

## Beards of Paradise: Hair in the Muslim Eschaton

Christian Lange, Utrecht University

PREPRINT VERSION<sup>1</sup>

Around the end of the Mamluk reign, in the late 9th/15th and early 10th/16th centuries, a debate occurred among the learned men of Egypt and Syria about the question whether the inhabitants of paradise sport beards, or whether they are beardless (Arab. *amrad*, pl. *murd*). At least two scholars, the traditionist Ibrāhīm al-Nāǧī (d. 900/1494) and the jurist and historian Shams al-Dīn Ibn Ṭulūn (d. 953/1546), both of whom had studied in Cairo but made a career in Damascus, devoted epistles to the subject. At first sight, these two short texts appear to be no more than an erudite oddity. However, beards weigh heavily as identity markers, and should therefore be taken seriously as objects of study. This appears to be particularly the case in Islam, where there is, as Abdalwahab Bouhdiba has noted, a “fetishism of hair”.<sup>2</sup> Identity is a multilayered concept, and so is the beard, speaking as it does to issues of sexuality and gender relations, of modernization and secularization, of interreligious relations, but also of inner-Muslim controversies over orthodoxy, that is, arguments used by Muslims against other Muslims as to what constitutes true Islam. Occasionally, all of these layers of meaning are involved at the same time, such that the beard becomes a “condensed symbol”.<sup>3</sup> Mamluk society appears to have invited, perhaps to a hitherto unprecedented degree in the history of Islamic societies, such an accumulation of symbolic significance attributed to beards.

*Beards under the Mamluks (Egypt and Syria, c. 7th/13th-10th/16th c.)*

The debate over beards in paradise was not the only instance in the Mamluk period in which beards played a role in measuring Muslim orthodoxy. In Mamluk Egypt and Syria, the context in which al-Nāǧī and Ibn Ṭulūn wrote, grooming and shaving a beard were in fact highly controversial and contested public practices. The Qalandariyya Sufi order, which proliferated during the period, was known for the scandalous practice of shaving off not only the beard and moustache, but also the hair on the head, as well as the eyebrows. As has been suggested, the Qalandars shaved because they believed that the human face

---

<sup>1</sup> See the published version in Youri Volokhine, Bruce Fudge & Christoph Herzog (eds), *Barbe et barbues - Symboliques, rites et pratiques du port de la barbe dans le Proche-Orient ancien et moderne* (Berlin: Peter Lang Verlag, 2019), pp. 119-129 (DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3726/b15078>). Please be aware that the published and the preprint version are not 100% the same; page numbers differ. This preprint version is deposited under a Creative Commons Attribution Non-Commercial 4.0 International (CC BY-NC) licence. This means that anyone may distribute, adapt, and build upon the work for non-commercial purposes, subject to full attribution. The author gratefully acknowledges the support and hospitality provided by the Netherlands Institute of Advanced Studies (NIAS) in Wassenaar, the Netherlands, during the time in which this study was written. In the later stages of preparing this study, the author was supported by an ERC Consolidator Grant (project number 724951).

<sup>2</sup> BOUHDIBA 2008, p. 35.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. RIDGEON 2010, p. 21. OLIVELLE 1998, p. 40-41, defines a “condensed symbol” as a symbol that is “so powerful that it encapsulates all the diverse aspects of the symbolized.”

reflected divine beauty,<sup>4</sup> in the same way in which the gazing at the enticing faces of beardless boys (Pers. *shāhidbāzi*), from early Islamic times, had served Sufis as a reminder of God's beauty.<sup>5</sup> The "fourfold shave" of the Qalandars elicited severe condemnation from Mamluk-era scholars, who saw in it a challenge to the system of normativity on which Islamic society was to be built.<sup>6</sup> "Those beard-shaving Qalandars," fumed the famous scholar from Damascus, Ibn Taymiyya (d. 728/1328), "are misguided and ignorant; most of them ... do not declare sacrosanct what God and His messenger have declared sacrosanct".<sup>7</sup>

The Qalandars, however, were not the only ones to arouse the angst and ire of the Mamluk-era proponents of beards. Another group of beardless figures worried them at least as much. These were the Mongols, the sworn military enemies of the Mamluk sultans. The Mongols entered Damascus twice, in 658/1260 and 699/1300. On the second occasion, large parts of the city were occupied and plundered; the distinguished center of scholarly activity, the Dār al-Ḥadīth of Nūr al-Dīn, built in the 6th/12th century, also suffered damage. Even though the Mamluk army drove the Mongols out of Syria in 702/1303, the threat of warfare and invasion lingered. The specter of Mongol aggression came violently alive again when the army of the Central Asian conqueror, Temür, whose proclaimed aim it was to re-establish the Mongol empire, repeatedly invaded Anatolia and Syria from the 790s/1390s onwards, devastating Damascus in 803/1401. On all these occasions, the old apocalyptic prophecy about the coming of the Turks, found in canonical collections of *ḥadīth* and repeated by Mamluk scholars, must have resonated. "The Hour will not be established until you fight with the Turks," the prophecy read, continuing to describe the Turks as "people with small eyes, red faces, flat noses, and faces that look like shields coated with leather."<sup>8</sup> On such evidence, in 7th/13th and 8th/14th-century Syria it could plausibly be suggested that the hordes of the Mongol warlords Hülägü and Temür signaled the coming of the antichrist and his armies, people with beardless, smooth, leather-like faces, barbarians whom the Muslims must fight at all cost. The Mongol problem encouraged scholars like Ibn Taymiyya to militate in favor of a re-orientation of Islam towards its Arab origins, towards the Arabic language in particular—according to Ibn Taymiyya, the Qur'ān must not be read in any language other than Arabic—, but also, more generally speaking, towards the exemplary behavior of the bearded Arab heroes, the *al-salaf al-ṣāliḥ*, that helped to spread Islam in the mythic age of conquest.<sup>9</sup> As for Ibn Ṭūlūn, he experienced the transition of power from the Mamluks to the Ottomans; and although he does not seem to have been greatly perturbed by this pivotal political event,<sup>10</sup> the coming of a new Turkish dynasty may have spurred his interest in the question of beards, and of the authority that came with them.<sup>11</sup>

---

<sup>4</sup> KARAMUSTAFA 1994, p. 22.

<sup>5</sup> SCHIMMEL 2000, p. 274-7.

<sup>6</sup> Scholarly condemnations of the practice are discussed in RITTER 1955, p. 459-77. See also WILSON 1988, p. 93-121; RIDGEON 2010.

