī Bukayr (Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 992; Bayḥaqī, *Qadar*, I, p. 149; Ṭabarānī, *Kabīr*, III, p. 194); the CL ‘Abd Allāh Ibn Ḥuṭaym (Rāzī, *Fawā‘id*, II, pp. 16f (40 days); Ṭabarānī, *Awsaṭ*, II, pp. 148f (40 nights); the other material in this cluster consists only of the frame); the CL ‘Azra (Ibn Abī ‘Āṣim, *Sunna*, I, pp. 79 (40 or 45 nights); Firyābī, *Qadar*, I, p. 114 (40 nights); Ṭabarānī, *Kabīr*, III, p. 196 (40 or 48 nights). The version in *ibidem*, III, p. 177 gives only the start of the *matn* and stops before giving numbers. The two versions with 45 or 48 nights, respectively, add these numbers clearly as a later insertion. The number 48 is only mentioned here and I have no explanation for it.

### The opening of Muslim's *Qadar* chapter

Finally, we are in a position to better analyse the opening Muslim chose for his chapter on *Qadar*:

(Ibn Mas'ūd) “One of you, his creation is collected in the womb of his mother for 40 days, then it is in this a blood-clot (*'alaqa*) likewise, then it is in this a lump of flesh (*mudġa*) likewise, then the angel is sent to him and he breathes into him the soul, and he is ordered to write down four words: his sustenance, his time of death, his deeds and whether he will be wretched or blessed. And by the one, for who [this is true:] there is no God apart from him. One of you does what the people of paradise do until there is nothing left between him and paradise but a cubit, then the book precedes him and he does what the people of the fire do and he enters it. One of you does what the people of fire do until there is nothing left between him and fire but a cubit, then the book precedes him and he does what the people of the paradise do and he enters it.”<sup>193</sup>

(Ḥuḍayfa PCL Sufyān) “The angel enters upon the semen (*nutfā*) after it has established itself in the uterus within 40 or 45 nights. Then he says: Oh Lord! Wretched or blessed? And the two are written down. Then he says: Oh Lord! Male or female? And the two are written down. And his deeds, his work, time of death and his sustenance are written, then the pages are folded and nothing is added and nothing is taken away.”

(Ḥuḍayfa PCL Ibn Wahb) (‘Āmir Ibn Wāthila heard) Ibn Mas'ūd say: “The wretched is the one who is wretched in the womb of his mother and the blessed is the one who has been promised otherwise”. He [‘Āmir] then met a man from the companions of the messenger of God, called Ḥuḍayfa Ibn Asīd al-Ġifārī, and told him this from what Ibn Mas'ūd had said adding: How is a man wretched without having acted. So the man [Ḥuḍayfa] said: Are you surprised by this? I heard the messenger of God say: “When the semen (*nutfā*) has passed 42 nights God sends an angel to it and he forms it and creates his ability to hear and see and his skin, flesh and bones. Then he says: Oh Lord! Male or female? And your Lord ordains as he likes and the angel writes. Then he says: Oh Lord! His time of death?, so your Lord says as he likes and the angel writes. Then he says: Oh Lord! His sustenance? And your Lord ordains

<sup>193</sup> A passage on minor variants of the Ibn Mas'ūd *ḥadīṭ* follows. The main version has *inna aḥadikum yuġma' ḥalquhu fī baṭn ummihi arba' ʾin yawman* (lafẓ li-Muḥammad Ibn 'Abd Allāh Ibn Numayr al-Hamadānī), the variant (with four *isnāds*) has *inna ḥalq aḥadikum yuġma' fī baṭn ummihi arba' ʾin Layla*, followed by two variants regarding the counting word of the 40 (nights, days, or nights and days).

as he likes and the angel writes. Then the angel exits with the page in his hand and he does not add anything to what he has been ordered and he does not take anything away.”<sup>194</sup>

(Ḥuḍayfa PCL Yahyā Ibn Abī Bukayr) Abū aṭ-Ṭufayl said: I entered at Abū Sarīḥa Ḥuḍayfa Ibn Asīd al-Ġifārī and he said: I heard the messenger of God with these my two ears say: “The semen (*nutfā*) falls in the uterus 40 nights, then the angel *yataṣawwaru* ‘*alay-hā* and says: Oh Lord! Male or female? So God makes it male or female. Then he says: Oh Lord! Even or uneven? So God makes it even or uneven. Then he says: Oh Lord! What is his sustenance? What is his time of death? What are his personal characteristics? Then God makes him wretched or blessed.” (Ḥuḍayfa CL Rubai‘iya) “An angel assigned for the uterus.<sup>195</sup> If God wants to create something (*idā arāda Allāh an yaḥluqa šay’an*) with the permission of God, on 40 plus some nights. After this, he mentioned a *ḥadīṭ* similar to the others.”

