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APOCALYPTICISM IN SUNNI HADITH

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Most Islamic apocalypticism is in hadith. In Arabic, *ḥadīth* literally means something spoken. Technically, it means the body of reports of what the Prophet and sometimes other early Muslims said and did. It probably corresponds to the Oral Law of the Jews, as the Qur'an corresponds to the written Torah. According to the Sunni tradition, it is equally authoritative with the Qur'an, being equally inspired by God although less certainly transmitted down the centuries. Non-Sunni theologians, especially Khawārij and Mu`tazilah, sometimes questioned its authority. (Most of the Shī`ah accepted such hadith as had come through their imams.) The Qur'an has always been endorsed by all Muslims, so what is in Sunni hadith, what not, is the more reliable indicator of Sunni orthodoxy.

My plan here is to provide a series of sample translations with commentary. The Qur'an is only about two-thirds as long as the New Testament (in Arabic translation). Its contents seem to have been fixed by the end of the seventh century.[1] The literature of hadith is much larger, and the outer boundaries of authoritative hadith have never been fixed.[2] I shall stress here hadith from the Six Books, collections of hadith dating from the mid-ninth to early tenth centuries, which over the next two or three centuries became the most highly respected collections among Sunni Muslims. Whereas earlier studies have tended to stress the wider (and wilder) range of apocalyptic ideas circulating amongst Muslims, the present study

[1] *V*. Harald Motzki, 'The collection of the Qur'ān', *Der Islam* 78 (2001): 1-34, for a good review of the earlier controversy over when the Qur'an was collected, and Behnam Sadeghi and Uwe Bergmann, 'The codex of a Companion of the Prophet and the Qur'ān of the Prophet', *Arabica* 57 (2010): 343-436, for the latest manuscript evidence.

[2] The best survey is Jonathan Brown, *Hadith*, Foundations of Islam (Oxford, 2009).

will develop the uses of apocalyptic at the most impeccably orthodox centre of Sunni Islam.[3]

This study presumes a certain history and certain definitions of Sunni orthodoxy. One difficulty with defining it is just that it is has long been used in multiple senses. Marshall Hodgson puts the problem succinctly and well:

> We may summarize three ways in which the [term] *Sunnî* has been most used, as follows: to mean *Jamâ`î* as vs. *Shî`î*; to mean *Ḥadîthî* as vs. *Kalâmî* (including Mu`tazilîs and Ash`arîs); to mean *Shar`î* as vs. *Ṣûfî*. Then it has been extended to those `Alid-loyalists, kalâm men, and Ṣûfîs who accepted key positions of their respective opponents.[4]

*Jamā`ī* has been helpfully defined as indicating 'all those who did not opt out of the community by reserving their allegiance for current or future imams of their own'.[5] 'Shi`i' is a familiar term, now designating those who believe that the caliphate should have been handed down among various descendants of `Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (different Shi`i groups differ as to ~~which~~ exactly which descendants). *Kalām* designates dialectical theology, more or less severely distrusted by those who called themselves Sunni in the ninth century but increasingly accepted when used in defence of Sunni dogmatic tenets from the tenth century, as by the Ash`ari and Māturīdi schools. *Shar`ī* refers to preferring observance of Islamic law as the chief expression of faithfulness, whereas *ṣūfī* refers to the Islamic mystical tradition.

As Hodgson indicates, use of the term 'Sunni' has varied not only from one group to another but also over time. The Sunni tradition naturally presents itself as re-establishing Islam just as the Prophet taught it to his Companions. (It acknowledges some elaboration; for example, it is freely acknowledged that formal jurisprudence and Sufism, among other things, were not cultivated by the Companions but appeared only later, as 'good innovations'.)

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[3] A good short survey deliberately not emphasizing Sunni Islam is Saïd Amir Arjomand, 'Islamic apocalypticism in the Classic period', *Encyclopedia of apocalypticism* 2: *Apocalypticism in Western history and culture*, ed. Bernard McGinn (New York, 2000), 238-83. A longer is David Cook, *Studies in Muslim apocalyptic*, Studies in late antiquity and early Islam 21 (Princeton, 2002). *V*. also Hayrettin Yücesoy, *Messianic beliefs and imperial politics in medieval Islam*, Studies in comparative religion (Columbia, S.C., 2009), esp. Introduction and chaps. 1-2.

[4] Marshall G.S. Hodgson, *The venture of Islam*, 3 vols (Chicago, 1974), 1:278fn.

[5] Patricia Crone, *Medieval Islamic political thought* (Edinburgh, 2004), 75.

Historians will naturally suppose it evolved over time. Of particular relevance to this study, most non-Sunni historians suppose that the hadith they cited in support of their distinctive doctrines represent a good deal of back projection from the eighth and ninth centuries (as likewise supposed their non-Sunni opponents of the ninth century). From the beginning to the end of the ninth century, *ahl al-sunnah wa-al-jamā`ah* ('the people of normative precedent and the great majority'), to use their term for themselves, went from being a veritable sect, actively persecuted by the caliphs at the Inquisition, to being indeed the great majority, the default category into which went everyone who was not a declared Shi`i or Khāriji.[6]

In the midst of this evolution there was of course some disagreement over what the Sunnah included. For spectacular example, the hadith collector al-Bukhārī (d. 256/870) was expelled from a series of cities near the end of his life for contending that although the Qur'an was increate (the contention for which the caliphs had persecuted the Sunni party at the Inquisition), one's pronunciation of the Qur'an was create, a concession to the necessity of theological distinctions repugnant to most of the Sunni party of his time. Nevertheless, his collection of sound hadith would become (by the eleventh century) the most revered Sunni text after the Qur'an itself.[7] Of more immediate importance, the Sunni party seems to have grown suspicious of world-renouncing piety from at least the beginning of the ninth century and of the earliest signs of mystical piety from about the last third of the century, as manifest in the Sufi Inquisition of Ghulām Khalīl in 264/877-8.[8] The polarity of Sunni and Shi`i was not strong until the mid-tenth century, while full Sunni mutual recognition and self-awareness prevailed only from the eleventh century. This said, I think that the leading Sunni collections

[6] For the Inquisition of 218-37/833-52, *v*. *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, new edn, s.v. 'miḥna', by M. Hinds.
[7] For Bukhārī's growing reputation, *v*. Jonathan Brown, *The canonization of al-Bukhārī and Muslim*, Islam (*sic*) history and civilization, studies and texts 69 (Leiden, 2007). On Bukhārī's persecution, which Brown prefers to blame on personal envy, cf. Christopher Melchert, 'Bukhārī and his *Ṣaḥīḥ*', *Le muséon* 123 (2010): 425-54, at 451-3.
[8] For this Inquisition, *v*. Richard Gramlich, *Alte Vorbilder des Sufitums* 1: *Scheiche des Westens*, Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Literatur, Mainz, Veröffentlichungen der orientalischen Kommission 42, 1 (Wiesbaden, 1996), 384-5.

of hadith from the later ninth century show sufficient convergence on a particular worldview, law-centred and moderately world-affirming, to merit study together before anyone meritoriously investigates how they differ one from another and from other Sunni collections of the time. (The Sunni view is of course that they converge on the Prophet's teaching, with those of al-Bukhārī and Muslim quoting him just a little more reliably than the others.)

Examples of Sunni hadith

Many details of the End Times and Last Judgement are found in hadith only. Indeed, although the Qur'an has much to say of the Last Judgement, then the pleasures of Paradise and the torments of Hell, the whole concept of an *eschaton*, a considerable period before the Last Judgement when present-day arrangements are upended, seems to be found only in hadith. (David Cook proposes that the Prophet must have thought he was living already in the End Times.[9]) It was controversial whether hadith was a reliable complement to the Qur'an. In particular, the Mu`tazili and Khāriji theological parties advocated a law and theology inferred from the Qur'an, not hadith, whereas the developing Sunni party insisted on the equal authority of hadith.[10] Here is an eschatological passage from a ninth-century Sunni creed:

> **1.** (One must have) faith in the torment of the tomb and faith in Munkar and Nakīr. (One must have) faith in the basin and intercession. The intercession is that of the Prophet for the cardinal sinners of his nation. (One must have) faith that the people of Paradise will see their Lord (blessed and exalted be he). (One must have) faith that the monotheists will come out of the Fire after having been burnt, as it has come in hadith reports from the Prophet . . . concerning these things.[11]

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[9] Cook, *Studies*, 301.