<sup>7</sup> IBN TAYMIYYA, *Majmū'*, vol. I, p. 52.

<sup>8</sup> See COOK 2002, p. 84-91.

<sup>9</sup> IBN TAYMIYYA, *Iqtidā'*, vol. I, p. 148. On beards, see *ibid.*, p. 158-9, 83, 136.

<sup>10</sup> CONERMANN 2004, p. 119.

<sup>11</sup> Ibn Ṭūlūn's treatise on beards, *al-Durar al-fākhira*, appears to have been penned in the last years

### *Traditions in favor of a beardless afterlife*

This situation forms the backdrop to the epistles of al-Nājī and Ibn Ṭulūn discussed here. Of these two texts, unfortunately only one has come down to us. This is the epistle of al-Nājī, which is preserved in a manuscript in the Staatsbibliothek in Berlin.<sup>12</sup> Relatively little seems to be known about al-Nājī. He was a traditionist who transmitted *ḥadīths* from Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī (d. 852/1449). Like his teacher, who compiled a *summa* of *ḥadīths* about the afterlife,<sup>13</sup> al-Nājī cultivated an interest in eschatological topics. He wrote a commentary (*ta‘līq*) on the “Book of Stimulation and Intimidation” (*K. al-Targhīb wa-l-tarhīb*) of al-Mundhirī (d. 656/1258), as well as an epistle on the question of intercession (*shafā‘a*).<sup>14</sup>

The other epistle, written about half a century later by Ibn Ṭulūn, is entitled “The Precious Pearls regarding those who have Beards in the Otherworld” (*al-Durar al-fākhira fī dhikr man lahu liḥya fī l-ākħira*). It is mentioned by the Ottoman bibliographer Katip Çelebi (Ḥājjī Khalīfa) in the 11th/17th century,<sup>15</sup> but seems to be lost.<sup>16</sup> Like al-Nājī, Ibn Ṭulūn was active in the area of eschatological *ḥadīth*; one of his surviving works is titled “The Firmly Established Record regarding the Conditions of the Isthmus [between Death and Resurrection]” (*al-Taḥrīr al-murassakh fī aḥwāl al-barzakh*).<sup>17</sup> Ibn Ṭulūn is also the author of an epistle entitled “In Support of those Wishing to Shave their Moustaches” (*I‘timād al-rāghib fī ḥalq al-shārib*).<sup>18</sup> Among the problems that occupied medieval Muslim scholars writing about beards were, next to the question of the beards of paradise, issues that touched on the etiquette of coiffure: the licitness of dyeing the beard, of combing it, or of shaving the moustache, as well as the correct length of the beard.<sup>19</sup> Ibn Ṭulūn contributed works to two of these disputed questions. We cannot extrapolate from the titles of his two epistles how Ibn Ṭulūn thought about otherworldly beards, but his great interest in facial hair seems beyond doubt. It also bears mentioning that Ibn Ṭulūn studied with the polymath al-Suyūṭī (d. 911/1505) in Cairo, an acclaimed scholar with Sufi leanings who considered himself, and was considered by others, the renewer (*mujaddid*) of the ninth century of the Muslim calendar.<sup>20</sup> Al-Suyūṭī, in turn, is the author of several compendia of eschatological *ḥadīths*, one of which contains a section on the question of

---

of his life, that is, after the Ottoman takeover, as it is not listed among his works in his autobiography, *al-Fulk al-mashḥūn*.

<sup>12</sup> See AHLWARDT 1887, vol. II, p. 649 (# 2698).

<sup>13</sup> Ibn Ḥajar’s “Brilliant Pearls in the Explanation of the Conditions of People in the Otherworld” (*al-Durar al-zāhira fī bayān aḥwāl ahl al-ākħira*) is preserved in manuscripts housed in Bankipore, Cairo, and Gotha (fragm.). See BROCKELMANN 1943-49, vol. II, p. 83; Suppl. II, p. 74.

<sup>14</sup> KAḤḤĀLA, *Mu‘jam*, vol. I, p. 69.

<sup>15</sup> ḤĀJJĪ KHALĪFA, *Kashf*, vol. III, p. 217. See IBN ṬULŪN, *Fulk*, p. 145.

<sup>16</sup> According to Stephan Conermann, of the 750 titles mentioned in Ibn Ṭulūn’s autobiography (IBN ṬULŪN, *Fulk*), “probably less than 100 have been preserved”. See CONERMANN 2004, p. 121.

<sup>17</sup> IBN ṬULŪN, *Taḥrīr*.

<sup>18</sup> See IBN ṬULŪN, *Fulk*, p. 79.

<sup>19</sup> For a survey, see FUDGE forthcoming.

<sup>20</sup> See GEOFFROY 1997.

otherworldly beards.<sup>21</sup> It is perhaps not too far-fetched to assume that Ibn Ṭūlūn and al-Suyūṭī took a similar view on the matter, and in the course of this paper, I shall be referring to al-Suyūṭī on several occasions.

The question of beards in the afterlife is hairy because there is a Prophetic *ḥadīth* that states that “the people of paradise are thirty years old, they are hairless (*jurđ*) and beardless (*murđ*), and they have eyes adorned with collyrium; they resemble Adam, who was sixty ells tall.”<sup>22</sup> It is sometimes suggested that Iranian ideas led to the emergence of this tradition. According to Iranian mythology, in the ideal kingdom of the just king Jamshīd, fathers and sons have the same youthful age, and are undistinguishable, whether by beards or other bodily features.<sup>23</sup> This theory of an Iranian pedigree is not implausible; several of the earliest transmitters of the saying came from the Yemen, an area that in Late Antiquity was under the sway of Persia. The *ḥadīth* was transmitted by the South Arabian nobleman al-Miqdām b. Ma‘dīkarīb al-Kindī, a fighter in the wars of conquest who had settled in Ḥimş.<sup>24</sup> The earliest known collector of *ḥadīth* to include the tradition is ‘Abd al-Razzāq of Şan‘ā’ (d. 211/827), a scholar whose family came from Iran and was probably Zoroastrian before converting to Islam.<sup>25</sup> Be that as it may, the *ḥadīth* entered the canonical collection of al-Tirmidhī (d. 279/892), and was also given the stamp of approval by Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal (d. 241/855), the 3rd/9th-century hero of piety and eponym of the Ḥanbalī school of law.<sup>26</sup> The tradition thus enjoyed a sounder pedigree than the one according to which the Prophet Muḥammad, during his heavenly journey, saw God in paradise in the shape of a beardless young adolescent (*amrad*), adorned with golden sandals, sitting on a green meadow—a tradition that was widely rejected.<sup>27</sup>

