# The End is Near: Minor and Major Signs of the Hour in Islamic Texts and Contexts

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## Our Vocabulary of ultimate purpose and order

Apocalypse (Greek for "revelation of divine mysteries") means disaster, cosmic catastrophe, the end of the world; in scripture it is a vision of the future shape of eschatological events. The rich Jewish tradition of apocalyptic[1] visions was inherited by Christ and his disciples,[2] especially the second-generation figure of John of Patmos, author of the book of Revelation (also called Apocalypse) (ca.95 C.E.) The Jewish and Christian traditions, both profoundly influenced by Zoroastrianism, reverberate in the Qur'an's eschatological accounts [3] and, especially, the apocalyptic Hadith.

Apocalypticism is the belief that the end is imminent. When an apocalyptic sense of imminence spreads, eschatological groups typically emerge under charismatic leaders. Every age produces a variety of apocalyptic movements appropriate to its circumstances, and their actions may focus on private salvation, sometimes through a combination of quietism and a withdrawal from the world, or on reform, or radical segregation of the righteous from the sinful majority, or on militant activism bent on restructuring society in order to hasten the final event. Islamic history is filled with apocalyptic movements, of differing nature, which fall within any of these categories.

Millennialism, or millenarianism, is the belief in the kingdom of holiness, peace, justice, and plenty that the Messiah will establish on earth before the last judgment. Although the term millennium implies a thousand year kingdom, its duration—which is predicted in the Islamic sources in a variety of time frames—is of secondary importance; what matters is that, initiated by signs portending the cataclysmic end of ordinary time, and after a preliminary period of purging and transformation, human society reaches its final state on earth when all conflicts are resolved and all injustices removed. In the Islamic Hadith, two messianic figures, Jesus and the Mahdi, are portrayed as end-time rulers whose reigns signify that last period of justice and plenty. While apocalypticism is about disruption, upheaval, devastation, and endings, millennialism is about new beginnings, restoration, and regeneration. But the millennium itself is only a transitional, liminal "band of time," before in a final cataclysm the earth is devastated and the process of creation reversed.

Apocalyptic millenarianism is defined as a form of activism that directs groups of believers who see themselves at the threshold of the awaited millennium (in the eschatological sense) toward radical political action, including anti-establishment attempts at restructuring society. It is a reaction to a collective sense of extremity, dislocation, and the feeling of living in truly terrible times. Natural disasters, political persecution, economic deprivation, even change itself—in the form of a negative discrepancy between expectation and reality—have triggered it, while atomic and ecological eschatology have recently added a new dimension. In the Islamic context, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has joined the list of major grievances that, especially as formulated in popular sermons, pulp fiction narratives, on Websites and the like, can set the tone for an apocalyptic millenarian mind-frame in their mass audiences and readers.

## Apocalyptic themes in the Qur'an

There is an apocalyptic edge to some of the Qur'anic, especially the Meccan, revelations when they expound that the end is near:

"They see the (day) far off, but We (God) see it quite near," (70:6–7, Early Meccan). "The hour of judgment is near, and the moon is split," (54:1, Middle Meccan). "Verily the hour is coming. My (God's) design is to keep it hidden, so that every soul be rewarded by the measure of its endeavor," (20:15, Middle Meccan). "Closer and closer to people is their reckoning, while they in neglect turn away," (21:1, Middle Meccan).

But [even] according to the (chronologically) earliest revelation regarding the hour, its appointed time is known only to God, and the Prophet is but a warner for those who fear it (79:42–46, Early Meccan). This theme is reiterated in two late Meccan revelations:

"Verily the knowledge of the hour is with God alone. He sends down rain, and He knows what is in the wombs," (31:34, Late Meccan), and "The knowledge (of the hour) is with my Lord, none but He (can) reveal its time," (7:187, Late Meccan), and also in a Medinan revelation:

"Men ask you about the hour. Say: knowledge of it is with God. What will make you understand? Perhaps the hour is near," (33:63, Medinan).

On the other hand, the Qur'an gives only the sparsest detail on any portents that would indicate the hour's imminent arrival. Among the signs of the hour is the observable disintegration of established familial, societal, and economic norms.[4] Then, "When the word is fulfilled against them (the sinners), We shall produce for them from the earth a beast to speak to them, because people did not believe with assurance in Our signs," (27:82, Middle Meccan); the nations of Gog and Magog will break through their ancient barrier wall and sweep down to scourge the earth (21:96–97, Middle Meccan); and Jesus is "a sign of the hour"(43:61, Middle Meccan).

By contrast, the Qur'anic revelations provide an abundance of eschatological detail that begins with God's cosmic undoing of the "old world" followed by the last judgment and creation of a "new world" of everlasting paradise and hell. Thus, while the "terrestrial signs of the hour" remain a relatively marginal theme in the Qur'anic message, the actual occurrence of doom (destruction of the cos-

mos and cosmic time), resurrection, last judgment, and individual assignment to an eternal abode of beatitude or torment are a fully developed part of Qur'anic doctrine.

### Apocalyptic themes in the Hadith

Unlike the Qur'an, it is the Hadith that furnishes a vast variety of detail on the portents of the hour that signify its imminence. In many cases, these resemble the "signs" of Judeo-Christian apocalyptic literature. Western scholarship both old and new has attributed this fact to the prominence of Jewish and Christian converts to Islam who played important roles as scripturalist experts (Qur'an interpreters and, especially, transmitters of Hadith) during the first century-and-a-half of Islamic history.[5] In addition, Western scholars have read the apocalyptic Hadith as a reflection of the cultural, social, and political turmoil that marked Muslim history during the same period.[6]

Muslim theologians and historians would refer to these times of turmoil in early Islamic history as fitna ["secession, upheaval, seduction, anarchy"]. It was also by the concept of fitna, in its plural fitan, that the compilers of Hadith collections inscribed their chapters on the turmoils that signal the end of the world. Over time, a small portion of the apocalyptic Hadith gained canonical status (in Sunni Islam) by way of its inclusion in the legal foundational texts and, especially, the canonical Hadith collections (The Six Books of "Sound Traditions") that have held prominence in Sunni doctrine and law since their first appearance during early Abbasid times. The six Hadith compilations in question were the work of al-Bukhari (d. 870), Muslim ibn Hajjaj (d. 875), Abu Da'ud (d. 888), al-Tirmidhi (d.892), al-Nasa'i (d. 915), and Ibn Maja (d.886). From among the founders of the four extant schools of jurisprudence, the "legal textbooks" of Malik ibn Anas (d. 795) and Ahmad ibn Hanbal (d. 855), likewise written in the form of Hadith collections, form part of this recorded corpus of "sound" traditions as measured by classical Islamic criteria of authentication (regarding source and chain of transmission).