[10] Regrettably, non-Sunni theological positions from before the tenth century usually have to be inferred from Sunni arguments against them, not directly from early texts, of which few survive. *V.* for now Michael Cook, ‘`Anan and Islam: the origins of Karaite scripturalism’, *Jerusalem studies in Arabic and Islam*, no 9 (1987), 161-82, esp. 165-74. For an example of the Sunni case for equal authority, *v.* Shāfi`ī, *Ibṭāl al-istiḥsān*, *K. al-Umm*, 7 vols in 4 (Bulaq, 1321-5), 7:271 = ed. Rif`at Fawzī `Abd al-Muṭṭalib, 11 vols (Cairo, 1422/2001, repr. 1425/2004), 9:70: ‘The Messenger of God . . . never imposed (*faraḍa*) anything save by God's inspiration (*waḥy*). There is the inspiration that is recited and there is what came as inspiration (*waḥy*) to the Messenger of God . . . that is to be followed as *sunnah* (*yustannu bih*).’

[11] Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (attrib.), Creed IV, *apud* Ibn Abī Ya`lá, *Ṭabaqāt al-ḥanābilah*, ed. Muḥammad Ḥāmid al-Fiqī, 2 vols (Cairo: Maṭba`at al-Sunnah al-Muḥammadīyah, 1371/1952), 1:295. An excellent alternative translation at Ibn al-Jawzī, *Virtues of the imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal*, ed. and trans. Michael Cooperson, Library of Arabic literature (New York, 2013), 1:307. Ibn Abī Ya`lá reproduces six creeds attributed to Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (d. 241/855) in his biographical dictionary of the Ḥanbali school of law. They were numbered and summarized by Henri Laoust, ‘Les premières professions de foi hanbalites’, *Mélanges Louis Massignon*, 3 vols. (Damascus:

The torment of the tomb is an apparent purgatorial period (for unbelievers, an anticipation of Hell) developed in hadith.[12] Munkar and Nakīr are the two interrogating angels, not mentioned in the Qur'an but only hadith.[13] 'The basin' (*al-ḥawḍ*) is a feature of the landscape on the Day of the Resurrection not mentioned in the Qur'an but often in hadith.[14] Talk of the torment of the tomb, the basin, and the Prophet's intercession is directed against the Khawārij and Mu`tazilah, non-Sunni theological groups who interpreted the Qur'an as threatening cardinal sinners with eternal perdition, whether Muslim or not, and tended to base their religion on Qur'an to the exclusion of hadith.[15] Another ninth-century creed accuses them both of disbelieving in the torment of the tomb, the basin, and intercession.[16] Talk of seeing God in the afterlife is again directed against the Mu`tazilah, who thought that God must not be visible (as apparently taught by the Qur'an, which says, 'Sight does not reach Him, but He

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Institut Français de Damas, 1957), 3:7-35, at 12-15; idem, *La profession de foi d'Ibn Batta* (Damascus: Institut Français de Damas, 1958), xv-xvi. On the basis of other evident quotations, Saud Al-Sarhan attributes Creed IV rather to al-`Abbās ibn Mūsá ibn Miskawayh (*fl.* early 9th cent.) in his contribution to the Paul Auchterlonie Festschrift, forthcoming. Cook mentions some other ninth- and tenth-century creeds featuring other apocalyptic details: Cook, *Studies*, 328fn.

[12] E.g., Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, *k. al-janā'iz* 86, *mā jā'a fī `adhāb al-qabr*, nos 1369-74; Muslim, *Jāmi`*, *k. al-masājid* 24, *bāb istiḥbāb al-ta`awwudh min `adhāb al-qabr*, nos 123-6; Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan*, *k. al-sunnah* 23, *bāb al-mas'alah fī al-qabr wa-`adhāb al-qabr*, nos 4750-4; Nasā'ī, *Mujtabá*, *k. al-janā'iz* 114, *`adhāb al-qabr*, nos 2058-61, 115, *al-ta`awwudh min `adhāb al-qabr*, nos 2062-9. *V*. *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, new edn (henceforth '*EI*²' for short), s.v. ''adhāb al-ḳabr', by A.J. Wensinck and A.S. Tritton. The labour of looking up hadith reports is much increased by the conceit of editors who introduce their own numbering systems. There are many commercial editions of the most authoritative Sunni hadith collections, so citing one by volume and page is seldom acceptable. I shall cite hadith in the Six Books according to book and section as they are counted by A.J. Wensinck, *A handbook of early Muhammadan tradition* (Leiden, 1927), then number according to what I take to be the most widely-observed conventions, which is to say Fu'ād `Abd al-Bāqī's numbers for Bukhārī, Muslim, Tirmidhī, and Ibn Mājah, Muḥammad Muḥyī al-Dīn `Abd al-Ḥamīd's for Abū Dāwūd, and Muḥammad `Aṭā' Allāh al-Amritsarī's for Nasā'ī.

[13] Tirmidhī, *Jāmi`*, *k. al-janā'iz* 70, no 1071. *V*. also *EI*², s.v. 'Munkar wa-Nakīr', by A.J. Wensinck. ~~For an example of Mu`tazili scepticism, *v*. al-Jāḥiẓ, *K. al-Tarbī` wa-al-tadwīr*, ed. Charles Pellat (Damascus, 1955), 43~~.

[14] E.g. Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, *k. al-riqāq* 53, *bāb fī al-ḥawḍ*, no 6589; Muslim, *Jāmi`*, *k. al-ṭahārah* 12, *bāb istiḥbāb iṭālat al-ghurrah*, no 249; *k. al-imārah* 1, *bāb al-nās taba` li-quraysh*, no 1822; *k. al-faḍā'il* 9, *bāb ithbāt ḥawḍ nabīyinā*, nos 2289-90, 2295-7, 2305; Ibn Mājah 5, *bāb lā tarji`ū ba`dī kuffāran*, no 3944. *V*. also *EI*², s.v. 'ḥawḍ', by A.J. Wensinck, and G.H.A. Juynboll, *Encyclopedia of canonical ḥadīth* (Leiden, 2007), 21, 473-4, with further references.

[15] The Prophet's intercession is often mentioned in hadith. For intercession on behalf of Muslim cardinal sinners in particular, *v*. Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan*, *k. al-sunnah* 20, *bāb fī al-shafā`ah*, no 4739; Tirmidhī, *Jāmi`*, *k. ṣifat al-qiyāmah* 11, nos 2435-6; Ibn Mājah, *Sunan*, *k. al-zuhd* 37, *bāb dhikr al-shafā`ah*, no 4310. *V*. also *EI*², s.v. 'shafā`a', by A.J. Wensinck and D. Gimaret. For an example of Mu`tazili scepticism (asking who is better, Munkar or Nakīr), *v*. al-Jāḥiẓ, *K. al-Tarbī` wa-al-tadwīr*, ed. Charles Pellat (Damascus, 1955), 43.

[16] Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (attrib.), Creed I, *apud* Ibn Abī Ya`lá, *Ṭabaqāt* 1:32, 34. Al-Sarhan reassigns Creed I to Ḥarb al-Kirmānī (d. 280/893-4), on whom *v*. Dhahabī, *Siyar a`lām al-nubalā'*, ed. Shu`ayb al-Arna'ūṭ, &al., 25 vols (Beirut, 1401-9/1981-8), 13:244-5, with further references.

reaches sight', 6:103).[17] It is the Sunni doctrine that almost everyone will go into Hell. The Qur'an suggests it: 'There is none of you who will not go down to it' (Q. 19:71). Hadith adds detail, such as a term for some of those brought out, al-Jahannamīyūn.[18] The caliph `Umar is credited with foreseeing skepticism of all these tenets, saying, 'There will come a people who deny the basin, intercession, the torment of the tomb, and a people who come out of the Fire.'[19] (See below for the Prophet's warning against future deniers of predestination.) The obvious point of the foregoing excerpt from a creed is to show three things: first, that hadith adds various details to what the Qur'an says about the Last Judgement; secondly, that these additions were controversial, rejected by some Muslims but considered crucial elements of orthodoxy by the Sunni party; thirdly, that the ninth-century Sunni party, although interested in taming apocalypticism to the extent that it should not support contemporary rebellion, also employed apocalypticism to discredit rationalistic, spiritualizing tendencies.

Here is an eschatological passage from yet another ninth-century creed:

> **2.** The root of the *sunnah*, in our view, is . . . faith in the sight on the Day of Resurrection, as it is related of the Prophet . . . in sound hadith, and that the Prophet . . . saw his Lord. It is soundly handed down from the Messenger of God . . . . It was related by Qatādah < `Ikrimah < Ibn `Abbas, by al-Ḥakam ibn Abān < `Ikrimah < Ibn `Abbās, and by `Alī ibn Zayd < Yūsuf ibn Mihrān < Ibn `Abbās. Hadith, in our view, is to be interpreted after its evident meaning, as it came from the Prophet . . . . Talk of it (*kalām*) is an innovation. We believe in it as it came, after its evident meaning. We do not debate with anyone concerning it.
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> (It is) faith in the scale on the Day of Resurrection, as it came: 'The servant will be weighed on the Day of Resurrection. He will not weigh so much as a gnat's wing.' The deeds of the servants will be weighed, as it has come in

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[17] Translation.from *The Qur'ān*, trans. Alan Jones (n.p., 2007). For the assertion that the believers will see God on the Day of the Resurrection, *v*. Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, , *k. al-adhān* 129, *bāb faḍl al-sujūd*, no 806; *k. al-riqāq* 52, *bāb al-sirāṭ*, no 6573; *k. al-tawḥīd* 24, *bāb qawl Allāh . . . wujūh yawma'idhin nāḍirah*, no 7437; Juynboll, *Encyclopedia*, 235-6, with additional references; also Claude Gilliot, 'La vision de Dieu dans l'au-delà', in M.A. Amir-Moezzi, &al. (eds), *Pensée grecque et sagesse d'Orient: homage à Michel Tardieu*, Bibliothèque de l'Ecole des hautes études, sciences religieuses 142 (Turnhout, 2009), 241-73.