In the early centuries of Islam, there is no shortage of statements hostile to beards, and approving of a beardless afterlife. For example, al-Suyūṭī relates that the pious Companion Abū l-Dardā’ (d. c. 32/652) once grabbed his beard in exasperation and exclaimed: “May God take away beards!” When asked how this was going to happen, he joyfully replied: “When I enter paradise!”<sup>28</sup> That the beard is a kind of punishment for men, not an embellishment, also comes across in certain, possibly early, versions of the Islamic Adam legend. In paradise, as is asserted in the “Tales of the Prophets” (*Qişaş al-anbiyā’*) of al-Kisā’ī (*fl.* 3th/9th c. [?]), Adam had no beard, rather he was “like a polished mirror”. When he was banished to earth, suddenly he grew one, much to his surprise, and discomfort. “Lord,” he protested, “what is this? I did not know it in paradise”. God replied: “It is because of your sin.”<sup>29</sup> According to the traditionist, Ibn Qutayba (d. 276/889), Adam was beardless (*amrad*); it was only his sons who grew beards.<sup>30</sup>

---

<sup>21</sup> On al-Suyūṭī’s contribution to eschatological *ḥadīth*, see LANGE 2016, p. 88-9.

<sup>22</sup> ‘ABD AL-RAZZĀQ, *Muşannaf*, vol. XI, p. 416.

<sup>23</sup> CHRISTENSEN 1917-34, vol. II, p. 69; RITTER 1955, p. 186.

<sup>24</sup> VAN ESS 2001, p. 176.

<sup>25</sup> MOTZKI 1997.

<sup>26</sup> See WENSINCK 1992, vol. I, p. 337.

<sup>27</sup> SUYŪṬĪ, *La’ālī*, vol. I, p. 29-30.

<sup>28</sup> SUYŪṬĪ, *Budūr*, p. 591.

<sup>29</sup> KISĀ’Ī, *Qişaş*, p. 52-53.

<sup>30</sup> IBN QUTAYBA, *Ma’ārif*, p. 17.

There are more such statements regarding the undesirability of beards, certainly in this life. In the 3rd/9th century, the essayist and polemicist of Baghdad, al-Jāḥiẓ, rather maliciously wrote that a long beard is often attached to a dumb head.<sup>31</sup> Irreverence towards beards also characterizes the view of later medieval Muslim authors, as can be observed, for example, in the “Séances” (*Maqāmāt*) of the 4th/10th-century author al-Hamadhānī. In one of the “Séances”, witty short stories written in rhymed prose, the trickster-hero takes revenge on a group of treacherous friends by inviting them to a banquet in his house in Baghdad, getting them drunk, and then calling in the barber: “In one hour,” the story concludes, “he shaved off fifteen beards, and the people became hairless and beardless (*jurd murd*) like the people of paradise.”<sup>32</sup> As late as the 9th/15th century, the time of Ibn Ḥajar, al-Suyūṭī, al-Nāǧī, and Ibn Ṭūlūn, poets and *littérateurs* took great license in ridiculing beards. In one story told by the Tunisian *littérateur*, Muḥammad al-Nafzāwī (fl. early 9th/15th c.), a scholar wants to test the correctness of al-Jāḥiẓ’s dictum about the reverse relationship between beards and intelligence. He decides to burn half of his beard, to see whether his intelligence increases by the same margin. Predictably, his beard goes up in flames entirely, and his chin is burned. The scholar concludes that, although he has not become more intelligent, he is more knowledgeable than before.<sup>33</sup> In Friedrich Rückert’s brilliant rendering,

*weiser ward er nicht darum,  
sondern nach wie vor so dumm  
blieb er und so hochgelahrt,  
ohne jetzt, wie sonst mit Bart.*<sup>34</sup>

#### *Opinions in favor of beards in the afterlife*

How then, in the presence of convincing textual evidence, and in the face of the ridicule leveled at beards by the likes of al-Jāḥiẓ, could anybody claim there were beards in paradise, and why should one wish to do so? The answer is simple: the notion that men in paradise will be beardless clashed with the high esteem for beards that prevailed in other strands of Islamic culture. As M. J. Kister has noted, in Islam two contradictory ideals of male beauty coexisted cheek by jowl: the young beardless ephēbe and the man with a full black beard.<sup>35</sup> The absence of beards in paradise was a conundrum that scholars, bearded ones in particular, were at pains to resolve. A case in point is the Damascene Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya (d. 751/1350), the eminent student of Ibn Taymiyya. He relates the argument of someone seemingly keen on undermining the value of beards:

If the hair of the beard were an embellishment, women would deserve [to wear beards] more than men, because they need to embellish themselves, and, in order to distinguish [the sexes], men should forfeit them; the inhabitants of paradise

---

<sup>31</sup> ḤUṢRĪ, *Jamʿ*, p. 188.

<sup>32</sup> HAMADHĀNĪ, *Maqāmāt*, p. 213.

<sup>33</sup> See MEIER 2003, p. 169 n. 71.

<sup>34</sup> RÜCKERT 2003, p. 168-9.

<sup>35</sup> KISTER 1993, pp. 139-40.

would also deserve [to wear beards] more, even though it is decreed that they shall be hairless and beardless!

Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya's answer is as contorted as it is speculative:

The answer is that women are the object of physical enjoyment and embracing (*maḥall al-istimtā' wa-l-taqbīl*). Therefore, it is more beautiful and fitting that they forfeit beards, for the object of physical enjoyment, when freed of hair, is more perfect (*atamm*). And this is also the reason - but God knows best! - why the people of paradise are beardless, [*viz.*] in order that their wives can enjoy them in the same way in which they [the men] enjoy their wives. Also, in this way the beauty of faces is more easily appreciated, because hair conceals that which is beneath. It is pleasant, however, to touch the skin of women. But God knows best what His wise intentions are in shaving [beards in paradise]!<sup>36</sup>