These canonical sources' emphasis lay on careful definition and elaboration of the Islamic legal tradition, while apocalyptic matters (including traditions of a messianic nature) were of secondary or tertiary interest. The books on fitan generally appear at (or towards) the end of these classical Hadith collections.[7] At an early age, rationalist Muslim critics professed profound reservations about the validity of (at least parts of) those apocalyptic Hadith materials, even though they had been assembled in the canonical books. A fourteenth-century example of this critical trend is the celebrated historian and legal authority Ibn Khaldun (d. 1406) who inter alia, when writing about the figure of the Mahdi, questioned the interplay between apocalyptic tradition, esoteric interpretation of Sura 18 ("The Cave") and historical political claims, especially of the Twelver-Shi'a, in a manner that betrayed his personal mistrust of the validity of apocalyptic texts.[8] Nineteenth- and twentieth-century Sunni modernist thought has more systematically questioned the authenticity of this apocalyptic Hadith, referring to it by the older label of isra'iliyyat ("Bible-derived traditions"), that hold at best some symbolic significance. Such language from the likes of the Egyptian modernist theologian Muhammad Abduh (d.1905) or his Syrian disciple Rashid Rida (d.1935)[9] can induce apoplectic rage in the more literalist, traditionalist contemporary compilers of the classical Hadith, for whom every detail of the transmitted texts is true.[10]

The sheer volume of available, canonical and sectarian, classical and later Hadith on apocalyptic themes has for many centuries enabled Islamic scholars to forge their own collections of these materials. By nature of the subject, such textual activities always had a potential political edge. As is more fully discussed in what follows, the manner in which Islamic scholars have historically handled Hadith end time predictions has been indicative not just of their religious orientation but also their stance toward the political system under which they performed their work. Lately that stance has been affected by ideological concerns regarding world politics in the manner and language of Samuel Huntington's "clash of civilizations." While, on the whole, Huntington's oeuvre so far has a hear-say presence in the contemporary Islamic and Islamist discourses, an echo of his language is discernible in new formulations of pre-existing anti-colonialist patterns of thought and argumentation.[11]

The apocalyptic Hadith has been classified in several ways. Some sources distinguish the "minor signs" of the hour from its "major signs." Others distinguish between "signs that have passed," "signs that can be observed at present," and "signs that have not yet occurred." Here the "signs that have passed" are historical events which were, or are, recorded in the nature of historical "markers" on the way of mankind's linear approach to its final destination. The second category, "signs that can be observed at present," functions to denounce religious aberrations, including innovative and other objectionable cultural, social, and political practices, in "mirror of the times fashion;" their import, then, is largely moral guidance in that they promote a reversed (upside-down) vision of godly society. The third category, "signs that have not yet occurred," contains the metahistorical and messianic traditions on the (Qur'anic) "beast from the earth," a (non-Qur'anic) antichrist figure (Dajjal), the devastation of the earth by Gog and Magog (Qur'anic), the return of Jesus (Qur'anic), and also the return of a second messianic figure called the Mahdi ("the rightly guided one") (not mentioned in the Qur'an). The lines between these three categories are, however, fluid. This fact essentially derives from the paradigmatic nature of the apocalyptic Hadith. While later Hadith criticism (including of the modern rationalist and reformist schools of Islam) would argue that historical events were often cast as "minor signs" in the form of prophetic Hadith, to their more literalist adherents these traditions were not only literally true, but their prophesizing nature also left room that these events could re-occur, at much later times and under vastly different conditions than when they first appeared to be fulfilled.

### A contemporary compendium of classical Sunni apocalyptic Hadith

Ashrat al-sa'a ("the signs of the hour") by Yusuf al-Wabil, quoted above, is a tome of classical traditions assembled by a young religious scholar who had studied at Umm al-Qura University in Mecca. Some years ago, the book was one of many similar, popular items at bookstores in the Arab world, attesting to a trend that started in the 1980s and gained full force during the 1990s, when the classical apocalyptic Hadith, newly re-assembled and re-edited by religious scholars, came to draw the interest of large numbers of conservative readers. For the purposes of this paper, al-Wabil's book will serve as example of the mixture of scholarly Hadith expertise, civic caution, and the anti-globalization stance that has characterized much of today's traditionalist clerical output. In addition, the volume is also animated by a spirit of hostility towards historical and modern Islamic rationalism and reformism, and an anti-Western/anti-Jewish/anti-Christian stance, that betray its "fundamentalist" roots. Thus it belongs into a universe that parallels the anti-rationalist, anti-reformist, and anti-Islamic platform of the New Fundamentalist Evangelical Christian Right. As the three monotheistic contemporary fundamentalisms (Jewish, Christian, and Muslim) share the use of today's means of instant communication in propagating the apocalypse in terms of their own vindication, the theme has acquired a globalized and hastened, dialectical power in the validation of exclusionary religious identity and worth.

Our source lists the historical and moral "signs", i.e. those that have occurred and/or are still with us, under the heading of "minor signs," while the metahistorical and messianic traditions are collected in a chapter entitled "major signs." The author adds glosses in the form of Hadith interpretation and application to some of his listings. All of the "basic texts" in this compilation, however, are of classical origin and well documented as to their provenance from the medieval collections. Thus they differ considerably from the contemporary Islamic non-clerical apocalyptic literature that is discussed at the end of this paper.

## Minor signs of the hour

In this compendium, the minor signs of the hour are presented in sequential listings where traditions on natural disasters, lunar and solar eclipses, and landmarks of Islamic history intersperse the enumeration of significant societal aberrations. By placing the latter paradigmatically in the context of the prophetic Hadith, their contemporary manifestations are given true apocalyptic weight, while the line between historic events that had seemingly fulfilled prophetic predictions, and their future re-occurence, remains equally open. The following partial synopsis maintains the sequencing and numbering of the source's data. The compiler's commentary has been omitted except where a brief gloss is given within parantheses.