[18] Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, *k. al-riqāq* 51, *bāb ṣifat al-jannah wa-al-nār*, no 6566 [also 6559, 7450]; Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan*, *k. al-sunnah* 20, *bāb fī al-shafā`ah*, no 4740; Tirmidhī, *Jāmi`*, *abwāb ṣifat jahannam* 10, no 2600; Ibn Mājah, *Sunan*, *k. al-zuhd* 37, *bāb dhikr al-shafā`ah*, no 4315. *V*. Juynboll, *Encyclopedia*, 665-6.

[19] Hannād ibn al-Sarī, *K. al-Zuhd*, ed. `Abd al-Raḥmān ibn `Abd al-Jabbār al-Faraywā'ī, 2 vols (Kuwayt, 1406/1985), 144. Ascribed by `Umar to the Messenger of God in `Abd al-Razzāq, *Muṣannaf* 7:330 and Aḥmad, *Musnad* 1:23 *1:296-7*.

> *al-athar* (hadith). (It is) faith in it and belief and declaring it true. One turns away from whoever rejects that and refuses to argue about it. (It is) faith that God will speak to his servants on the Day of Resurrection. There will be no interpreter between him and them. (It is) faith in it and declaring it true. (It is) faith in the basin; that the Messenger of God . . . will have a basin on the Day of Resurrection to which he will bring his nation, its breadth equal to its length, a month's journey across, able to contain the number of the stars of heaven, as reports (*akhbār*) have soundly conveyed in more than one version.
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> (It is) faith in the torment of the tomb; that this nation will be tried in its tombs, asked about their faith and submission. (One will be asked) 'Who is his Lord?' 'Who is his prophet?' (The angels) Munkar and Nakīr will come to him, however God wills and however he wishes. (It is) faith in it and declaring it true. (It is) faith in the intercession of the Prophet . . . and in a group that will come out of the Fire after having burnt and become cinders. He will order them to go to a river at the gate of Paradise, as *al-athar* has come. However God wills it, and as God wills it, that is to be believed and considered true. (It is) faith in the Antichrist (*al-masīḥ al-dajjāl*) who rebels, with 'unbeliever' written between his eyes, and in the hadith reports that have come down concerning him. (It is) faith that this will be and that `Īsá (Jesus) will come down and kill him at the gate of Ludd.[20]

Here again is the sight of God in the afterlife, although connected also to a controversial incident in the life of the Prophet.[21] *Sunnah* refers to the normative example of the Prophet and other especially virtuous men of the past. It is the proper pattern of behaviour and belief. It is known mainly from hadith, and this creed, like the previous one, makes a point of requiring Muslims to believe in hadith as well as the Qur'an. (In the ninth century, *athar* was a synonym of *ḥadīth*. Only centuries later did it became customary to restrict *ḥadīth* to sayings of the Prophet, *athar* to sayings of other Muslims.) At the end of the first paragraph, we come to literalism and the legitimacy of theological inquiry. 'Literalism' is a much-abused term. It does not mean 'rigorist', 'puritanical', or 'bigoted'. But here, in the ninth-century controversy between Sunnis and Mu`tazilah, it is appropriate. The literalism to which this creed points is admittedly qualified: they do not insist that they know the correct

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[20] Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (attrib.), Creed III, *apud* Ibn Abī Ya`lá, *Ṭabaqāt* 1:241-3; Ibn al-Jawzī, *Virtues*, 319-20. On the same grounds as for Creed IV, Al-Sarhan attributes Creed III to `Alī ibn al-Madīnī (d. 234/849) or disciples of his.

[21] Early disagreement documented in `Abd al-Razzāq, *al-Tafsīr*, *ad* Q. 38:69, 53:8-9, 11; ed. `Abd al-Mu`ṭī Amīn Qal`ajī, 2 vols (Beirut, 1411/1991), 2:137, 202-4. Cf. Bukhārī, [*Ṣaḥīḥ*,] *k. al-tawḥīd* 4, no 7380, quoting the Prophet's wife `Ā'ishah: 'Whoever relates to you that M[uḥammad] . . . saw his lord, he has lied, for He says, "Sight does not reach Him"' (Q. 6:103; variants at 3234-5, 4855).

interpretation of the texts. God might have meant this in a way we cannot fathom. The Sunni approach was to discourage theological discussion. They said that since the Prophet and his Companions had got along without discussing these questions, it should be possible for present-day Muslims to get along, too. They thought that belief was important—as the creeds show, Sunni Islam is basically orthodox, not orthoprax—, but it was so tricky to formulate one's beliefs correctly, it was safer not to talk about it.[22]

The third paragraph concludes with the Antichrist and Jesus, the former not mentioned in the Qur'an, the latter at least not prominently an apocalyptic figure in the Qur'an.[23] Ludd (biblical Lydda) was a leading administrative centre when the Arabs conquered Palestine but it was eclipsed and fell into ruin when the caliphs built up al-Ramlah in the eighth century.[24] Its mention then bespeaks two things: this part of the tradition is fairly early and probably takes off from a pre-Islamic Christian tradition.

My next example comes from al-Nawawī (d. Nawá, 676/1277), *Arba`ūna ḥadīthan*, a very popular collection of the forty most important hadith reports, widely published and memorized throughout the Sunni world to the present.[25]

> **3.** (1) On the authority of the commander of the Faithful Abū Ḥafṣ `Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, may God be pleased with him. He said, 'I heard the Messenger of

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[22] On trickiness and caution, *v*. A. Kevin Reinhart, 'On Sunni sectarianism', in Yasir Suleiman (ed.), *Living Islamic history* (Edinburgh, 2010), 209-25 (bibliography, 279-308); on orthodoxy rather than orthopraxy, *v*. Norman Calder, 'The limits of Islamic orthodoxy', in Farhad Daftary (ed.), *Intellectual traditions in Islam* (London, 2000), 66-86, esp. 66-7.

[23] *V*. *EI*^{2}, s.v. 'Dadjdjāl', by A. Abel, and *Encyclopaedia of the Qur'ān*, s.v. 'Antichrist', by Neal Robinson. The Quran quotes Jesus fairly often, usually refuting Trinitarianism. Many early commentators also took Q. 43:61 to allude to Jesus's coming in the End Times; e.g. most of those cited by al-Ṭabarī, *ad loc.*; *Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī*, 13 vols (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-`Ilmīyah, 1420/1999), 11:204-5. Among 20th-century Muslim translators, A. Yusuf Ali offers 'And (Jesus) shall be a Sign (for the coming of) the Hour (of Judgment)', but most seem to have followed Pickthall, 'Verily there is knowledge of the Hour.'

[24] *V*. *EI*^{2}, s.v. 'Ludd', by M. Sharon. Jesus's killing the Antichrist at the gate of Ludd is mentioned in Muslim, *Jāmi`*, *k. al-fitan* 20, *bāb dhikr al-dajjāl*, no 2137; Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan*, *k. al-malāḥim* 14, *bāb khurūj al-dajjāl*, no 4321; Tirmidhī, *Jāmi`*, *k. al-fitan* 59, *bāb mā jā'a fī fitnat al-dajjāl*, no 2240; Ibn Mājah, *Sunan*, *k. al-fitan* 33, *bāb fitnat al-dajjāl*, nos 4075, 4077; Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad imām al-muḥaddithīn*, 6 vols. (Cairo, 1313/1895), 4:181-2, 420, 226, 390 = *Musnad al-imām*, ed. Shu`ayb al-Arna'ūṭ, &al., 50 vols. (Beirut, 1413-21/1993-2001), 29:172-7, 209-12, 511, 32:226. Henceforth, references to the latter edition in *italic*.

[25] For scholarly purposes, the edition to consult is Louis Pouzet, *Une herméneutique de la Tradition islamique: la commentaire des «al-Arba'ūn an-Nawawīya»*, Recherches: nouvelle série, A, Langue arabe et pensée islamique 13 (Beirut, 1982), which includes a full translation. Nawawī states that these hadith reports are related by both Bukhārī and Muslim, which is true, but his wording is slightly discrepant.