A key text in praise of beards, quoted at length by al-Nājī, is found at the end of the chapter on ritual purity in the “Revivification of the Religious Sciences” (*Iḥyā' ulūm al-dīn*) of al-Ghazālī (d. 505/1111). Al-Ghazālī writes that

to pluck out the hairs [of the beard] when they begin to grow is a manner of assimilating oneself to beardless young boys (*murd*). This is one of the grave sins. Beards serve to beautify men. God has angels who swear an oath “By Him Who beautifies Adam's progeny with beards!” In fact, beards belong to [the category of] perfection in creation (*min tamām al-khalq*). Through it, men are distinguished from women. A subtle point of exegesis is that God's saying [in the Qur'ān] “He gives increase to whatever He wishes in creation” (*yazīdu fī l-khalq mā yashā'*, Q 35:1) refers to the beard. The friends of al-Aḥnaf b. Qays used to say: “We would love to buy al-Aḥnaf a beard, even if it cost 20,000 [dinars]!” Shuraykh the judge said: “I would pay 10,000 [dinars] for a beard!” How then can beards not be liked? Through them men are magnified. The bearer of a beard is credited with knowledge and dignity, and given an exalted position in public sessions. Dignitaries seek his company, he is made a leader of the community, and he is protected from public shame, for when he is insulted, he wards off [the insult] by virtue of his beard, provided he has one.<sup>37</sup>

As al-Nājī explains, al-Aḥnaf (d. 67/686-7), a general in the conquest of Iran who was celebrated in later times for his sagacity, was beardless like a shark.<sup>38</sup> (Also in reference to his beardless face, the fourth president of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, was known colloquially as “Akbar the Shark”.) The high value al-Ghazālī attributes to beards is manifest. In a congenial spirit, the jurists of Islam, across the spectrum of the legal schools, condemned punitive shaving of beards as an act of

<sup>36</sup> IBN QAYYIM AL-JAWZIYYA, *Tibyān*, p. 196.

<sup>37</sup> GHAZĀLĪ, *Iḥyā'* vol. I, p. 251. The passage is replicated, with minor differences and additions, in NĀJĪ, *Ḥuṣūl*, fol. 12a, l. 1-10.

<sup>38</sup> NĀJĪ, *Ḥuṣūl*, fol. 12a, l. 6. On al-Aḥnaf, see PELLAT 1960.

mutilation.<sup>39</sup> Given such fervent protection and such glowing encomium, it is hardly surprising that defenders of beards in the tradition of al-Ghazālī sought to come up with ways to ensure that honorific beards were carried over from this life into the next. Let it be added that, in Islamic contexts, not only honor but also virility is measured by the beard, the full manifestation of which marks the end of youth.<sup>40</sup> The beard, in Everett Rowson's phrase, is "the cardinal symbol of masculinity in traditional Islamic culture".<sup>41</sup> It is well known that the Muslim paradise is a place where virility is not just present, but celebrated.<sup>42</sup> According to an eschatological tradition recorded by al-Suyūṭī, every man in paradise is given seventy wives, and in order to be able to satisfy them sexually, he enjoys the potency of a hundred men.<sup>43</sup> So, as the defenders of beards might have argued, how on earth, or rather, how in heaven, can the blessed not have beards?

Here is where al-Nājī and, presumably, Ibn Ṭūlūn come in, because their discussion essentially revolves around the degree to which the *ḥadīth* on beardlessness in Paradise, whose authenticity was not open to challenge, can be softened and in fact subverted by the introduction of a certain number of exceptions. The first such exception is Adam.<sup>44</sup> To destigmatize his beard, it was suggested (in the spirit of al-Ghazālī) that God's granting a beard to Adam served to demonstrate God's forgiveness and to embellish Adam and his male offspring.<sup>45</sup> Alternatively, and contrary to some of the stories quoted in the preceding text, it was taught that Adam *did* have a beard in paradise. This, as one might add, is borne out by a number of medieval Persian illustrations that show Adam in paradise with a beard.<sup>46</sup> Qalandar texts picked up on this idea by stating that Adam shaved his beard *after* the banishment from paradise, to show contrition.<sup>47</sup> In regard to the future, eschatological paradise, certain traditions came to affirm that Adam will have a beard when he returns to the Garden. According to a tradition quoted by al-Suyūṭī, Adam is the only person in the future paradise to sport a beard, a black one that reaches down to his navel.<sup>48</sup>

The second exception that al-Nājī discusses is Aaron, brother of Moses.<sup>49</sup> Al-Nājī reports that the Prophet saw Aaron in the fifth heaven, with a beard reaching down to his navel, half white and half black.<sup>50</sup> And when Aaron is granted a beard in heaven, it is not far-fetched to think that his more highly esteemed brother Moses should have one, too. Al-Nājī and al-Suyūṭī relate a *ḥadīth*, declared "weak" (*ḍa'īf*) by their contemporary, al-Sakhāwī (d. 902/1497),<sup>51</sup> stating that "the people of paradise are hairless and beardless, they

<sup>39</sup> E.g. KĀSĀNĪ, *Badā'i'*, vol. II, p. 141. See the references in LANGE 2007, p. 442 n. 115.

<sup>40</sup> VON HEES 2007.

<sup>41</sup> ROWSON 1991, p. 53.

<sup>42</sup> AL-AZMEH 1995, p. 220, 224; LANGE 2016, pp. 151-2.

<sup>43</sup> SUYŪṬĪ, *Budūr*, p. 562.

<sup>44</sup> NĀJĪ, *Ḥuṣūl*, fol. 11b, l. 14-24.

<sup>45</sup> See the references in KISTER 1993, p. 139 n. 138.

<sup>46</sup> An example is the illustration contained in a MS of al-Birūnī's "Chronology of Ancient Nations" (*al-Āthār al-bāqīya*), produced in Tabriz around 700/1300 (MS Edinburgh Or. 161, fol. 48v).

<sup>47</sup> RIDGEON 2010, p. 12.

<sup>48</sup> See the references in KISTER 1993, p. 139 n. 139.

<sup>49</sup> NĀJĪ, *Ḥuṣūl*, fol. 12a, l. 11-17.

<sup>50</sup> NĀJĪ, *Ḥuṣūl*, fol. 12a, l. 16-17; GHAZĀLĪ, *Iḥyā'*, vol. I, p. 251.