Among the minor signs of the hour are the following:

1. The Prophet's mission (since God's messenger Muhammad is the last prophet sent to mankind, his career initiates the last chapter of human history); 2. The death of the Prophet; 3. The conquest of Jerusalem (achieved by the second caliph Umar, who prayed where the Prophet[12] had prayed facing the true qibla, after which he set to cleaning the place of refuse); 5. Superabundance of wealth that leaves no-one in need of receiving sadaqa [charity]; 6. The appearance of fitan [many varieties of turmoil, anarchy, secession, and seduction], such as when believers turn into unbelievers and sell their religion for nonessential things of this world; when sectarian and other dissenters belie the true message of Islam; when trials and tribulations arrive from the East (Islam's struggles against invaders from Asia, such as the Mongols, or, later, communism); when sectarian and political divisions erupt within the Islamic community (here the compiler lists the civil wars of early Islamic history); when Muslims (slowly but deeply) appropriate the traditions of others (Persians and Byzantines, Jews and Christians); when religion is affected by (heretical) innovations ("innovations" based on "arbitrary views" and "personal opinion" to where Muslim men come to resemble unbelieving men, and Muslim women resemble unbelieving women);

7. The appearance of false prophets; 10. Islam's struggle against the Turks, "people of small eyes, broad and reddish faces, flat noses, who wear fur and walk in shoes made of fur" (here the compiler distinguishes between the Mongols whose conquest of Islamic territories wrought devastation, and later Turkish dynasties who served the Islamic cause by spreading the power and might of Islam both East and West); 12. The loss of trustworthiness, loyalty, and integrity (coupled with loss of the true faith); 13. The supression of knowledge and the emergence of ignorance; 14. Abundance of police squads and oppressive officials who wield whips the size of the tails of cattle; 15. The prevalence of illicit sexual relations;

16. The spreading of usury; 17. The condonement of musical instruments (and of male and female singers); 18. Widespread and condoned consumption of wine;

19. The decoration of mosques as a matter of pride and competition (and the ornate embellishment of copies of the Holy Book); 20. The building of very tall *buildings; 22. Wide-spread killing (massacres and senseless fighting within the Muslim community); 23. A (perceptible) acceleration of time (when a year feels like a month, a month like a week, a week like a day, a day like an hour, and an hour like the small amount of time it takes for a palm leaf to burn to ashes);

24. Closeness between markets (when markets affect each other's trading); 25. The rise of idolatry in the community (when idols are worshiped and graves are made into sanctuaries and shrines); 26. The emergence of indecency (obscenity) and enmity among relatives and neighbors; 27. Imitation of the young by the old;

28. Prevalence of avarice, greed, and covetousness; 29. Pervasiveness of trade (and wealth gained from trade); 30. Abundance of earthquakes; 31. Frequent occurrences of disgrace, distortion, and defamation; 32. Departure of the righteous (so that those who remain are mainly evil); 33. The rise to prominence of the despicable (to where the liar is believed, the traitor trusted, and the fool's advice heeded); 34. Extending greetings (of peace) to acquaintances only (when the communal spirit is weakened); 35. Seeking knowledge from

minors; 36. The emergence of women who are nude even when they are clothed (because their garments do not cover their "private parts");38. The pervasiveness of writing (when knowledge of how to write is widely spread);39. Neglect by Muslims of the rules of Islam; 40. Distention, or swelling-up, of the new moon (to where it appears bigger than previously observed); 41. Abundance of lies and lack of verification in the transmission of information (the news);42. Prevalence of false testimony (and suppression of true testimony); 43. Abundance of women and paucity of men (to where there is a single man left for every 50 women);

44. Frequent occurrences of sudden and unexpected death; 45. Snubbing and stand-offishness among people; 46. The greening of Arabia: when the land of the Arabs returns to being a land of rivers and fields; 47. When there is much rain but little vegetation; 49. When predatory animals and minerals speak to humans;

50. When people wish to die (lie in a grave that they are passing) because of the severe trials and tribulations (that they are suffering); 51. When the Rum (Byzantines/the pallid people) are in the majority and fight against the Muslims; 52. The conquest of Constantinope (without military struggle,i.e. the event lies in the future); and so forth.[13]

Other Hadith collections also list additional traditions on the minor signs that signal the end. All depict the future as wrought with difficulties. The Muslim community will break into a chaotic mass of conflicting sects. As faith, morality and honesty, human decency and acceptable generational and gender relations, political accountability, justice and public civility fall by the wayside,the whole fabric of the Muslim community is rent asunder. Sedition follows sedition,until the living envy the dead. Eventually, according to the apocalyptic Hadith, God sends a final seducer in the person of the antichrist (al-Dajjal, the "Imposter," or al-Masih/al-Masikh al-Dajjal, "the False Messiah") who is either a beast,a monster, or a human figure. God also sends the world its redeemer in the person of the Mahdi. To some minority voices, Jesus son of Mary is the eschatological savior whom the Hadith calls the Mahdi. To most others,they are two distinct figures, and the Mahdi is of the Prophet's lineage.[14] In the contemporary compendium of classical end time Hadith quoted above and in what follows,the rise of the Dajjal, return of Jesus,and arrival of the Mahdi signify the shift from "minor" to "major signs" of the hour when the world begins to witness the final struggle between good and evil that is the concluding chapter of human history.

## Major signs of the hour

In this Hadith collection, the Mahdi is identified as a member of Muhammad's family; "his name is like that of the Prophet, and his father's name is the same as that of the Prophet's father."[15] The Mahdi will rule the earth for seven, or eight, or nine years, filling it with justice just as it was before filled with injustice. Under his reign, the community will live in ease and comfort as never before. The earth will bear vegetation, rain will be plentiful, wealth will be abundant and equally divided among the faithful.[16] Thereafter, the antichrist, Dajjal                                                           (or                                                           al-Masih/ al-Masikh al-Dajjal) appears from the East. Among the signs of the Dajjal are that he is blind in one eye, has frizzy hair, and on his forehead blazes the word kafir [unbeliever] that Muslims see and understand, whether they be literate or illiterate.[17] The Dajjal roams the earth (except for Mecca and Medina, — or: the holy mosques of Mecca, Medina, Jerusalem and Tor —, which are guarded by angels).[18] He travels with enormous speed. He tempts people away from their true faith by way of "pseudo-miracles," that is, preternatural feats — (interchangeably) a (cold) fire and a (blazing) garden. Wherever he goes, he brings with him great wealth: rivers, mountains of bread, and honey. He can produce rain and the greening of the earth, but this is always followed by destruction. His reign on earth lasts only forty days, except that the first day equals a year, the second a month, the third a week, and the rest of his days are like human days.[19]