> God . . . say, "Actions are only by intentions. Every man has only what he intended. Whosever migration is for God and his messenger, his migration is for God and his messenger. Whosever migration is for something worldly or to take some woman in marriage, his migration is for that for which he migrated."'
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> (2) Also on the authority of `Umar, who said, 'While we were sitting with the Messenger of God one day, there appeared before us a man with extremely white clothes and extremely black hair. No trace of journeying was to be seen on him and none of us knew him. He sat down by the Prophet . . . . He supported his knees against his, placed the palms of his hands on his thighs, and said, "O Muḥammad, tell me about Islam." The Messenger of God . . . said, "Islam is that you testify that there is no god but God and that Muḥammad is the messenger of God; that you perform the ritual prayer, pay the alms tax, fast in Ramaḍān, and make the pilgrimage to the House if you are able." He said, "You have told the truth." We were amazed at his asking him and saying that he had told the truth. He said, "Then tell me about faith." He said, "(It is) that you have faith in God, his angels, his books, his messengers, and the Last Day; that you have faith in destiny (*qadar*), its good and its evil." He said, "You have told the truth." He said, "Then tell me about doing well (*iḥsān*)." He said, "(It is) that you to worship God as though you are seeing Him. Even if you do not see Him, he sees you." He said, "Then tell me about the Hour." He said, "The one being asked about it knows no better than the one asking." He said, "Then tell me about its signs." He said, "That the slave-girl gives birth to her mistress and that you will see the barefooted, naked, destitute shepherds competing in constructing tall buildings." Then he left while I stayed for a time. Then he said, "O `Umar, do you know who the asker was?" I said, "God and his messenger know better." He said, "This was Gabriel come to you to teach you your religion."'

It seems noteworthy that, in a religion of law, good intentions should be considered so important as to begin a collection like this. (The same hadith report also begins the collection of al-Bukhārī.) I think it is noteworthy also that the second hadith report in the collection should review the basic ritual works—there is an element of orthopraxy to Sunnism—, then theological tenets to be believed, including some signs of the End Times.

Extra-Islamic origins are occasionally evident in more than just known parallels.

> **4.** Ibn `Uyaynah (Kufan, d. Mecca, 198/814) < al-Zuhrī (Medinese, d. 124/741-2?) < Sālim (ibn `Abd Allāh ibn `Umar, Medinese, d. 106/725?) < his father that `Umar once told a Jew, 'I think you are truthful. Tell me about the Antichrist.' The Jew answered him, 'By the god of the Jews, Ibn Maryam will kill him by the open space (*fīnā'*) before Ludd.'[26]

[26] Ibn Abī Shaybah, *al-Muṣannaf*, *k. al-fitan* 2, *mā dhukira fī fitnat al-dajjāl* = ed. ~~Muḥammad~~ [Ḥamad] `Abd Allāh al-Jum`ah & Muḥammad Ibrāhīm al-Luḥaydān, 16 vols. (Riyadh, 1425/2004), 14:133.

(Indifference such as this to what separated Jews and Christians is typical of ninth-century references to learning from the People of the Book and their scriptures.) Here is the introduction to a story about a Companion's finding the Antichrist securely bound in a castle at some unspecified location:

> **5.** Fāṭimah bint Qays: I heard that a congregational *ṣalāt* was announced. I went out and performed it with the Prophet. When he had finished, he sat down on the pulpit with a smile on his face and he addressed the people: 'Everybody must stay in his place. Do you know why I have called you here together? No? It was not because I wanted to warn you of something bad or good. But Tamīm ad-Dārī here, who used to be a Christian, came to me and swore allegiance to me. He told me a story which tallies with what I once told you about the Dajjāl . . . .[27]

All versions mention Tamīm al-Dārī, but some do not mention that Tamīm had told the Prophet nothing he had not spoken of already, as here; rather, they let the Prophet simply repeat what Tamīm had told him.[28] Another hadith report both acknowledges overlapping ideas and insists on Islamic uniqueness:

> **6.** < `Abd Allāh ibn `Umar: 'The Messenger of God . . . arose and praised God as he was worthy to be praised, then mentioned the Antichrist, saying, 'I do warn you of him. There has been no prophet but that he has warned his people; however, I shall tell you something about him that no prophet has told his people: that he is one-eyed, whereas God is not one-eyed.'[29]

Admittedly, however, there is another version, through a very different chain of authorities, by which he says, 'There is no prophet but that he warned his community of the one-eyed liar.'[30] Insistence on the uniqueness of the Muslims' knowledge seems likely to postdate the

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[27] Translation from Juynboll, *Encyclopedia*, 625. The hadith report is to be found in Muslim, *Jāmi`*, *k. al-fitan* 24, *qiṣṣat al-jassāsah*, no 2942; Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan*, *k. al-malāḥim* 15, *bāb fī khabar al-jassāsah*, nos 4325-7. *V.* also Juynboll, *Encyclopedia*, 625-6; Cook, *Studies*, 117-20.
[28] Tirmidhī, *Jāmi`*, *k. al-fitan* 66, no 2503; Ibn Mājah, *Sunan*, *k. al-fitan* 33, *bāb fitnat al-dajjāl*, no 4074; Aḥmad, *Musnad* 6:273-4, 413, 417-18 *45:57-61*, *314-15*, *336-8*.
[29] Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, *k. al-jihād* 178, *bāb kayfa yu`raḍu 'l-islām*, no 3057; *k. aḥādīth al-anbiyā'* 3, no 3337 (with an addition mentioning Noah in particular as an example of previous prophets); *k. al-adab* 97, *bāb qawl al-rajul lil-rajul ikhsha'*, no 6175 (with Noah, again); *k. al-fitan* 26, *bāb dhikr al-dajjāl*, no 7127; Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, *k. al-fitan* 20, no 2936 (completely different *isnād*); Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan*, *k. al-sunnah* 26, *bāb fī al-dajjāl*, no 4757 (also mentioning Noah); Tirmidhī, *Jāmi`*, *k. al-fitan* 56, *bāb mā jā'a fī `alāmat al-dajjāl*, no 2235 (also mentioning Noah).
[30] Muslim, *Jāmi`*, *k. al-fitan* 20, no 2933; Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan*, *k. al-malāḥim* 14, *bāb dhikr khurūj al-dajjāl*, nos 4316-18; Tirmidhī, *Jāmi`*, *k. al-fitan* 62, *bāb mā jā'a fī qatl `Īsá ibn Maryam al-dajjāl*, no 2245.

idea of the Antichrist's having only one eye.

Intercommunal relations come up in more distasteful ways in other hadith reports about the End Times.

> **7.** Prophet: 'There is no prophet between me and him (meaning `Īsá ibn Maryam). He is about to descend . . . . He will fight the people on behalf of Islam, so he will break the cross, kill the swine, and abolish the tax on non-Muslims (*jizyah*). In his time, God will destroy all the communities except Islam. The Messiah (*masīḥ*) will destroy the Antichrist and remain on the earth for forty years. Then he will be claimed (die) and the Muslims will pray over him.[31]

Shorter versions go on from abolishing the tax on non-Muslims to passing out so much wealth that no one accepts it any longer, not explaining why the tax will be abolished.[32] This version from the collection of Abū Dāwūd (d. 275/889) evidently explains that the tax will be abolished because there will be no more non-Muslims to pay it. But Ibn Ḥajar (d. 852/1449) notes of one shorter version that it is an example of legal abrogation (*naskh*) in the future, since in the present the Christians have a legal right to their crosses and swine so long as they keep them out of sight.[33] Abū Dāwūd's version also raises the question of how long the *eschaton* will go on before the Last Judgement. 'Forty years' is a usual estimate, but they will evidently seem to go by faster than we are accustomed to, 'a year like half a year, a year like a month, a month like a week, and the last of his days like sparks' in one version.[34]

Apocalypticism also arises in connection with intra-Islamic disputes.