<sup>51</sup> SAKHĀWĪ, *Maqāṣid*, p. 196.

do not have beards except Moses the son of Imrān; he has a beard that bounces on his chest.”<sup>52</sup>

Next in line in al-Nāǰī’s discussion is the prophet Abraham. Again, certain *ḥadīths* grant him a beard in the hereafter. Al-Nāǰī quotes his teacher, Ibn Ḥajar, who was once asked why one should think that Abraham has a beard in paradise. “It seems,” was Ibn Ḥajar’s answer, “that the point of this is that . . . Abraham occupies the rank of a father to all Muslims. It was he, after all, who called them [i.e. his believing progeny] by the name [‘Muslims’] and ordered them to follow his community (*milla*).”<sup>53</sup> Ibn Ḥajar reiterates a common theme in Muslim literature: the great honorability of, and respect due to, Abraham as the forefather of all monotheists. According to the historian and Qur’ān commentator al-Ṭabarī (d. 310/923), Abraham was the first man on earth to sport a white beard, and this was in order to indicate the degree of his “modesty, gravitas, intelligence and gentleness.”<sup>54</sup> The final exception discussed by al-Nāǰī concerns the Companion of the Prophet and first caliph, Abū Bakr. Al-Nāǰī notes that, as in the case of Abraham, the view that Abū Bakr has a beard in paradise is found in “some Persian books.”<sup>55</sup> It appears relevant to note here that in the illustrations of an Uighur manuscript of the Prophet’s heavenly journey, produced in the 15th century in Herat, *all* prophets encountered by Muḥammad, with the sole exception of Joseph, are bearded.<sup>56</sup>

#### *The beards of paradise recalibrated*

To sum up, one senses that going on in the background of al-Nāǰī’s (and, again presumably, of Ibn Ṭulūn’s) discussion is a certain pressure, a growing pressure perhaps, to affirm the orthodoxy of beards, and to extrapolate from there the existence of beards in the next life. Not long after the time of al-Nāǰī and Ibn Ṭulūn, in the early modern European *Bildersturm*, statues were defaced, as Protestant iconoclasts erased the facial features of the saintly figures depicted in medieval European art. Rather the opposite seems to be happening in the discussion that forms the backdrop to al-Nāǰī’s and Ibn Ṭulūn’s epistles: facial features are not eliminated but added, in the form of beards. In a manuscript of the “Séances” of al-Ḥarīrī (d. 516/1122), preserved in the National Library in Paris (MS Arabe 5847) and dated to the 7th/13th century, practically all men are depicted as wearing beards; but if one looks closely, one cannot but think that a later hand has in several instances added beards to formerly beardless faces.<sup>57</sup>

However, while beards might be added easily by a simple stroke of the pen in the manuscript of al-Ḥarīrī’s “Séances”, the matter was less easily adjusted when dealing with *ḥadīth* literature, as the genre remained answerable to the strict criteria of medieval Muslim *ḥadīth* criticism. The Mamluk scholars of Damascus, in particular, had revived the thorough examination of the trustworthiness of eschatological *ḥadīths*, a corpus of

---

<sup>52</sup> NĀǰĪ, *Ḥuṣūl*, fol. 12b, l. 1-3; SUYŪṬĪ, *Budūr*, p. 591.

<sup>53</sup> NĀǰĪ, *Ḥuṣūl*, fol. 13b, l. 1-2.

<sup>54</sup> ṬABARĪ 1964-65, vol. I, p. 66.

<sup>55</sup> NĀǰĪ, *Ḥuṣūl*, fol. 13a, l. 22.

<sup>56</sup> See the reproductions in SÉGUY 1977 (plates 8, 13, 16, 17, 20, 23, 24, 26).

<sup>57</sup> I owe this observation to Jan-Just Witkam, Leiden.



traditions that in earlier centuries had been allowed somewhat laxer standards.<sup>58</sup> Some Mamluk scholars therefore preferred to take an agnostic viewpoint. For example, the *ḥadīth* scholar from Cairo al-Sakhāwī, like al-Nājī a student of Ibn Ḥajar, relates *ḥadīths* about the paradisiacal beards of Aaron and Moses and simply states that “I don’t know anything with certainty about this.”<sup>59</sup>

As for al-Nājī, he rejects most of the exceptions he discusses. He grants a paradisiacal beard without reservation only to Aaron, while denying a beard to Adam, Abraham, Moses and Abū Bakr. This is first and foremost based on technical considerations concerning the reliability of the chains of transmitters of the relevant *ḥadīths*;<sup>60</sup> but al-Nājī buttresses his view with some logical considerations. For example, al-Nājī relates an argument against attributing a beard to Moses in paradise on the authority of the 6th/12th-century Baghdad Ḥanbalī, Ibn al-Jawzī (d. 597/1201). Ibn al-Jawzī reasoned that if Moses is honored with a beard in paradise, the Prophet Muḥammad deserves one, too. As there are no indications in the revealed scriptures that he has one, *a fortiori* Moses cannot have one either<sup>61</sup>—although it remains unclear why the argument should not be applied to Aaron as well. As for Abū Bakr’s beard in paradise, al-Nājī quotes the opinion of his teacher Ibn Ḥajar that this would impinge on the status granted to Abraham.<sup>62</sup> Anyway, when it comes to the beard of Abū Bakr, which signals a transition from Prophetic beards to the beards of non-prophetic figures, a line seems crossed for al-Nājī. After denying that Abū Bakr has a beard in paradise, he concludes his epistle rather abruptly: “This is enough,” he declares, “more cannot be said about [the question].”<sup>63</sup>

By contrast, al-Suyūṭī simply reports the *ḥadīths* about the beards of Moses and Aaron, without providing any commentary. From this we may conclude that he and his student Ibn Ṭulūn may have held a more permissive view of the matter. Al-Suyūṭī also relates a *ḥadīth* according to which the inhabitants of paradise can spot the white hairs in the black beards of men over great distances—a tradition that appears to imply that *all* men in paradise will have beards.<sup>64</sup> Other, late-medieval collections of eschatological traditions also mention facial hair as one of the privileges enjoyed by the blessed. The men in paradise, states the anonymous “Subtle Traditions about Paradise and Hell” (*Daqā’iq al-akhbār fī dhikr al-janna wa-l-nār*), the most widely circulated popular text on the afterlife of the Islamic Middle Period, possess beautiful, “neatly bifurcated” moustaches, of a greenish color (green being a poetic convention to describe the color of the beards of young, virile men).<sup>65</sup>

## Conclusions

<sup>58</sup> See LANGE 2016, p. 85-9, 162.

<sup>59</sup> SAKHĀWĪ, *Maqāṣid*, p. 196.

<sup>60</sup> For *ḥadīth* critics rejecting Moses’s paradisiacal beard, see also DHAHABĪ, *Talkhīṣ*, vol. I, p. 353; IBN ḤAJAR, *Lisān*, vol. XV, p. 25.

<sup>61</sup> NĀJĪ, *Ḥuṣūl*, fol. 13a, l. 18-19.

<sup>62</sup> NĀJĪ, *Ḥuṣūl*, fol. 13b, l. 3-4.

<sup>63</sup> NĀJĪ, *Ḥuṣūl*, 13b, l. 13.