The Dajjal's army is largely made up of Jews, Persians, Turks, and an admixture of other people who are mainly "Arabs of the desert" (Bedouins), and women. According to traditions here quoted from Muslim ibn Hajjaj's and Ahmad ibn Hanbal's canonical Hadith collections, seventy thousand Jews will follow the Dajjal, while traditions quoted from Bukhari's and Ibn Maja's canonical Hadith collections also include Persians, Turks, and desert Arabs among the Dajjal's followers. According to a tradition in Ibn Hanbal, most of the Dajjal's followers are women, since women are even more ignorant and impressionable than are the Bedouins. Reportedly the Prophet predicted that, after the Dajjal's appearance at a place in the vicinity of Medina, men would tie up their consorts and mother, daughter, sister and aunt for fear that they might join the Dajjal.[20]

Against the Dajjal's onslought, Muslims are reduced to a remnant. In their hour of need, Jesus will return to earth from heaven (to where, according to the Qur'an, he ascended without dying on the cross) in order to lead the final battle against the Dajjal. Jesus will descend on the Eastern Minaret in Damascus, and the (remaining) believers gather around him. The Dajjal makes his escape toward Jerusalem but Jesus will slay the Dajjal at the gate of Lydda in Palestine. The Dajjal's followers are likewise annihilated when the Muslims (in Jesus' army) will pursue and kill them (with supernatural help) so that the trees and stones are saying: oh Muslim, oh servant of God, there is a Jew behind me, come and kill him, — except for the Gharqad tree, which remains silent, as indeed it is a tree of the Jews.[21] Then Jesus will reign in justice and plenty, validating Islam, exterminating the pig and breaking the crosses of the Christians (on whom he will levy the poll tax). He will apply the (Muhammadan) shari'a and perform the ritual prayer behind the Mahdi. This period will last for seven or forty or many more years.[22] Then the final horrors of human history unfold, Gog and Magog arrive who rush from every hill and drink all available water, including Lake Tiberias, until they are defeated and killed.[23] There are three solar eclipses,[24] then a great smoke arises,[25] the sun rises in the West,[26] the beast from the earth appears,[27] a fire drives the people to crowd together (in anticipation of judgment day)[28] and history gives way to the day of doom.

## The apocalyptic impulse, church, and state

Millenarian expectation and political radicalism often fit each other's needs. To the oppressed and persecuted, in Islam as elsewhere, their suffering designates them as the elect who hold the promise of redemption. It was, therefore, mainly with the Shi'a that apocalyptic millenarianism came into its own. In post-tenth century Imamite (Twelver) Shiism, the Mahdi came to be identified as the Twelfth Imam, Muhammad the son of Hasan al-Askari, who will return from occultation at the end of time to fulfill the hopes of the Shi'i community and deliver mankind from degeneration. Earlier imams had been similarly awaited. A special eschatological place is also reserved for the third Imam, Husayn, the great martyr and final avenger, whose return together with a group of loyal followers signals the "first resurrection" of the elect.[29]

Establishments, both state and church, have always considered apocalyptic millenarianism extremely dangerous. Like the Christian Church, and for the same reasons, Sunni establishment Islam took a dim view of apocalyptic movements that came with messianic claims and promises of this worldly redemption. State-supporting ulama (clerics), in their role as scripturalist experts in government service, have used the apocalyptic Hadith in "mirror of the times" fashion to criticize unwelcome social and political practices, but mainly to call for repentance.[30] After a history of two centuries of bloody and failed attempts to wrest political power from the Umayyads and Abbasids (in 680, 689, 758, 864 C.E.), even the Shi'a leadership increasingly withdrew from politics to concentrate on developing Shi'i doctrine and law.[31] Simultaneously, the concept of occultation gained prominence in Shi'i theology. With the declaration of the Twelfth Imam's Major Occultation in 939 CE, the Imamites (Twelvers) reinforced their position of political quietism; the Hidden Imam would return as the Mahdi at a future point in time that was "known only to him and God." With this doctrine, the Twelver Shi'a also distanced themselves from the activist and revolutionary agenda of the Sevener Isma'iliyya that held attractions for many of the Shi'i faithful at the time.[32] In this manner, the Twelver establishment came to deal with their eschatological traditions much as the Sunni theologians did: cautiously. The final outcome of history was clear, but their emphasis lay on the duty to wait patiently.[33]

Nineteenth            and            early-twentieth            century            Sunni            modernist            reformists, re-focusing on an older rationalist tradition in Sunni theology, developed new approaches to the Qur'anic text with the goal of strength-

ening and modernizing Muslim society in the colonialist age. Their "school's" methodology has sought to understand and interpret the scripture by way of its own internal structure and thematic hierarchy, which has meant reducing the space that was previously granted to the Hadith. Modernist reformism has been particularly outspoken in its criticism of the apocalyptic Hadith, discrediting the isra'iliyyat traditions as a foreign body imported from other cultures that are in essence un-Islamic. A century ago, for example, Rashid Rida dealt with the concept of the apocalyptic Mahdi as a doctrinal item representative of the inherent weakness and unreliability of the classical corpus of apocalyptic Hadith. To Rida, these messianic traditions, while attributed to the Prophet, were based on authorities known for Hadith forgery; they were put into circulation to support the political claims of early Shiite, or Abbasid, or even older anti-Arab and anti-Islamic Persian groups who used the venue of Hadith invention to strengthen their political claims.[34] Within the same context, Rida chastised the social, cultural, and political passivity of the Arab Muslims of his own age who transferred their hopes of regeneration to the miraculous powers of a Mahdi-to-come, while in truth it was up to the Arab Muslims themselves to actively struggle for a renewal of their past civilizational and political preeminence, which would only occur through modernization.[35] For Rida's (early twentieth-century Islamic modernist) paradigm, an example of successful change from passive messianic expectation to modernist activism was provided by the Jewish experience, where embrace of modern science, revival of the Hebrew language, emphasis on banking, and alliance with "the greatest power on earth" [Britain] had served to establish a Jewish homeland (watan yahudi).[36] In the same vein, Rida questioned the validity of the Hadith corpus regarding the concept of the Dajjal. The narratives on the Dajjal's end time reign and ultimate defeat were unreliable because of: questionable origin and transmitters, weak chains of Hadith authentication, internal contradictions on this topic within the Hadith corpus as a whole (that invalidate all of its parts), and the fact that these narratives contradict the Qur'anic text. Rida registered agreement with earlier authorities who had attributed these traditions to old Jewish and Christian lore, especially as transmitted by the likes of Ka'b al-Ahbar who "used such fables to deceive the Muslims and corrupt their religion."[37]

This modernist, deconstructionist approach to the apocalyptic Hadith remains largely unacceptable to the traditionalists among the Islamic clerical establishment. This is not to say that the rank and file of Islamic ulama are in favor of revolutionary apocalyptic movements, as the opposite holds true; when working within an established political system, state supporting theologians and legists prefer the often intricate balance between their own professional power base and that of the state which largely controls it. In truth, their professed loyalty to the apocalyptic Hadith in its inherited and literalist form lies much closer to home, which is a corporatist defense of their professional scripturalist expertise that includes privileged knowledge of the canonical Hadith. Chipping away at that corpus would weaken the whole edifice of traditionalist theology and law that is the ulama's mainstay. Therefore, it is far better for the religious establishment to downplay, or "interpret," certain apocalyptic traditions, especially if they have a political edge to them (such as the hadiths on end time tyrannical governments) than to disregard them altogether. This long-lived corporatist mode of the Muslim religious establishment(s), however, has not prevented political agents and revolutionary activists, both Sunni and Shi'a, from appropriating an apocalyptic framework for their activities, and the apocalyptic indicator of a timetable of "round numbers" may have helped to sharpen the focus of some of them.