> **8**. Messenger of God: 'Every nation has Magians (*majūs*). The Magians of this community are those who say there is no predestination (*qadar*). Whoever of them dies, do not witness his funeral. Whoever of them falls ill, do not visit him. They are the party (*shī`ah*) of the Antichrist.'[35]

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[31] Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan*, *k. al-malāḥim* 14, *bāb dhikr khurūj al-dajjāl*, no 4324.
[32] Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, *k. al-buyū`* 102, *bāb qatl al-khinzīr*, no 2222; *k. al-maẓālim* 31, *bāb kasr al-ṣalīb*, no 2476; *k. aḥādīth al-anbiyā'* 49, *bāb nuzūl `Īsá ibn Maryam*, no 3448; Muslim, *Jāmi`*, *k. al-īmān* 71, *bāb nuzūl `Īsá ibn Maryam ḥākiman bi-sharī`at nabīyinā Muḥammad*, nos 155-9; Tirmidhī, *Jāmi`*, *k. al-fitan* 54, *bāb mā jā'a fī nuzūl `Īsá ibn Maryam*, no 2233; Ibn Mājah, *Sunan*, *k. al-fitan* 33, *bāb fitnat al-dajjāl*, no 4078. Comments from Juynboll, *Encyclopedia*, 608.
[33] Ibn Ḥajar, *Fatḥ al-bārī*, ed. `Abd al-`Azīz ibn `Abd Allāh Bin Bāz, 15 vols (Beirut, 1428-9/2008), 5:316, *ad* Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, *k. al-maẓālim* 31, *bāb kasr al-ṣalīb*, no 2476.
[34] Ibn Mājah, *Sunan*, *k. al-fitan* 33, *bāb fitnat al-dajjāl*, no 4077.
[35] Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan*, *k. al-sunnah* 16, *bāb fī al-qadar*, no 4692.

Perhaps the idea is that those who denied predestination (the Qadarīyah) resembled the dualistic Magians in that both denied that the good god alone had willed to happen everything that does happen.

There is practically a genre of 'conditions of the Hour (*ashrāṭ al-sā`ah*)', mainly collections of hadith about signs of the End Times. The term itself is qur'anic: 'Do they expect anything except the Hour—that will come on them suddenly. The portents for it (*ashrāṭuhā*) have come' (Q. 47:18). As enumerated in hadith, they are often polemical. The Qur'an describes disturbances to nature like moving mountains and boiling oceans (Q. 81:3, 6), and some natural disturbances show up in hadith; for example, the sun will rise in the west.[36] But hadith tends to talk more about social disorder, as in no 3 from Nawawī. More on this to come. External threats to the community could also be taken as conditions of the Hour.

> **9**. Sa`īd ibn Muḥammad (Kufan) < Ya`qūb (ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Sa`d, Baghdadi, d. 208/824) < his father (Medinese, transferred to Baghdad, d. 183/799-800) < Ṣāliḥ (ibn Kaysān, Medinese, d. 145/762-3?) < al-A`raj (`Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Hurmuz, Medinese client, d. 117/735-6?) < Abū Hurayrah < Messenger of God: 'The Hour will not come until you fight the Turks: small of eyes, red of faces, small-nosed, with faces like layered shields. The Hour will not come until you fight a people whose sandals are made of hair.'[37]

Some versions omit to name the Turks expressly. Ibn Ḥajar observes in his commentary that there had already come a people who wore sandals of hair (in other versions expressly the Turks themselves), namely the followers of the rebel Bābak al-Khurramī, whose anti-Arab rebellion in Azerbaijan was suppressed only after more than twenty years in 222/837.[38]

Some material on the End Times is preserved in the Islamic literature of renunciation. Here for example is al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (d. 110/728), than whom no renunciant is more highly

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[36] Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, *k. al-tafsīr* , *ad* Q. 6:150, no 4635; *k. al-tafsīr* , *ad* Q. 6:158, no 4636; *k. al-riqāq* 40, no 6506; *k. al-fitan* 25, no 7121; Muslim, *Jāmi`*, *k. al-īmān* 72, *bāb bayān al-zaman alladhī lā yuqbalu fīhi īmān*, nos 157-9; *k. al-fitan* 23, *bāb fī khurūj al-dajjāl*, no 2941; Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan*, *k. al-malāḥim* 12, *bāb amārāt al-sā`ah*, nos 4310-12; Ibn Mājah, *Sunan*, *k. al-fitan* 32, *bāb ṭulū` al-shams min maghribihā*, nos 4068-70.
[37] Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, *k. al-jihād wa-al-siyar* 95, *bāb qitāl al-turk*, no 2928; sim., *k. al-manāqib* 26, *bāb `alāmāt al-nubūwah fī al-islām*, no 3587; Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan*, *k. al-malāḥim* 9, *bāb fī qitāl al-turk*, nos 4303, 4305; Nasā'ī, *Mujtabá*, *k. al-jihād* 42, *ghazwat al-turk wa-al-ḥabashah*, no 3179. *V.* also Juynboll, *Encyclopedia*, 254-5, 453; Arjomand, 'Islamic apocalypticism', 256; Cook, *Studies*, 84-91.
[38] *V. EI*[3], s.v. 'Bābak', by Patricia Crone.

renowned:

> **10.** Our staying here will be short, our remaining there long. Your community (*ummah*) is the last community, and you are the last of your community. You soon must chose, so what are you waiting for?[39]

This does look like a plausible attribution to someone of the early eighth century. It has been said that expectation of apocalypse leads to dysfunctional behaviours, a reason for world-affirming systematizers to discourage it. Al-Ḥasan was sometimes remembered for dysfunctional behaviour. For example, someone once told him he ought to wash his shirt. He said, 'The matter is more pressing than that.'[40] Asked about a man who devoted himself to worship and another who devoted himself to his ~~dependents~~[dependants], he said he preferred the one who devoted himself to worship.[41] It did not make sense to be concerned with one's appearance or even family if the world was about to end. However, it cannot be said that the End Times are more prominent in collections of renunciant sayings than in mainstream collections of hadith. For example, the chief features of al-Ḥasan's piety have been expertly sketched by Helmut Ritter under sixteen headings. Anticipation of what is to come after death (that is, fear of perdition) is the first of them, but Ritter has not found sufficient evidence of apocalypticism to make it one of the sixteen.[42] Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal's collection of renunciant sayings includes a chapter comprising two-hundred odd sayings of al-Ḥasan's. Only two or three, at a stretch, can be made out to concern the End Times; for example, 'Death, by God, is on your necks, the Fire is before you, so expect the judgement of God (mighty and glorious is he) every day and night.'[43]

The Qur'an seems to promise an imminent Last Judgement; for example, 'We have warned you of a punishment that is near' (Q. 78:40). Al-Ḥasan's expectation that his was the

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[39] Al-Jāḥiẓ, *al-Bayān wa-al-tabyīn*, ed. `Abd al-Salām Muḥammad Hārūn, Maktabat al-Jāḥiẓ 2, 4 vols in 2 (Cairo, 1367/1948), 3:132.
[40] Aḥmad, *al-Zuhd*, ed. `Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Qāsim (Mecca, 1357), 278 = (repr. Beirut, 1403/1983), 339.
[41] Aḥmad, *Zuhd* (Mecca), 271 = (Beirut), 332.
[42] H. Ritter, 'Studien zur islamischen Frömmigkeit I: Ḥasan al-Baṣrī', *Der Islam* 21 (1933): 1-83, at 14-53.
[43] Aḥmad, *Zuhd* (Mecca), 285 = (Beirut), 347.

last generation (no 10) was probably general in his time. Here is reassurance that the Prophet foresaw some delay:

> **11.** Messenger of God: 'I was sent with the hour like these two.' Shu`bah: 'I heard Qatādah say in his *qaṣaṣ* (preaching), "like the excess (*faḍl*) of one of them over the other." I do not know whether he was mentioning it on the authority of Anas or Qatādah (himself) said it.'[44]

The preacher would have held up his first two fingers as he said this. The Prophet's words seem to bespeak a fairly early time, promising that the Apocalypse will happen soon. The same statement often appears with no qualification.[45] Originally, it seems likely, the stress would have been on the fingers' being next to each other. Then someone stressed the small difference in length between the two fingers. It would be satisfying to say when the interpretation shifted. No 11 here suggests a time of settling down. Qatādah has been mentioned before, in Aḥmad's Creed IV. He was a Basran who died in the mid-730s. We see from this hadith report in Muslim's collection that Qatādah was also remembered as a preacher. Preachers are often blamed for expanding or even inventing hadith reports. Here the question is of expansion. Qatādah's lifetime spanned the end of the conquest period and the beginning of the settled, when Islamic law began to be elaborated. Qatādah's alleged addition is reassurance that some gap was expected between the Prophet's death and the Apocalypse, if not a long one.

> **12.** 'Men of the rough Arabs would come to the Prophet and ask him, "When is the Hour?" He would look at the youngest of them and say, "If this one lives, old age will not reach him till your Hour comes upon you."' Hishām: 'This means their death.'[46]

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[44] Muslim, *Jāmi`*, *k. al-fitan* 27, *bāb qurb al-sā`ah*, no 2951.