<sup>64</sup> SUYŪṬĪ, *Budūr*, p. 592.

<sup>65</sup> ANON., *Daqā’iq*, p. 82. On this text, see LANGE 2016, p. 108-112; TOTTOLI 2008.

In conclusion, a couple of observations can be made. The first one pertains to the relevance of studying the eschatological imagination of the Islamic tradition. As the epistles written by al-Nāji and Ibn Ṭulūn demonstrate, eschatological literature is not simply concerned with making predictions about the things to come in the far future, after the Final Judgment; rather, it can serve as a matrix to pass judgment on current issues. As I have argued elsewhere, the enduring promise of paradise and hell in Islam is not the escape to an unreal world of dreams, but the ability of the otherworld to sanctify life in the here and now.<sup>66</sup> To my mind, this “presentist” function of Islamic eschatology remains a field of research ripe with promise.

Secondly, in the case of the Mamluk scholars discussing the existence of beards in paradise, the debate deals with correct Muslim identity and true Islam. This concerns, on the one hand, the limits of Islam in the doctrinal sense: not only are certain Sufis (those, for example, who talk of the vision of God as a beardless young boy in paradise, and “pre-enact” the unbearded bliss of the blessed by shaving in this world) delegitimized and branded as deviant, but certain standards in *ḥadīth* criticism are also defended against positions that are deemed too lenient (such as al-Suyūṭī’s tolerance of *ḥadīths* granting a beard to Moses, or even to all denizens of paradise). On the other hand, Islam is framed politically, or ethnically, in the sense of contrasting Arab beardedness, and the beards of the prophets and the *salaf*, with the beardlessness of the Turks. At the dawn of the Ottoman conquest of the Arab world, the issue is particularly poignant. Whether Ottoman scholars ever revisited the question of the beards of paradise remains to be studied. While most late-medieval illustrations, such as are contained in the “Books of Omen” (*Fālnāmehs*) produced at the courts of the Ottomans, Safavids, and Mughals, appear to show only beardless faces in paradise, the illustrated manuscript of an Ottoman text entitled “The Conditions of the Resurrection” (*Aḥvāl-e qiyāmat*) depicts men in paradise with “neatly bifurcated” moustaches (MS Staatsbibliothek Berlin Or. Oct. 1596).

Thirdly, a certain hardening of the position that there are beards in paradise, a position that also underlines the necessity of having a beard in *this* life, seems to take place in the Mamluk period. One suspects that the worrying presence of beardless Qalandars and Mongols may have triggered this. No learned epistles or treatises on paradisiacal beards are known to have been written in earlier centuries of Islam, which indicates that the question acquired a certain topicality in Mamluk society. One should also note, however, that the late Mamluk period sees a general move towards the production of specialized epistles (*rasā’il*), not least in the area of eschatological *ḥadīth*.<sup>67</sup> The existence of two epistles written about the beards of paradise therefore does not carry enough weight in itself to prove the hypothesis of a wider process of beardification in Mamluk society.

#### *Postscript: Beards of paradise today*

The problem of beards in the afterlife continues to occupy the minds of practitioners to this day. E-fatwas on the topic are relatively easy to find. In the early 2010’s, for example, the website of the Qatari Ministry for Religious Affairs ([islamweb.net](http://islamweb.net)) issued two fatwas in

---

<sup>66</sup> LANGE 2016, p. 288.

<sup>67</sup> BAUER 2002, p. 432.

the span of less than two years dealing with the question. In one of them, the questioner asks: “There are some people who infer the licitness of shaving [in this world] from the *ḥadīth* [about the inhabitants of paradise having no beards], so what should one answer them?” The Mufti first confirms the reliability of the *ḥadīth* and that being beardless is forbidden in this life, but allowed in the next,<sup>68</sup> thus likening the issue to the drinking of wine or men’s wearing of gold and silk garments. The Mufti writing the second fatwa argues that the wisdom (*ḥikma*) of revealed knowledge is often inaccessible to human reasoning, suggesting that this may also be the case regarding the beardlessness of men in paradise, in other words, that one should simply accept the notion without speculating about ulterior reasons. He then ventures the opinion, however, that having no beards is “more perfect in terms of beauty” (*akmalu fi l-ḥusn wa l-jamāl*).<sup>69</sup>

Salafis are the champions of male beards in the contemporary Islamic world, and [islamweb.net](http://islamweb.net) is a Salafi website. This may seem ironic. Salafis, who one suspects would cherish a decent beard in the afterlife, submit to the discursive power of the *ḥadīth* and thus accept that beardlessness is what awaits them in paradise. In fact, they may even grant, as an afterthought, that a shaved face is actually more beautiful. But they are forced to accept their beardless future only on the basis of traditionist criteria, not on strength of esthetic considerations. They do not enjoy the freedom of St. Augustine, with whose appreciation of beards they would otherwise have been likely to agree, who could simply reason that beards are beautiful and therefore must be a part of paradise.<sup>70</sup> As for the modern scholarly argument that the *ḥadīth* most likely entered Islam from non-Islamic sources, this is of no concern to Salafis. It is enough that the *ḥadīth* be part of the Salafi scriptural canon; as such it cannot be rejected. After all, iconic proto-Salafi figures of the Middle Ages never doubted the tradition. Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, for example, weaves the *ḥadīth* into his great didactic poem, the *Nūniyya*.<sup>71</sup>

The interpretive conundrum produced by the *ḥadīth*, however, remains difficult to resolve for the proponents of beards. This is a problem that did not go unnoticed, throughout Islamic history, by the critics of beards, who, in order to underscore the desirability of shaving in this life, could joyfully invoke the *ḥadīth*, while citing the example of the Companion, Abū l-Dardā’, who cursed beards, or irreverently recommending that women should grow beards, if facial hair was indeed a sign of beauty, as al-Ghazālī and countless other male scholars had maintained.

#### Bibliography:

‘ABD AL-RAZZĀQ, *Muṣannaḥ*: ‘ABD AL-RAZZĀQ AL-ṢAN‘ĀNĪ, *Al-Muṣannaḥ fi l-ḥadīth*, ed. Ḥabīb al-Raḥmān al-A‘zamī, 11 vols., Beirut, Al-Maktab al-Islāmī, 1970.

AHLWARDT 1887: AHLWARDT, W., *Die Handschriften-Verzeichnisse der Königlichen Bibliothek zu Berlin*, Vol. 7-9: *Verzeichnis der arabischen Handschriften*, 3 vols., Berlin, A. W. Schade’s Buchdruck, 1887.