(Anas Ibn Mālīk) “God has assigned an angel for the uterus. And he says: Oh Lord! Semen (*nutfā*), oh Lord, blood-clot (‘*alaqa*), oh Lord, lump of flesh (*mudḡa*). And if God wants to ordain a creation says the angel: Oh Lord! Male or female? Wretched or blessed? And what is his sustenance? And what is his time of death? So he writes likewise in the womb of his mother.”

The Ibn Mas‘ūd material first gives the *ḥadīṭ* in extenso, followed by minor variants without quoting the entire *matn* again. The Ḥuḍayfa material follows, with three extensive versions, and a fourth variant quoting only the opening passage. The *ḥadīṭ* via Anas Ibn Mālīk is given in only one version. After this, the chapter moves away from the angel and unborn topos. This arrangement has several effects:

1. The three groups of *ḥadīṭ* material use (slightly) different expressions for the unborn: The opening Ibn Mas‘ūd material uses a tripartite structure, *ḡam*‘-‘*alaqa-mudḡa*. The Ḥuḍayfa material mostly uses only the term *nutfā* (only the final Ḥuḍayfa PCL Rubai‘iya does not use any specific term). The Anas Ibn Mālīk material speaks about *nutfā*-‘*alaqa-mudḡa*. Taken by themself, without any reference to other texts, the three groups of material build a seamless picture: the Ibn Mas‘ūd material more or less leaves a blank space in the first position of the tripartite structure (*ḡam*‘, but what could this mean?) and the Ḥuḍayfa material introduces the term *nutfā* consistently. In its version of the Ḥuḍayfa *ḥadīṭ*, the PCL Rubai‘iya, of which Muslim only quotes the first words, the material speaks about an angel assigned to the uterus, which provides a seamless

<sup>194</sup> I skip the following reference to the PCL Ibn Ġurayḡ, of which Muslim only gives the *isnād*.

<sup>195</sup> The Arabic is here clearly elliptic: *anna malak<sup>an</sup> muwakkal<sup>an</sup> bi-ar-rahim*.

topical bridge to the final *ḥadīṭ* transmitted by Anas Ibn Mālik about this very angel. This material uses the tripartite *nutfa-‘alaqa-mudḡa*, i.e. the *ḡam* ‘ from the Ibn Mas‘ūd *ḥadīṭ* is substituted by the *nutfa* term – something perceived by the reader/listener as a natural, self-evident conclusion due to the specific arrangement of the material chosen by Muslim.<sup>196</sup> What a reader or listener will take away from this passage in its entirety is that it constantly refers to the tripartite *nutfa-‘alaqa-mudḡa*, which is also in Q 22:5 and 23:12–14, while in fact only the Anas Ibn Mālik *ḥadīṭ* matches this terminology exactly.

2. All the material, except the *matn* of the Ibn Wahb variant of Ḥuḍayfa, has the *ṣaqī/sa‘īd* dichotomy. At the end of the passage, the reader/listener has read or heard it in four of five extensive *matns*. Additionally, the framing story speaking about the dichotomy has been moved to the PCL Ibn Wahb material, probably by Muslim himself. As a result, the fact that the *matn* in this variant does not mention *ṣaqī/sa‘īd* will usually go unnoticed.<sup>197</sup>

3. The passage probably expresses a specific position about the development of the unborn. In a landmark article on the Ibn Mas‘ūd *ḥadīṭ*, Sulaymān al-Aṣqar pointed out that among the canonical sunnī *ḥadīṭ* collections, Muslim is unique in including the Ḥuḍayfa *ḥadīṭ*.<sup>198</sup> Furthermore, Al-Aṣqar paid attention to a very slight detail in Muslim’s version of the Ibn Mas‘ūd *ḥadīṭ*, which is usually understood to speak about three consecutive phases ([*nutfa*]-*‘alaqa-mudḡa*) each lasting 40 days, and adding up to 120 in total. After this, the soul would be blown into the unborn.<sup>199</sup> However, the version in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* states that “One of you, his creation is collected in the womb of his mother for 40 days, then it is **in this** ‘alaqa likewise, then it is **in this** *muḍḡa* likewise, ...” Aṣqar argues that “in this” (*fī dālīka*) would refer back to the 40 days, so the three phases *taken together* would last 40 days. This is also suggested by the fact that Muslim placed the Ḥuḍayfa *ḥadīṭ* in this section. The findings of this article strongly support Aṣqar’s interpretation. This suggests that in the first centuries of Islamic history, the concept of ensoulment on the 40<sup>th</sup> day was cherished by such a prominent scholar as Muslim Ibn al-Ḥaḡḡāḡ (d. 875/261). In this period, the ideas about ensoulment were thus flexible and diverse, and only in processes after Muslim’s lifetime did the idea that the soul is blown into the unborn on the 120<sup>th</sup> day become almost universally widespread among Muslim religious scholars.<sup>200</sup>

<sup>196</sup> In later transmissions of the Ibn Mas‘ūd-*ḥadīṭ*, the term *nutfa* was often added to the structure (see Eich, ‘Patterns’, pp. 141f).