### The apocalyptic impulse, numerology, and political action

Round numbers, in a society's or culture's calendar, are powerful factors in social imagination. In the eschatological context, chronography and calendars can acquire symbolic meaning and even cosmic significance. The feeling that the world and time are coming to an end does not need a century's or millennium's closure. But the two notions have historically quickened and spurred each other. Millennialism has often identified the end of chronological cycles as moments of crisis, while the reverse has also been true, and the end of a century, or a millennium, aroused millenarian expectations.

Islamic history provides abundant examples of Mahdi figures who rose with millenarian claims and intentions, some of whom found establishment support. The Sudanese Mahdi created his Islamic state in the Sudan in 1884, at the very beginning of the 14th century of the Islamic calendar. Just prior to the dawning of the year 1400 h, the 1979 Iranian revolution used apocalyptic material to communicate the urgency of its reformist message. In the dawn hour of New Year's Day 1400 h, 1 Muharram of hijra year 1400, a group of Arab Muslim revolutionaries occupied the Meccan sanctuary and proclaimed that the Mahdi had come. This date was momentous because—according to an apocalyptic tradition—5000 years separated Adam from Jesus and 600 years separated Jesus from Muhammad, so that the year 1400 of the Muslim calendar signified the Year 7000 which God had decreed as Creation's End. The core group of the 1979 Meccan apocalyptic rebels was formed by young puritanical Saudis, several of them former law and theology students at Medina and Mecca. Their Mahdi was Muhammad ibn Abdallah al-Qahtani, whose signs fulfilled the eschatological Hadith in that he was of the Prophet's tribe, had proclaimed himself a descendant of the Prophet, his and his father's name were the same as the Prophet's and the Prophet's father's, and he had arrived in Mecca from the North. The second leader of the group, Juhayman ibn Muhammad al-Utaybi, had tribal as well as ideological links to the Saudi Ikhwan of the 1920s; he was known for his previous attacks on the ruling dynasty and the clerical establishment, denunciations of what he saw as their shared corruption, and castigations against modernization and all modern devices in the Kingdom. The Saudi ulama then issued a fatwa [legal opinion] that permitted the use of military force to remove the rebels from the Holy Mosque and kill the pretender for sowing dissension among the faithful.[38]

### Twentieth-century politics, globalization, and a new breed of Islamic apocalyptic literature

The millenarian theme continues to occupy many minds among the faithful. With the approach of the year 2000 of the Christian calendar, when the Islamic calendar read 1420, an abundance of Muslim books and pamphlets appeared on the Arab market that pegged the coming third millennium of the Western calendar to the final defeat of the West. Often predicated on old prophesizing hadiths about the coming fall of Byzantium [which did, indeed, occur] was/is the prediction of the collapse of Byzantium's latter-day-incarnations, Europe and America. But this new apocalyptic literature, that in fact began to appear in printed form in the 1980's (and in electronic format during the 1990's), is a new creature altogether. On the one hand, it is the offspring of the renewed Islamist impulse that began to gain momentum during the 1970's. Its other parent is globalization, which now functions as both source and venue of information that is seeping through today's increasingly porous borders between cultures. The globalized book and newspaper market, radio and television, but especially the Internet have given apocalyptic prophesies an array of newly pervasive and persuasive media in which to find expression. The apocalyptic fever is catching, especially among groups that decry the corrosive effects of modernization. There are scores of Muslim Internet sites and Web pages that carry Islamic apocalyptic messages, just as there are scores of Internet sites and Web pages that carry the apocalyptic messages of Jewish and Christian groups. At the same time, these Jewish, Christian, and Muslim visions of the end time are mutually exclusive in that each religion perceives the eschatological millennium in terms of its own global vindication.[39] Especially between Jewish and Muslim, and Christian and Muslim, fundamentalist groups, intercultural "awareness" of apocalyptic themes across religious lines has only served to harden the messages, since what has been traded are mainly the (hostile) spirit and some of the features and argumentation of Another's exclusivist model of apocalyptic expectation. In light of this process, hopeful notions such as 20th century inter-faith ecumenism (in the sense of mutual respect for the ethical values shared by the three monotheistic religions), and even early globalization theory (that defined globalization as a constructive and liberating, "positive" system of global interdependence) would appear utopian.

The "new genre" of Islamic apocalyptic literature follows established patterns by contextualizing inherited texts, as some ulama but now mainly "lay" voices address Arab and Muslim political grievances, especially as regards the Arab-Israeli struggle, in apocalyptic language. Throughout history, oppressive political situations have always sharpened the tenor of apocalyptic discourses that translated terrestrial strife into trans-temporal relevance. The new globalization is adding the element of "virtual" coexistence, that is, instantaneous mutual accessibility of clashing apocalyptic paradigms, where the new Islamic apocalyptic literature has come to bear the imprint of foreign fundamentalisms, especially that of Christian Evangelicalism. Most discernible here are Christian fundamentalist writings in the manner of Hal Lindsey's The Late Great Planet Earth (1970) and parts of the LaHaye-Jenkins Left Behind series (first volume 1995, ten volumes by 2002). To these are added anti-semitic conspiracy theories in the manner of "The Protocols of the Elders of Zion" (a tzarist forgery) and also some American science fiction details. Christian Evangelical prophesy is grounded in a Dispensationalism that predicates Christ's Second Coming on the building of the Third Temple in Jerusalem, which informed (or was encouraged by) nineteenth and twentieth-century British and American support for Restorationism (the restoration of a Jewish Kingdom, or homeland), and has underlain nineteenth and twentieth-century Evangelical efforts to propagate Christianity among the Jews. In the present-day Muslim

apocalyptic literature, this scenario is well used, but in the negative—that is, it is turned around, in that the end of the world will not arrive until Israel is defeated. In this context, then, the Arab-Israeli conflict has assumed apocalyptic significance. Difference between the Evangelical Christian end time scenarios and the Muslim versions is that the believers whose faith in the end triumphs above all others, symbol of their exclusive right to salvation, are not the Christians but the Muslims.