<sup>68</sup> QATARI MINISTRY FOR RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS 2012.

<sup>69</sup> QATARI MINISTRY FOR RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS 2013.

<sup>70</sup> See BYNUM 1995, p. 99.

<sup>71</sup> See IBN ‘ISĀ, *Tawḍīḥ*, vol. II, p. 487.

AL-AZMEH 1995: AL-AZMEH, A., "Rhetoric for the senses: A consideration of Muslim paradise narratives", *Journal of Arabic Literature* 26.3, 1995, p. 215–31.

ANON., *Daqā'iq*: ANON., *Daqā'iq al-akhbār fī dhikr al-janna wa-l-nār*, Cairo, Maktabat al-Tahrīr, n.d.

BAUER 2002: BAUER, T., "Islamische Totenbücher", in: LEDER, S., KILPATRICK, H., MARTEL-THOUMIAN, B. and SCHÖNIG, H. (eds.), *Studies in Arabic and Islam: Proceedings of the 19th Congress, UEAL, Halle 1998*, Leuven, Peeters 2002, p. 421-36.

BOUHDIBA 2008: BOUHDIBA, A., *Sexuality in Islam*, first publ. 1975, London, Routledge, 2008.

BROCKELMANN 1943-49: BROCKELMANN, C., *Geschichte der arabischen Litteratur*, first publ. 1898, Leiden, Brill, 1943-49.

BYNUM 1995: BYNUM, C. W., *The Resurrection of the Body in Western Christianity, 200-1336*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1995.

CHRISTENSEN 1917-34: CHRISTENSEN, A., *Les types du premier homme et du premier roi*, Stockholm, P. A. Norstedt, 1917-34.

CONERMANN 2004: CONERMANN, S., "Ibn Ṭūlūn (d. 955/1548): Life and Works", *Mamluk Studies Review* 8.1, 2004, p. 115-39.

COOK 2002: COOK, D., *Studies in Muslim apocalyptic*, Princeton, Darwin Press, 2002.

DHAHABĪ, *Talkhīṣ*: DHAHABĪ, al-, *Talkhīṣ Kitāb al-mawḍū'āt li-Ibn al-Jawzī*, Riyadh, Maktabat al-Rushd, 1998.

FUDGE forthcoming: FUDGE, Bruce, "Beard", in: KRÄMER, G., et al. (eds.), *The Encyclopaedia of Islam, THREE*, Leiden, forthcoming.

GEOFFROY 1997: GEOFFROY, E., "Al-Suyūṭī", in: BOSWORTH, C. E. et al. (eds.), *The Encyclopaedia of Islam, New Edition*, Vol. 9, Leiden 1997, p. 913-16.

GHAZALĪ, *Ihyā'*: GHAZALĪ, al-, *Ihyā' 'ulūm al-dīn*, ed. Muḥammad 'Abd al-Malik al-Zughbī, 5 vols., [Cairo,] Dār al-Manār, n.d.

ḤĀJJĪ KHALĪFA, *Kashf*: ḤĀJJĪ KHALĪFA, *Kashf al-ẓunūn 'an asāmī l-kutub wa-l-funūn*, ed. G. Fluegel, 7 vols., London, R. Bentley, 1835-58.

HAMADHĀNĪ, *Maqāmāt*: HAMADHĀNĪ, al-, *Maqāmāt*, ed. Muḥammad 'Abduh, first publ. 1889, Beirut, Dar al-Machreq, 1993.

ḤUŞRÎ, *Jam'*: ḤUŞRÎ, al-, *Jam' al-jawāhir fî l-mulaḥ wa-l-nawādir*, ed. 'Alî Muḥammad al-Bijāwî, Cairo, Dār Iḥyā' al-Kutub al-'Arabiyya, 1953.

IBN ḤAJAR, *Lisān*: IBN ḤAJAR AL-'ASQALĀNĪ, *Lisān al-mizān*, Beirut, Mu'assasat al-'Alamī, 1390/1971.

IBN 'ĪSĀ, *Tawḍīḥ*: IBN 'ĪSĀ, A., *Tawḍīḥ al-maqāsid wa-taṣḥīḥ al-qawā'id fî sharḥ qaṣīdat al-Imām Ibn al-Qayyim*, ed. Z. al-Shāwīsh, 2 vols., Beirut, al-Maktab al-Islāmī, 1406/[1985-6].

IBN QUTAYBA, *Ma'ārif*: IBN QUTAYBA, K. *al-Ma'ārif*, ed. S. Okacha, [Cairo,] n.p., 1960.

IBN QAYYIM AL-JAWZIYYA, *Tibyān*: IBN QAYYIM AL-JAWZIYYA, *Al-Tibyān fî aqsām al-Qur'ān*, [Damascus,] Dār al-Fikr, n.d.

IBN TAYMIYYA, *Iqtidā'*: IBN TAYMIYYA, *Iqtidā' al-ṣirāt al-mustaqīm*, Cairo, Maṭba'at al-Sunna al-Muḥammadiyya, 2nd ed., 1369/[1949-50]

IBN TAYMIYYA, *Majmū'*: IBN TAYMIYYA, *Majmū' al-rasā'il wa-l-masā'il*, ed. M. Rashīd Riḍā, 2 vols., Cairo, Maṭba'at al-Manār, 1341-45/[1922-26].

IBN ṬULŪN, *Fulk*: IBN ṬULŪN, *Al-Fulk al-mashḥūn fî aḥwāl Muḥammad b. Ṭulūn*, ed. Muḥammad Khayr Ramaḍān Yūsuf, Beirut, Dār Ibn Ḥazm, 1416/1996.

IBN ṬULŪN, *Tahrīr*: IBN ṬULŪN, *Al-Tahrīr al-murassakh fî aḥwāl al-barzakh*, ed. Abū 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Atharī, Tanṭā, Dār al-Ṣaḥāba lil-Turāth, 1991.

KAḤḤĀLA, *Mu'jam*: KAḤḤĀLA, 'U. R., *Mu'jam al-mu'allifin: Tarājim muṣannifī l-kutub al-'arabiyya*, 15 vols, Damascus, Maṭba'at al-Taraqqī, 1957-61.

KARAMUSTAFA 1994: KARAMUSTAFA, A., *God's Unruly Friends: Dervish Groups in the Islamic Later Middle Period, 1200-1550*, Salt Lake City, University of Utah Press, 1994.