[45] E.g., 'I was sent with the Hour like this, it almost having preceded me', pointing with his two fingers, the forefinger and the middle (Hannād, *Zuhd* 1:297 [2 versions]); 'I was sent with the Hour like these two' and he stuck together his two fingers, the forefinger and the middle, 'in the same hour' (Ibn al-Mubārak, *al-Zuhd wa-al-raqā'iq*, ed. Ḥabīb al-Raḥmān al-A`ẓamī [Malegaon, 1386; repr. Beirut, 1419/1998], no 1592; sim., 1596). *V.* also Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, *k. al-tafsīr* 79, no 4936; *k. al-ṭalāq* 25, *bāb al-li`ān*, no 5301; *k. al-riqāq* 39, *bāb qawl al-nabī bu`ithtu anā wa-al-sā`ah kahātayn*, nos 6503-5; Muslim, *Jāmi`*, *k. al-fitan* 27, *bāb qurb al-sā'ah*, nos 2950; Tirmidhī, *Jāmi`*, *al-qadar* 39, *bāb mā jā'a fī qawl al-nabī . . . bu`ithtu anā wa-al-sā`ah ka-hātayn*, nos 2213-14; Nasā'ī, *Mujtabá*, *ṣalāt al-`īdayn* 22, *kayfa al-khuṭbah*, no 1579; Ibn Mājah, *Sunan*, *k. al-sunnah* 7, *bāb ijtināb al-bida` wa-al-jadal*, no 45; *k. al-fitan* 25, *bāb ashrāṭ al-sā`ah*, no 4040; Aḥmad, *Zuhd* (Mecca), 25 = (Beirut), 33; Juynboll, *Encyclopedia*, 480.

[46] Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, *k. al-riqāq* 42, *bāb sakarāt al-mawt*, no 6511.

This commentator is Hishām ibn `Urwah of Mecca (d. 146/761-2?). The Prophet's words are reminiscent of Matthew 16:28 ('There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom'), Mark 9:1, and Luke 9:27. Hishām's gloss suggests that the promise of imminent Apocalypse had been misunderstood: the Prophet was really talking about the Companions' deaths.[47]

> **13.** The Prophet prayed the evening prayer with us one night near the end of his life. When he had saluted, he arose and said, 'What do you think of this night of yours? At the turn of a hundred years from it, there will not remain on the face of the Earth one person.' Ibn `Umar said . . . , 'there will not remain on the face of the Earth one person', meaning that this generation would pass away.[48]

We seem to have a similar gloss here, now attributed to the same Companion who related the Prophet's saying. This has been quoted from the collection of Abū Dāwūd, who puts it near the end of his section on *malāḥim*, events of the End Times. It suggests that the Last Judgement will come about a hundred years after the Prophet's death. By contrast, al-Bukhārī quotes it in his book of knowledge, twice in his book on the times of the ritual prayer, suggesting that its main bearing is on the transmission of hadith by the Companions.[49]

Apocalyptic hadith could also serve social criticism; for example,

> **14.** Mu`ādh ibn Jabal, Companion (d. 17/638-9?): 'The world will not pass until there come lying rulers, reprobate viziers, oppressive overseers, and depraved Qur'an reciters. They have various fancies. They have no restraint. They wear the clothes of monks but have hearts more rotten than corpses. God will confound them in the trial of wrongdoers, in which they will strut about in the fashion of the Jews.'[50]

There are many hadith reports like this, identifying present disorder as signs of the End Times. This is a little odd in apparently attributing clairvoyance to a Companion, not the Prophet

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[47] But cf. Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, *k. al-adab* 95, *bāb mā jā'a fī qawl al-rajul waylak*, no 6167, in which likewise an Arab asks the Prophet when the Hour will come, to whom the Prophet replies, on seeing a slave boy pass by, 'If this one is left, old age will not reach him till the Hour comes', with no further gloss.
[48] Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan*, *k al-malāḥim* 18, no 4348.
[49] Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, *k. al-`ilm* 41, *bāb al-samar fī al-`ilm*, no 116; *k. mawāqīt al-ṣalāh* 20, *bāb dhikr al-`ishā'*, no 564; *mawāqīt al-ṣalāh* 40, *bāb al-samar fī al-fiqh*, no 601.
[50] Marrūdhī, *K. al-Wara`*, ed. Muḥammad Sayyid Basyūnī Zaghlūl (Beirut, 1409/1988), 76 = ed. Zaynab Ibrāhīm al-Qārūṭ (Beirut, 1403/1983), 94.

himself, but then another example has already arisen, in which `Umar foresees the rise of scepticism about the basin, intercession, and so on.

> **15.** Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (d. Baghdad, 241/855) < Wakī` (Kufan, d. 197/812?) < Sharīk (ibn `Abd Allāh, Kufan, d. 179/795-6?) < `Alī ibn Zayd (Basran, d. 131/748-9?) < Abū Qilābah (Basran, d. 104/722-3?) < Thawbān < Messenger of God: 'When you see the black banners have come from the direction of Khurasan, come to them. Among them is God's deputy the Mahdi (*khalīfat Allāh al-mahdī*).'[51]

The `Abbāsid revolution, accomplished by an army from Khurasan behind black banners, occurred in 750 C.E. Assuming *vaticinium ex eventu*, this saying has to be from around then. Notice how its transmission allegedly shifts from Basra to Kufa just before then (at Sharīk < `Alī ibn Zayd). The *mahdī* (lit. 'guided one') is another figure not mentioned in the Qur'an. Early on, hadith appears to have usually elaborated the role of Jesus at the end of time, but rival traditions arose by which a purely Muslim figure would appear to establish right government at the end. Arjomand mentions a tradition by which it is the caliph `Umar, not the prophet `Īsá, who will kill the Antichrist at the gate of Ludd.[52] The third `Abbāsid caliph, Muḥammad ibn `Abd Allāh (*r*. 158-69/775-85), took the regnal name 'al-Mahdī'.

Here from Abū Dāwūd is another description[53]:

> **16.** < Musaddad (ibn Musarhad, Basran, d. 228/842-3) < `Umar ibn `Ubayd (Kufan, d. 185/801-2?); also < Muḥammad ibn al-`Alā' (Abū Kurayb, Kufan, d. 247/861-2) < Abū Bakr, meaning Ibn `Ayyāsh (Kufan, d. 194/809-10?); in the version of Musaddad < Yaḥyá (ibn Sa`īd al-Qaṭṭān, Basran, d. 198/813) < Sufyān (ibn Sa`īd al-Thawrī, Kufan, d. 161/777?); also < Aḥmad ibn Ibrāhīm (Baghdadi, d. 246/860) < `Ubayd Allāh ibn Mūsá (Kufan, d. 213/828-9) < Zā'idah (ibn Qudāmah, Kufan, d. 160/776-7?); also < Aḥmad ibn Ibrāhīm < `Ubayd Allāh ibn Mūsá < Fiṭr (ibn Khalīfah, Kufan, d. after 150/767-8), all with the same gist, all < `Āṣim (ibn Kulayb, Kufan, d. 130s/748-58) < Zirr (Kufan, d. 83/702-3?) < `Abd Allāh (ibn Mas`ūd, d. 32/652-3?) < the Prophet . . . 'If there were just one day left (Zā'idah said in his version, "God would prolong it"—after this they agreed) until God sent in it a man of me or of the people of my house whose name will agree with my name and whose father's name will agree with my father's name.' Fiṭr added in his version, 'He will fill the earth with fairness and justice as it is filled with wrongdoing and oppression.' Sufyān said in his version, 'The world will not go away or be

[51] Aḥmad, *Musnad* 5:277 *37:70-1*. Similarly, Ibn Mājah, *Sunan*, *k. al-fitan* 34, *bāb khurūj al-mahdī*, no 4084.
[52] Arjomand, 'Islamic apocalypticism', 247, citing an 11th-century chronicle.
[53] Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan*, *k. al-mahdī*, no 4282.

> ended until the Arabs are ruled by a man of my house whose name agrees with mine.'

Actually, there had been an important rebellion in the name of someone whose name and father's name both agreed with Muḥammad's during the Second Civil War, mainly Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafīyah (d. 81/700). He is said to have called himself *al-mahdī*.[54] Another had actively risen in rebellion, mainly the `Alid Muḥammad ibn `Abd Allāh al-Nafs al-Zakīyah, killed by the `Abbāsids in 145/762. The `Abbāsid caliphs began to adopt eschatological regnal names for themselves partly in response to his rebellion.[55] The Shi`ah, unsurprisingly, would make their Hidden Imam the one who kills the Antichrist.[56] Abū Dāwūd's hadith report (no 16) shows that the line between Sunni and Shi`i was not sufficiently defined (perhaps till the tenth century) to prevent movement of hadith from one party to the other. It may have been especially to refute Shi`i claims that the following hadith report was put into circulation[57]:

> **17.** < Yūnus ibn `Abd al-A`lá (Egyptian, d. 264/877) < Muḥammad ibn Idrīs al-Shāfi`ī (d. Old Cairo, 204/820) < Muḥammad ibn Khālid al-Janadī (obscure) < Abān ibn Ṣāliḥ < al-Ḥasan ibn Abī al-Ḥasan (i.e. al-Baṣrī, d. 110/~~820~~728) < Anas ibn Mālik < the Messenger of God . . . : 'This affair will only get worse. The world is only turning away. People are only becoming greedier. The Hour will not come save to the worst of people. There will be no *mahdī* save Jesus the son of Mary.'