The new Islamist writers have also truncated the medieval apocalytic Hadith, not by reasoned inquiry into its historical cultural role, in the manner of Islamic modernism, but by a pick-and-choose approach to the traditional texts that means to battle present-day political, economic, and cultural problems, as well as other religions, in apocalyptic language predicated on a defensive/offensive exceptionalism. U.S. support for the state of Israel, economic imbalances keenly perceived as existing between the "First World" and the "Third," and the negative impact of modernization on traditional values are pre-eminent among its themes. This contemporary apocalyptic literature, then, is anti-Western in that it sees the West (often equated with Christianity) as the main breeding ground of immorality, whence its imperialist governments, voracious multi-national corporations, and intrusive media export it to the Muslim territories. This literature is also, especially, anti-American; in addition to the political, economic, and cultural oppression that the U.S. is wreaking on the Islamic world, American foreign policy and especially the continued American support for the state of Israel are seen as pertaining to, or representative of, the methods of the Dajjal's world domination. Thirdly, the literature is also, and most especially, anti-Jewish and anti-Israel, to where Israel is seen either as an embodiment of the Dajjal's power, or as his agent and instrument in accomplishing his goals. This information is passed along an Islamist-fundamentalist information loop of oral communication, video and audio cassettes of sermons delivered by Islamist preachers, popular pulp fiction narratives, and the new electronic media including Web sites and Home pages.

The writers of this new Islamic apocalyptic literature are mainly non-ulama professionals (journalists and/or university graduates in the arts and sciences) of Islamist background who have acquired some familiarity with both the Western, Christian Evangelical, and the Western, anti-semitic, texts mentioned above. In addition, some also have knowledge of science and the applied sciences, and Western literature, science fiction, and popular culture. Their readings of the apocalypse thus represent a new hybrid that derives from this new globalized mix.

For the purposes of this paper, the popular tract Beware, The False Messiah (Dajjal) Is Conquering The World From The Bermuda Triangle[40] by the Egyptian, later Saudi-based journalist Muhammad Isa Daud, a graduate of the College of Arts at Cairo University, will serve as an example of how conspiracy theories, science fiction, and popular superstition in the manner of the National Inquirer can be wedded together to explain all present-day world crises as signs of the Dajjal's arrival. The author avers that the Dajjal has already appeared, since it is his (as yet invisible) control of world affairs that generates the global problems suffered by contemporary humanity.[41] The Dajjal's hand lies hidden behind both Soviet and (now, especially) American power politics and world domination. His rich followers and agents abound in the U.S.; prominent among them are Jews[42] and also those actors and actresses of Hollywood and Broadway[43] whom he controls. The Dajjal's main powerbase lies in the Bermuda Triangle. From there he commands a fleet of UFOs/Flying Saucers that are, in truth, man-made and human-piloted aircraft of awesome technical capabilites. Daud[44] presents a lengthy discourse on a classical Hadith according to which the Dajjal is/was imprisoned on an island before his final end time emergence.[45] Sign of his release from this captivity to the author is the return of the Jews to Jerusalem, a historic fact that he ascribes to the world conspiracy recorded in the "Protocols of the Elders of Zion" as the Dajjal's secret handywork.[46] When the time is right, the Dajjal will reveal himself; he will emerge in the guise of an American or Russian man of war, equipped with the most advanced and frightening military arsenal.[47] But the Muslims are not afraid, because they know that the Dajjal's final defeat is foreordained.[48]

Similar end time scenarios inform the work The False Messiah (Dajjal) Is About To Emerge[49] by Hisham Kamil Abd al-Hamid, also an Egyptian Islamist writer. The author provides information on the Bermuda Triangle and the Flying Saucers that are manned by the Dajjal's army.[50] New and distinct are his familiarity with the Jewish and Christian Bible and the fact that he pursues his Hadith-based study of the Dajjal while providing information on ("the equivalent notion of") the Antichrist found in the Torah and Evangel[51] and their end time predictions,[52] where he frequently invokes Christian Evangelical narratives. The book's section on Jewish world conspiracy with special reference to "The Protocol of the Elders of Zion"[53] is followed by a chapter on "Jewish plans to destroy Al-Aqsa Mosque in the year 2000 and build the Jewish Temple in its place, in which to worship the Dajjal."[54] Quoting from the First Book of The Kings, the author celebrates [the Qur'anic prophet] (our lord) Solomon's building of the First Temple in Jerusalem, and Solomon's prayer there that God safeguard His covenant with His righteous servants. He continues to say that the Jews did not adhere to the covenant and later even slandered Solomon, as they did all other prophets, whence the Temple was destroyed and the Jews are still awaiting their King from the House of David to occupy the Throne of Israel. The Temple was rebuilt after the Jewish return from the Babylonian Exile, but after rejecting [the Qur'anic prophet] Jesus and continuing in their sinful ways, Jesus' prophesy (here quoted from Matthew) was fulfilled and the Second Temple destroyed. The author lists public statements made by "Israeli politicians, Zionist and Western Imperialist (British and American) organizations and individuals, and Christian Evangelical missionaries" that have supported building the Third Temple in Jerusalem. Among the Evangelical group, he mentions Hal Lindsey and Billy Graham and avers that these Christian beliefs are erroneous because based on falsified Jewish texts and interpretations.[55] Both the Christian Bible and the Muslim canon were negatively affected by Jewish influence, the former by the work of Paul who corrupted Christ's teachings, and the latter by those early converts to Islam (like Ka'b al-Ahbar) who introduced false traditions, the isra'iliyyat, for the same purpose.[56] The book's final chapter on the

Dajjal's world leadership assumes that he is already returned and now controls, by way of World Zionism, the United Nations, the Security Council, and the big powers.[57] This section includes an Arabic translation of chapter 13 of the Book of Revelation with the author's own historical, political, and eschatological interpretations. As to the fate of Al-Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem, Abd al-Hamid counsels his Muslim readers not to worry. Not all signs (such as "a third world war between the Muslims, and Jews and the West," and "the conquest of Rome") have so far been fulfilled, even though the time appears ripe (since the arrival of the end time is predicated on endless conflicts and dissensions among Muslim, such as can be observed today). Their hope must rest on the Hadith-imparted knowledge that, firstly, the Mahdi will unite all of Islam upon his arrival and, secondly, that Jesus after his return to earth will pray behind the Mahdi in Jerusalem, which means that at that time Al-Aqsa Mosque will still be standing.[58]