KĀSĀNĪ, *Badā'i'*: KĀSĀNĪ, al-, *Badā'i' al-ṣanā'i' fî tartīb al-sharā'i'*, 7 vols., Beirut, Dār al-Kitāb al-'Arabī, 1982.

KISĀ'Ī, *Qīṣaṣ*: KISĀ'Ī, al-, *Qīṣaṣ al-anbiyā'*, ed. Isaac Eisenberg, 2 vols., Leiden, Brill, 1922-23.

KISTER 1993: KISTER, M. J., "Adam: A Study of Some Legends in *Tafsīr* and *Ḥadīth* Literature", *Israel Oriental Studies* 13, 1993, p. 113-74.

LANGE 2007: LANGE, Ch., "On that Day when Faces will be White or Black': Towards a Semiology of the Face in the Arabo-Islamic Tradition", *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 127.4, 2007, p. 429-45.

LANGE 2016: LANGE, Ch., *Paradise and Hell in Islamic Traditions*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2016.

MEIER 2003: MEIER, F., *Rückerts morgenländische Sagen und Geschichten*, ed. Kim Sitzler und Gudrun Schubert, Würzburg, Ergon, 2003.

MOTZKI 1997: MOTZKI, H., “al-Ṣan‘ānī”, in: BOSWORTH, C. E. et al. (eds.), *The Encyclopaedia of Islam, New Edition*, Vol. 9, Leiden, E. J. Brill, 1997, p. 7-8.

NĀJĪ, *Ḥuṣūl*: NĀJĪ, al-, *Ḥuṣūl al-biḡhya lil-sā’il hal li-aḡhad min ahl al-janna liḡhya*, MS Berlin Wetzstein 409, fols. 11b-13b.

OLIVELLE 1998: OLIVELLE, P., “Hair and Society: Social Significance of Hair in South Asian Traditions”, in: HILTEBEITEL, A. & MILLER, B. (eds.), *Hair: Its Power and Meaning in Asian Cultures*, Albany, 1998, p. 11-49.

PELLAT 1960: PELLAT, Ch., “al-Aḡnaf b. Kaṡs”, in: BOSWORTH, C. E. et al. (eds.), *The Encyclopaedia of Islam, New Edition*, Vol. 1, Leiden, E. J. Brill, 1960, p. 303-304.

QATARI MINISTRY FOR RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS 2012: QATARI MINISTRY FOR RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS, “Sharḡ ḡadīth yadkhulu ahl al-janna jurd murd...”, URL: <http://fatwa.islamweb.net/fatwa/index.php?page=showfatwa&Option=FatwaId&Id=185569> (posted 21 August 2012; accessed 6 May 2014).

QATARI MINISTRY FOR RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS 2013: QATARI MINISTRY FOR RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS, “Al-ḡikma min i‘fā’ al-liḡhya wa-kawn ahl al-janna murdan”, URL: <http://fatwa.islamweb.net/fatwa/index.php?page=showfatwa&Option=FatwaId&Id=210604> (posted 13 June 2013, accessed 6 May 2014).

RIDGEON 2010: RIDGEON, L., “Shaggy or shaved? The symbolism of hair among Persian Qalandar Sufis”, *Iran and the Caucasus* 14, 2010, p. 1-18.

RITTER 1955: RITTER, H., *Das Meer der Seele. Mensch, Welt und Gott in den Geschichten des Farīduddīn ‘Attār*, Leiden, E. J. Brill, 1955.

ROWSON 1991: ROWSON, E., “The categorization of gender and sexual irregularity in medieval Arabic vice lists”, in: EPSTEIN, J. and STRAUB, K. (eds.), *Body Guards: The Cultural Politics of Gender Ambiguity*, New York & London, 1991, p. 50-79.

RÜCKERT 2003: RÜCKERT, F., “Der abgebrannte Bart”, in: MEIER 2003, p. 168-9.

SAKHĀWĪ, *Maqāṡid*: SAKHĀWĪ, al-, *Al-Maqāṡid al-ḡasana*, [Beirut,] Dār al-Kitāb al-‘Arabī, n.d.

SCHIMMEL 2000: SCHIMMEL, A., “‘I take the dress off the body’: Eros in Sufi literature and life”, in: COAKLEY, S. (ed.), *Religion and the Body*, Cambridge, 2000, p. 262-88.

SÉGUY 1977: SÉGUY, M.-R., *The Miraculous Journey of Mahomet. Mirāj Nāmeḥ Bibliothèque Nationale Paris (Manuscrit Supplément Turc 190)*, New York, George Baziller, 1977.

SUYŪṬĪ, *Budūr*: SUYŪṬĪ, al-, *Al-Budūr al-sāfira fi 'ulūm al-ākḥira*, ed. Abū 'Abdallāh Muḥammad al-Shāfi'ī, Beirut, Dār al-Kutub, 1416/1996.

SUYŪṬĪ, *La'ālī'*: SUYŪṬĪ, al-, *Al-La'ālī'al-maṣnū'a fi l-aḥādīth al-mawḍū'a*, 2 vols., Beirut, Dār al-Ma'rifa, 1410/1981.

ṬABARĪ, *Ta'riḥ*: ṬABARĪ, al-, *Ta'riḥ al-rusul wa-l-mulūk*, ed. M. J. de Goeje et al., 15 vols., Leiden, E. J. Brill, 1964-65.

TOTTOLI 2008: TOTTOLI, R., "Muslim eschatological literature and Western Studies", *Der Islam* 83, 2008, p. 452-77.

VAN ESS 2001: VAN ESS, J., *Der Fehltritt des Gelehrten: Die "Pest von Emmaus" und ihre theologischen Nachspiele*, Heidelberg, Winter, 2001.

VON HEES 2007: VON HEES, S., "Die Kraft der Jugend und die Vielfalt der Übergangsphasen. Eine historisch-anthropologische Auswertung von Korankomentaren des 10. bis 15. Jahrhunderts", in: CONERMANN, S. and VON HEES, S. (eds.), *Islamwissenschaft als Kulturwissenschaft I. Historische Anthropologie. Ansätze und Möglichkeiten*, Schenefeld, EB-Verlag, 2007, p. 139-76.

WENSINCK 1992: WENSINCK, A. J. et al., *Concordance et indices de la tradition musulmane: Les six livres, le Musnad d'Al-Dārimī, le Muwaṭṭa' de Mālīk, le Musnad de Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal*, 2nd edition, 8 parts in 4 vols., Leiden & New York, Brill, 1992.

WILSON 1988: WILSON, P. L., *Scandal: Essays in Islamic Heresy*, Brooklyn, NY, Autonomedia, 1988.