This was highly controversial. A fourteenth-century hadith critic related a story in which someone says,[58]

> I saw Muḥammad ibn Idrīs al-Shāfi`ī in a dream. I heard him say, 'Yūnus ibn `Abd al-A`lá lied about me concerning al-Janadī's hadith report < al-Ḥasan <

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[54] Ibn Sa`d, *Biographien*, ed. Eduard Sachau, &al., 9 vols in 15 (Leiden, 1904-40), 5:66, 68-9 = *al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrá*, 9 vols (Beirut, 1957-68), 5:91-2, 94.
[55] Said Amir Arjomand, 'The crisis of the imamate and the institution of occultation in Twelver Shiʿism: a sociohistorical perspective', *International journal of Middle East studies* 28 (1996): 491-515, at 496; idem, 'Islamic apocalypticism', 260-1, 268.
[56] *V*. *Encyclopædia Iranica*, s.v. 'Eschatology in Imami Shi`ism', by M.A. Amir-Moezzi, with references to earlier studies.
[57] Ibn Mājah, *Sunan*, *k. al-fitan* 24, *bāb shiddat al-zamān*, no 4039. Cf. Ibn Abī Shaybah, *Muṣannaf*, *k. al-fitan* 10, *mā jā'a fī al-mahdī* = ed. Jum`ah & Luḥaydān, 14:181, 182, quoting not the Prophet but Followers (members of the generation that met Companions but never the Prophet) of Mecca and Basra.
[58] Mizzī, *Tahdhīb* al-Kamāl, ed. Bashshār `Awwād Ma`rūf, 35 vols (Beirut, 1413/1992), 25:150, citing Ibn `Asākir, but I have not located the story in *Tārīkh madīnat Dimashq*.

> al-Anas < the Prophet concerning the *mahdī*. This is not part of my hadith, I did not relate it, and Yūnus falsely attributed it to me.'

The dream thus defends the Sunni doctrine of a distinctly Muslim *mahdī* at the end of time. But the term *mahdī* was also appropriated by persons who would guide people (or force them) to the truth, not necessarily herald the end of the world; for example, when the Basran proto-Sufi Sahl al-Tustarī (d. 283/896?) says that whatever servant undertakes anything God has commanded and avoids what God has forbidden, God will make him an imam and a *mahdī*.[59] It might also be extended to the point of triviality. Sufyān al-Thawrī, a leading transmitter of no 16, is said to have been talking with the Medinese Ibn Abī Dhi'b (d. 158/774-5?) about a visit to the caliph Abū Ja`far (al-Manṣūr, *r.* 136-58/754-75), in which he told him that he (as a man of religion willing to speak truth to power) was better for him than his son the future caliph al-Mahdī. Sufyān protested: 'How was it permitted you to say *al-mahdī*?' He wanted it reserved for a future deliverer, not a princeling of this tyrannical dynasty. Ibn Abī Dhi'b answered, 'We are all guided (*mahdī*)—may God guide him.'[60]

Comparative interest

Qur'anic apocalypticism suggests that there is no necessary connection between common distress and looking forward to the end of the world, for the early-seventh-century Hijaz was not the site of foreign occupation or persecution. However, the extended attention of hadith to eschatology may fit the pattern. No 9 presumably reflects disquiet among the orthodox at the dangerousness of the Turks, although it does not promise triumph over them (nor even presume that they will attack the Muslims rather than the other way around). No 14 clearly assumes a world perceived to be filled with injustice. Perhaps one might generalize that communal distress is not necessary to looking forward to the Last Judgement (as the Qur'an

[59] Abū Nu`aym, *Ḥilyat al-awliyā'*, 10 vols (Cairo, 1352-7/1932-8), 10:190. For a survey of Sufi and other apparently non-eschatological uses of *mahdī*, *v.* Anna Akasoy, 'Niffarī: a Sufi Mahdi in the fourth c. AH/tenth c. AD?' *Antichrist*, ed. Wolfram Brandes and Felicitas Schmieder (Berlin, 2010), 39-67, esp. 50-4.
[60] Al-Marrūdhī, *Akhbār al-shuyūkh*, ed. `Āmir Ḥasan Ṣabrī. Silsilat al-ajzā' al-ḥadīthīyah 35 (Beirut, 1426/2005), 86-7.

looks forward) but that communal distress does conduce to eschatology; that is, belief in an extended period when present-day arrangements are upended (as elaborated in hadith).

The application of apocalypticism to intercommunal relations and boundary maintenance has often been observed in the Christian tradition. Sunni hadith collections plainly show such applications. As for intercommunal relations, nos 4, 5, and 6 above all seem to reflect a time when Muslims were more receptive than later to teaching from non-Muslims. Fred Donner's picture of seventh-century Islam as an inclusive, puritanical monotheism not yet a distinct, exclusive religion is probably too rosy.[61] After all, some people were collecting tribute while others were paying it, so there had to be a fairly sharp line from the beginning. However, the Qur'an itself sometimes recommends consulting Jews and Christians and acknowledges the contribution of informants.[62] There are numerous signs that eighth-century Muslims cited extra-Islamic scripture and pre-Muḥammadan prophets more freely than later.[63] More controversially, studies of early Islamic law have repeatedly found rules that apparently developed first out of earlier legal systems, such as the Jewish and Late Roman.[64] By contrast, no 7 looks forward to a time when the subjugation of non-Muslims will give way to their annihilation. As for intracommunal boundary maintenance, nos 1 and 2 show that apocalypticism could also be used to identify and exclude unorthodox Muslims.

Almost entirely missing from Sunni apocalyptic hadith is new prophecy, or at least anything identifying itself as new. The Qur'an identifies Muḥammad as the seal of the

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[61] Fred M. Donner, *Muhammad and the believers: at the origins of Islam* (Cambridge, Mass., 2010).
[62] *V*. Claude Gilliot, 'Les «informateurs» juifs et chrétiens de Muḥammad', *Jerusalem studies in Arabic and Islam*, no 22 (1998), 84-126.
[63] *V*. for example Christopher Melchert, 'Quotations of extra-Qur'anic scripture in early renunciant literature', forthcoming among selected papers of the Union Européenne des Arabisants et Islamisants, 2010, edited by Agostino Cilardo [pp. 97-107 in *Islam and Globalisation*, ed. Agostino Cilardo, Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta 226 (Leuven, 2013)]; R.G. Khoury, 'Quelques réflexions sur les citations de la Bible dans les premières générations islamiques du premier et du deuxième siècles de l'hégire', *Bulletin d'études orientales*, no 29 (1977), 269-78.
[64] A survey by me is Christopher Melchert, 'The early history of Islamic law', *Method and theory in the study of Islamic origins*, ed. Herbert Berg, Islamic history and civilization, studies and texts 49 (Leiden, 2003), 293-324, esp. 294-300.

prophets (Q. 33:40) and it became an item of Sunni dogma that this means Muḥammad was the last of the prophets.[65] `Umar's prediction of heretical sects is alternatively presented as a quotation of the Prophet, whose business it was to predict. Sunni orthodoxy more generally has little truck with charismatic authority, leaving that chiefly to Shi`i Islam.[66]

Directions of new research

It is unsurprisingly controversial how far back to trace hadith. Sceptical modern scholarship has often fastened onto elements that appear to be datable. Some examples have come up already: a tradition about Ludd (nos 2, 4) that should go back to the seventh century, when it was still a major centre; one about black banners from Khurasan (no 15) that should go back to the time of the Abbasid Revolution.[67] Wilferd Madelung has developed the way an apocalyptic hadith report in Abū Dāwūd's collection must have originally referred specifically to events in the Hijaz early in the Second Civil War, yet was apparently retained and quoted in new contexts from the early eighth century, when its failure to predict events in the early 70s/*ca* 690 was no longer obvious.[68] But what of the great bulk of hadith reports that have no such easily datable elements? A *terminus ante quem* is provided by inclusion in a surviving book; for example, the Six Books often quoted here. But this is difficult when fixed, written texts evidently did not become usual until the middle of the ninth century.[69]