The two works quoted above belong to the sensationalist fringes of radical Islamist thought. Yet while the science fiction themes may be of marginal importance, the radical edge is essential to the message. As is true for the whole genre of this "new" apocalyptic literature, neither of these two volumes carries clerical establishment (ulama) endorsement, and both of our Egyptian Islamist examples were published by new Cairo printing houses (Daud's in Muhandisin and Abd al-Hamid's in Maadi) instead of by the established presses in the Al-Azhar/Al-Husayn area that issue traditional religious books. These observable features help to locate these two and many similar works into the present-day Islamic discourse. Regarding this literature, an Azhar-educated scholar would first of all object to the lack of established and proven knowledge of the classical Hadith. The obviously dilettantish pick-and-choose approach, heavy on anti-Jewish traditions, would be contempuously regarded as "laymen's work," even if the ultimate message were to find some resonance in ulama thinking. Clerical objections would furthermore include the sensationalism, quasi-scientific argumentation, foreign-culture and pop-culture references, and the mass market focus of this literature. To my knowledge there are at present no television shows in the Arab world (after the recent cancellation of the Egyptian high-class preacher Amr Khalid's T.V. show) that are bringing a similar package to Arab television viewers. Part of the persona of this "new" Islamist apocalyptic literature is the desire to fill a cultural niche that, in the American Christian West, is well occupied by Christian Televangelists, most prominent among them the Revs. Jerry Falwell, Pat Robertson, and Franklin Graham. In substance and style, cultural production of the new (freelance) Islamism and the American Christian Right shares a number of features, among them re-interpretation of past traditions in monolithic, harsher, and more politicized terms; a deliberate stance against (their own religion's) older, traditional clerical establishments; and the exploitation of the new media to the fullest extent possible. Each side denies that their own religion, as well as the religion of the Other, comprises (the) diversity and variety (that is the mark of any living religion).

European and early U.S. Protestantism gave rise to many sects; some were anti-semitic, others propagated a form of Judeo-Christianity, while all shared a common apocalyptic vision of the future in which the arrival of the Messiah would end the suffering of believers and create a heavenly order on earth. This apocalyptic view of history also developed within Islam, with fundamentalists seeking salvation on earth and not in heaven. Evangelicalism embraced the notion of the Jewish Return to the Holy Land, with the distinct expectation that the Jews in the Holy Land would be Christianized before the end time. The Judeo-Christian formula left only one unacceptable Other monotheistic religion, Islam, for denunciation. Islamic fundamentalism was affected by the formula, primarily in an anti-semitic manner. Fundamentalisms often present a problem to their countries' political institutions. After Jerry Falwell had called [the Prophet] Muhammad a "terrorist" on prime-time television[59] and similar remarks by Pat Robertson and Franklin Graham had also been publicized, President Bush distanced himself by stating that "some of the comments that have been uttered about Islam do not reflect the sentiments of my government or the sentiments of most Americans. Islam, as practiced by the vast majority of the people, is a peaceful religion."[60] By contrast, differences between Arab Islamist positions and their countries' official policies are rarely part of the evening news, since all but one or two television stations in the region are government-controlled.

## The nature of radical narratives

The potent mix of contemporary Islamist apocalyptic imagery means to console and energize the faithful, and scare Islam's enemies that restitution is nigh, when by divine ordinance the Muslim community of true believers returns to being a world power. Throughout history, encounters with enemies that were perceived as destined or inevitable have found expression in cultural discourses focused on difference and confrontation in a transcendental mode. Whether winning or losing, victor or vanquished, the collectively verbalized belief in the exclusivist justice of one's cause has served to rally and energize. "Narratives (that) juxtapose civilizations, religions, races, ethnic communities and nations...energize the collective psyche and orient it towards extremism. For this reason, they may be called radical."[61] Radical narratives exist in many forms, encompassing political manifestos, five-year plans, literature of both fact and fiction, painting, film, photography, and more. Central to the message is the creation and persistent reinforcement of an adversary's image as archetypal figure of the Other. It can be argued that the apocalyptic theme of "eschatological selection" of a specific religion or religious group to the exclusion of all others is as representative of the genre as are the themes of interethnic stereotypes and prejudice that inform those other "texts" just mentioned. Indeed, apocalyptic traditions have long borrowed from the latter, even across cultural frontiers, a fact here made evident by the obvious linkages between the anti-semitism of contemporary Islamist end time scenarios and European anti-semitic ideology.

All religions have an element of supremacy in their message that has throughout history informed, as well as been informed by, "state" ideology and political agendas. Where eschatological categories are enforced on political and social reality, the latter also make

their way into religious visions of end time significance. This is especially true in situations of perceived vulnerability, and alienation, when collective anxiety and feelings of inferiority are rallied to privilege the religion and defend its superiority over all others. To break the vicious circle would require hard, terrestrial, labor, on a global scale, "replacing the metaphysics of confrontation with the ethics of coexistence."[62]

## Endnotes

[1] As found, for instance, in the books of Ezekiel, Daniel, Joel, and Zechariah.

[2] Cf. Matthew 24:3–25:46; Luke 21:5–36; Paul, Thessalonians 4:13–5:3.

[3] Mainly in the Meccan Surahs, such as 99, 82, and 81.

[4] 80:34–37; 81:4; 70:10–14.

[5] Muslim scholars who figured with some prominence in the transmission of biblical lore were: Ka'b al-Ahbar ibn Mati', Abu Ishaq (d. around 652), a Yemeni Jewish convert to Islam, said to be the oldest authority for Jewish traditions in Islam; Abu Abdallah Wahb ibn Munabbih (d. around 730), a Yemeni authority on biblical legend and South Arabian history; Abdallah ibn Salam (d. 664), a Medinan Jew converted to Islam who transmitted many biblical narratives; Abu Hurayra al-Dawsi al-Yamani (d. around 678), Companion of the Prophet and prolific narrator of Hadith; also: Abdallah ibn Abbas (d.687), a student of Ka'b al-Ahbar; and Ibn Abbas' students: Mujahid, Ikrima, Sa'd ibn Jubayr, Qatada, and Dahhak.—Cf. M. W. Thackston, trans., *The Tales of the Prophets of Al-Kisa'i* (Boston, 1978) 337–339, 344–345, nn.1,2,4,10,12,42,44,45, 54.—On these and additional collectors, and the role of their traditions in Tafsir, biography, and historiography, cf. Gordon Newby, "Tafsir Isra'iliyyat," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion,* 47 (1979) 685–697, and Reuven Firestone, *Journey in Holy Lands* (Albanay, 1990) 3–21.