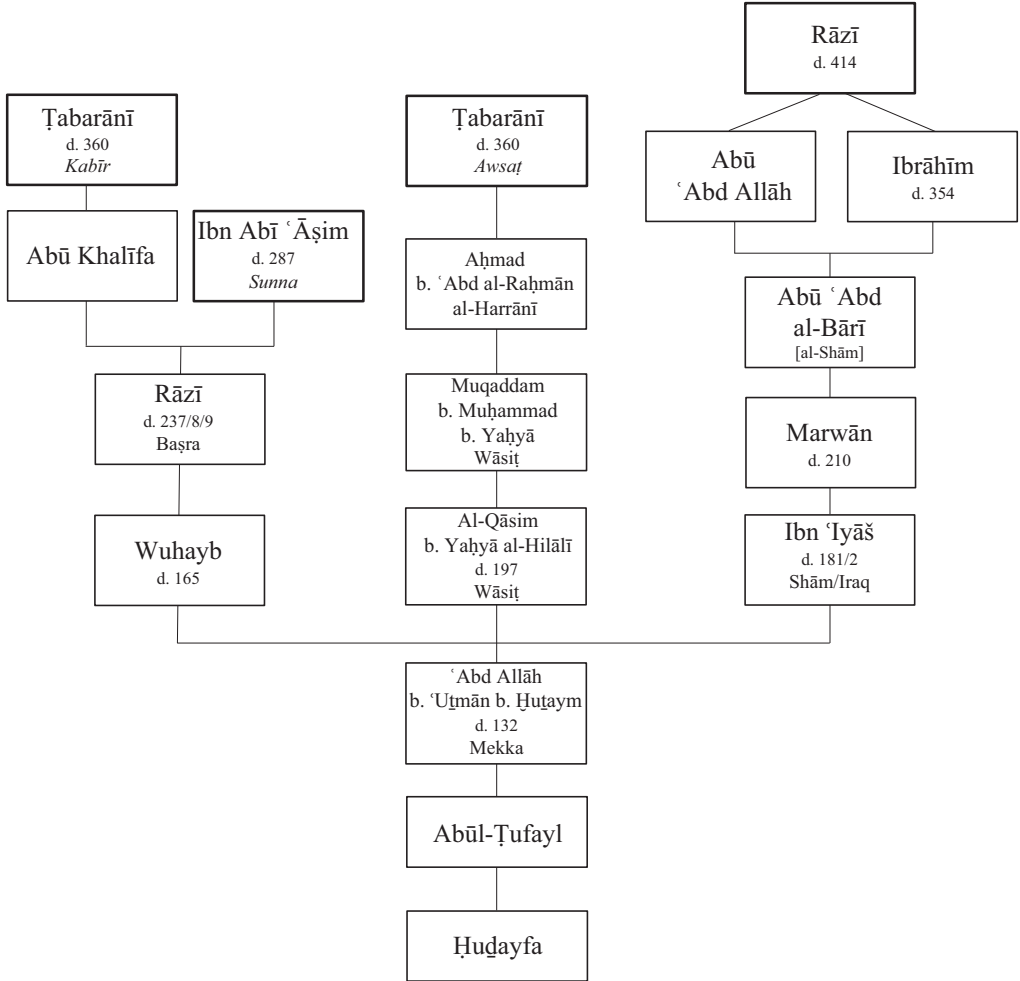
<sup>197</sup> I would also speculate that this is the reason why Muslim gathers so many different extensive variants of Ḥuḍayfa material. However, testing this scenario of a textual strategy in the *Ṣaḥīḥ* would require a study of comparative instances of the accumulation of extensive variants in other places, which is surely beyond the scope of this paper.

<sup>198</sup> Aṣqar, Muḥammad Sulaymān al-, ‘*Naṣra fī ḥadīṭ Ibn Mas‘ūd*’, in: *Al-Islām wa al-muṣkilāt aṭ-ṭibbiya al-mu‘āṣira. Tāniyan: al-ḥayāt al-insāniyya. Bidāyatuhā wa nihāyatuhā fī al-mafḥūm al-islāmī*, eds. ‘Abd ar-Raḥmān ‘Abd Allāh al-‘Awaḍī et al., Kuwait n.d. [1985?].

<sup>199</sup> On this, see van Ess, *Zwischen Hadīṭ und Theologie*, pp. 3f and 12.

<sup>200</sup> Ghaly, ‘Beginning of Human Life’; see also Eich, ‘Abtreibung’, pp. 351–358 for traces of diverse ensoulment concepts in early Islamic abortion debates.



**Table 2. CL ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Uṭmān b. Ḥuṭaym**







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