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[65] Yohanan Friedmann, 'Finality of prophethood in Sunnī Islam', *Jerusalem studies in Arabic and Islam*, no 7 (1986), 177-215.
[66] *V*. Calder, 'Limits', 72, 80.
[67] Anachronism is a chief part of the evidence for Ignaz Goldziher, who began the modern sceptical tradition with *Muslim Studies*, ed. S.M. Stern, trans. C.R. Barber & S.M. Stern, 2 vols (Chicago, 1968-71), 2:3-251. It is used by Michael Cook to argue that at least some of the material of hadith must be earlier than notable skeptics have generalized, since presumably no one would make up failed predictions: 'Eschatology and the dating of traditions', *Princeton papers in Near Eastern studies* 1 (1992): 23-47, also repr. in *Ḥadīth*: origins and developments, ed. Harald Motzki, The formation of the classical Islamic world 28 (Aldershot, 2004), 217-41.
[68] Wilferd Madelung, '`And Allāh b. al-Zubayr and the Mahdi', *Journal of Near Eastern studies* 40 (1981): 291-305, esp. 293.
[69] For eighth-century opposition to writing down hadith, *v*. Michael Cook, 'The opponents of the writing of tradition in early Islam', *Arabica* 44 (1997): 437-530. For the transition from oral to written records more generally, *v*. the series of articles by Gregor Schoeler referred to by Cook, esp. 'Die Frage der Schriftlichen oder mündlichen Überlieferung der Wissenschaften im frühen Islam', *Der Islam* 62 (1985): 201-30, and 'Schreiben und Veröffentlichen. Zu Verwendung und Funktion der Schrift in den ersten islamischen Jahrhunderten', *Der Islam* 69 (1992): 1-43. His work has now culminated in Gregor Schoeler, *The genesis of literature in Islam: from the aural to the read*, rev. and trans. Shawkat M. Toorawa, The new Edinburgh Islamic surveys

Scholars would naturally like to push our knowledge further into the past. G. H. A. Juynboll renewed the attempt to date hadith reports on the basis of *isnād*s, the chains of transmitters that the collectors themselves offered as documentation of how old their hadith were. Juynboll thought he could identify who first circulated one or another hadith report by means of identifying the Common Link.[70] This a term invented by Joseph Schacht in a seminal 1950 book on the early development of Islamic law, although Juynboll has identified an Arabic term in ninth- and tenth-century hadith criticism that he thinks is functionally equivalent.[71] The Common Link is identified by putting together multiple versions of one hadith report, then seeing who transmitted it to multiple auditors. The more auditors report having heard something from someone, the more credible it is that they really did. Some such idea evidently governed Islamic hadith criticism as well, since the early collectors like to demonstrate multiple corroborative versions when they can, as above in Creed III (no 2) and the hadith report from Abū Dāwūd about the *mahdī* (no 16). The point of offering multiple chains of transmission is that we needn't take their word for it—here is the evidence for us to examine ourselves. In the example above from Abū Dāwūd about the *mahdī*, the obvious Common Link would be Fiṭr ibn Khalīfah. (Fiṭr is associated with a number of reports about the *mahdī*, as remarked already by Wilferd Madelung.[72] But Juynboll himself does not identify Fiṭr as a credible Common Link, just a name that later traditionists liked to use.)

Juynboll's chief critic is Harald Motzki. He disallows considering the contents of hadith on the ground that we cannot know how they were understood at the time. I have repeatedly disregarded his proposition; for example, thinking that hadith referring to Jesus as fighting the Antichrist, referring to the gate of Ludd, and so on must be earliest; that hadith

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(Edinburgh, 2009).

[70] G.H.A. Juynboll, *Muslim tradition: studies in chronology, provenance and authorship of early* ḥadīth, Cambridge studies in Islamic civilization (Cambridge, 1983).

[71] Joseph Schacht, *The origins of Muhammadan jurisprudence* (Oxford, 1950); G.H.A. Juynboll, '(Re)appraisal of some technical terms in *ḥadīth* science', *Islamic law and society* 8 (2001): 303-49; for a summary, *v*. also Juynboll, *Encyclopedia*, 'Introduction'.

[72] *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, new edn, s.v. 'mahdī', by W. Madelung.

describing a *mahdī* with the same name as Muḥammad must be a little later; that a declaration that there will be no *mahdī* but Jesus probably the latest, a response to earlier hadith alleging alternatives. Motzki also thinks we do not need corroborative lines of transmission: it suffices if there is no particular reason to distrust a link, especially if there are many examples of transmission from one person to another and they do not altogether sound like what a forger would come up with; for example, if uncertainty is sometimes expressed about what the first one said, or if he is quoted inconsistently, or if he sometimes speaks on his own authority, sometimes on an earlier figure's.[73] Recently, he has also tried to correlate variant wordings and variant lines of transmission, a technique first used by Josef van Ess in the early '70s.[74]

To my mind, his assumptions are implausibly slanted in favour of authenticity. It looks to me reckless to exclude from consideration the contents of hadith. With so little evidence to work with, we need all we can lay our hands on. It seems to me he is also inconsistent: if two persons quote someone the same way, they are taken to corroborate each other; if they quote someone differently, it establishes that they are satisfactorily independent—one is not copying the other. Repetition and inconsistency are a sign that a collection is not a body of forgeries, but a collection of hadith without repetition or inconsistent quotation he will not pronounce forged. To my recollection, he has never come up with a body of hadith to show us what forgery looks like. But I feel bound to mention him. The practical difference between his method and Juynboll's is perhaps not great, about 50 years; that is, Juynboll has it that most of the hadith we have go back to the second half of the eighth century, whereas Motzki continually finds an authentic historical kernel going back to the beginning of the century and conceivably before.

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[73] Harald Motzki, *The origins of Islamic jurisprudence*, trans. Marion H. Katz, Islamic history and civilization, studies and texts, 41 (Leiden, 2002).

[74] For a very good summary of earlier scholarship and his own approach, *v*. Harald Motzki, 'Dating Muslim traditions', *Arabica* 52 (2005): 204-53. Cf. Josef van Ess, *Zwischen Ḥadīṯ und Theologie: Studien zum Entstehen prädestinatianischer Überlieferung*, Studien zur Sprache, Geschichte und Kultur des islamischen Orients, n.F., 7 (Berlin, 1975).

I myself have tried to apply one additional criterion, again with precedents in the work of Schacht, mainly to identify particular hadith reports with particular centres. For example, no 15 about the `Abbāsids purportedly moved from Basra to Kufa just at the time of the revolution it predicts, to my mind confirmation that it started in Kufa at the time of the revolution and was projected backward to a series of Basran authorities. This agrees with an observation of Schacht's, that a favourite tactic in controversy among the different centres was to attribute one's own doctrine to a leading authority in the other centre. I have identified the men in the hadith report about the *mahdī* from Abū Dāwūd (no 16). It certainly looks as though it goes back to Kufa in the mid-eighth century, although Juynboll refrains from identifying any probable inventor of it. (Of apocalyptic hadith reports in the Six Books that he feels comfortable assigning to particular traditionists, I count altogether nine he thinks were formulated by some Basran, seven by some Kufan, three by a Yemeni, and one each by traditionists from Baghdad, Medina, Khurasan, and Wasit.) On the other hand, whereas no 9 on fighting the Turks looks as if it has moved from Medina to Baghdad, Medina seems an unlikely place for especially intense concern with the Turks, and indeed parallels point to other cities as well.[75] Juynboll is noncommittal about who originated this one.

There is much more to be done. One needs to compare at greater length apocalyptic hadith both in the most respected collections and elsewhere. One needs to figure out from their chains of transmission where they first circulated. One needs to compare them at greater length with Christian and Jewish traditions. One needs to extend the search to Shi`i hadith—I have completely neglected that here, like most students of hadith. One needs to examine their language—why they avoid cryptic words and expressions (like hadith generally by comparison with the Qur'an[76]).

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[75] e.g. parallels from Bukhārī himself quote similar warnings about people with sandals of hair, &c., through Kufan and Basran Followers as well as Medinese: *Ṣaḥīḥ*, *k. al-manāqib* 26, *bāb `alāmāt al-nubūwah fī al-islām*, nos 3587, 3590-2.

[76] Fred Donner has argued that the perspicuity of hadith by comparison with the Qur'an is evidence that their

What I hope to have shown is first that a great deal of Islamic belief is to be found in hadith. There were Muslims in the early Middle Ages who resisted hadith, as there have been Muslims since the turn of the 20th century who have downplayed it in favour of the Qur'an; but for most of history, hadith has been essential to orthodox Islam. Secondly, I think I have shown that apocalyptic hadith could serve several purposes, among others social criticism, and that to some extent one can infer from it the rise of different theological and political tendencies. In broad outline, my idea is that Islam began as a puritanical, generic monotheism, and took some time to disengage itself from Judaism and Christianity, somewhat as Christianity took some time disengage itself from Judaism. There was a time when Muslims were happy to see themselves as part of a long tradition, not as having supplanted and made irrelevant older traditions; when the Bible was Scripture alongside the Qur'an. Hadith represents a secondary stage, in which a great deal of biblical and other Jewish and Christian material is being Islamized, almost everything being projected onto the Prophet and his Companions. But some of the pre-Islamic background still peeks through.

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texts were fixed in different centuries: Fred M. Donner, *Narratives of Islamic origins*, Studies in late antiquity and early Islam 14 (Princeton: Darwin Press, 1998), 55-60.