[6] A prolific scholar of Muslim apocalyptic literature and movements both classical and modern is David Cook of Rice University. Cf., for example, his "Messianism and Astronomical Events During the First Four Centuries of Islam," *Revue des Mondes Musulmans et de la Mediteranee,* 91–94 (2000) 29–52; and "Muslim Fears of the Year 2000," in *Middle East Quarterly,* 5 (1998) 51–68.—In addition to the latter title, other publications and writings of Professor David Cook are also available on the Website of the Boston *Center for Millennial Studies, www.mille.org,* such as his article "America, the Second 'Ad: Prophesies About the Downfall Of The United States," *h t t p : / / w w w . m i l l e . o r g / s c h o l a r s h i p / p a p e r s / ADAM.html* (March 22, 2002, 19 pages).

[7] In the medieval Arabic tradition, the arrangement of chapters in a book was usually determined by the book's focus, with the core issues presented first. In the Hadith collections of Bukhari and Muslim, for example, ritual law *('ibadat)* and socio-economic issues *(mu'amalat)* precede the chapters on eschatological matters.

[8] Ibn Khaldun, *Kitab al-'ibar wa-diwan al-mubtada' wal-khabar,* vol. 1 *(al-Muqaddima)* (Beirut, 1970), 155–159.

[9] Cf. Muhammad Rashid Rida, *Tafsir al-Qur'an al-hakim al-shahir bi-Tafsir al-Manar* (Beirut, 1970) vol.9, 489–504.

[10] E.g., Yusuf ibn Abdallah ibn Yusuf al-Wabil, *Ashrat al-sa'a* (Dammam, 1990), 265–269, 315–320.

[11] Cf., for example, Fahd Salim, *Asrar al-sa'a wa-hujum al-gharb* (Cairo, 1999), 20.

[12] During the Prophet's night journey, cf. Qur'an 17:1.

[13] Al-Wabil, *Ashrat,* 79–218.

[14] Cf. Jane I. Smith and Yvonne Y. Haddad, *The Islamic Understanding of Death and Resurrection* (Albany, 1981), 65–70.

[15] Al-Wabil, *Ashrat,* 249.

[16] Ibid, 249–273.

[17] Ibid, 275–283.

[18] Ibid, 311–315.

[19] Ibid, 313–315.

[20] Ibid, 311–312.

[21] Ibid, 222, 333–336. The latter tradition is recorded in Bukhari and Muslim on the authority of Abu Hurayra, a Companion of the Prophet "who lived only three years with the Prophet, yet he transmitted more *ahadith* than any other Companion." (Muhammad Mustafa Azmi, *Studies in Early Hadith Literature* [Indianapolis, 1978] 36).

[22] Ibid, 340–364.

[23] Ibid, 365–379.

[24] Ibid, 381–382.

[25] Ibid, 383–389.

[26] Ibid, 391–402.

[27] Ibid, 403–416.

[28] Ibid, 417–430.

[29] Mahmoud Ayoub, *Redemptive Suffering in Islam* (The Hague, 1978), 216–229; Abdulaziz A. Sachedina, "Messianism and the Mahdi," in *Expectations of the Millennium: Shiism in History,* ed. Seyyed Hossein Nasr, Hamid Dabashi, and Seyyed Vali Reza Nasr (Albany, 1989),

25.

[30] Cf. Smith and Haddad, *Death and Resurrection,* 128–131.

[31] Jassim M. Hussain,"Messianism and the Mahdi," in *Expectations of the Millenium,* 14–22.

[32] W. Montgomery Watt, "The Muslim Yearning for a Saviour: Aspects of Early Abbasid Shiism," in *The Saviour God,* ed. S.G.F. Brandon (Westport, 1980), 194–200.

[33] Sachedina,"Messianism and the Mahdi," in *Expectation of the Milennium,* 24–30.

[34] Rida, *Manar,* vol. 9, 501–504.

[35] Ibid,

[36] Ibid,500.

[37] Rida, *Manar,* vol.9,489–499. The quote is from p. 498.

[38] Joseph A. Kechichian, "The Ulama in Saudi Politics," *IJMES,* vol. 18, no. 1 (1986) 53–71; Moulana Abdul Quddus Hashmi, "Ka'aba Episode: A Historical Perspective," *Islamic Order,* vol. 1,no. 4 (1979) 7–8.

[39] The apocalyptic construction of "Identity"and "Otherness" among the three Abrahamic religions and its effect on contemporary politics are analyzed in, e.g., Gershom Gorenberg, *The End of Days: Fundamentalism And The Struggle For The Temple Mount* (New York, 2000; paperback, New York, 2002).

[40] *Ihdharu, Al-Masikh al-Dajjal yaghzu al-'alam min muthallath Barmuda* (Cairo, 1998).

[41] Daud, *Ihdharu,* 11, 42.

[42] Ibid, 111–115.

[43] Ibid, 117–120.

[44] Ibid,71–98.

[45] Ibid,16–18.

[46] Ibid, 100–101.

[47] Ibid,181.

[48] Ibid, 182.

[49] *Iqtaraba khuruj al-Masikh al-Dajjal* (Cairo, 1996).

[50] Abd al-Hamid, *Al-Masikh,* 45–168.

[51] Ibid. 9–44.

[52] Ibid,169–189; on this topic, the author also refers to Nostradamus ( 189–191).

[53] Ibid, 192–222.

[54] Ibid,222–231.

[55] Ibid,222–230.

[56] Ibid,238–254.—The author is unaware of the Islamic rationalist tradition,mentioned above,that had long attributed the whole notion of the Dajjal to foreign influence, mainly Jewish and Christian, i.e. to the *isra'iliyyat.*

[57] Ibid, 255–282

[58] Ibid.230–231.

[59] CBS "Sixty Minutes" program, October 6, 2002.

[60] Remarks offered during the portion of a November 13, 2002 Oval Office meeting with U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan that was open to reporters. —
On Pat Robertson's reaction to the President's statement, cf., for example, his interview with George Stephanopoulos on "This Week With George Stephanopoulos,ABC News," December 4,2002.

[61] Corinna Tsakidirou, "Ideology, Prejudice, and Ethnic Conflict in George Horton's *The Blight of Asia: A Radical Narrative Reconsidered," in The Turkish Studies Association Bulletin,* vol. 25, no. 1 (Spring 2001) 21.

[62] Ibid, p. 38.