DHIMMIS AND OTHERS: JEWS AND CHRISTIANS
AND THE WORLD OF CLASSICAL ISLAM
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That Jews and Christians were once transformed into apes and pigs by way of punishment, is a well-known Islamic idea. It is based on the Quran and is elaborated in Islamic literature. The aim of the present article is to illuminate a less explored aspect of the theme, namely, transformation into apes and pigs as a punishment meted out to Muslims.

In what follows the process of the adaptation of this Jewish-Christian type of punishment to Muslims will be traced, and its role within the Islamic context will be elucidated. It will become clear that the punishment was not applied to Muslim sinners at random, but rather to sinners whose deeds had a Jewish or a Christian connotation. It will be demonstrated that the traditions adapting the punitive transformation to Muslims were designed to confront Jewish and Christian elements which penetrated Islamic society and were considered a threat to the genuine Islamic identity.

ESCHATOLOGICAL MASH

As a punishment inflicted on Jews and Christians, transformation into apes and pigs is an event of the historical past. With the adaptation of the theme to Muslims, it has been changed from historical to eschatological; the traditions imposing this punishment on Muslims are all cast as apocalypses anticipating future disasters for sinful Muslims, including transformation.

As an eschatological event, the transformation has become associated with the idea of mash — the usual Arabic term for metamorphosis. The


2 Occasional reference to some relevant traditions has already been made in Cook, “Ibn Qutayba and the Monkeys”, note 32.
link between the two themes is secondary, and in its historical form the punitive transformation into apes and pigs has little to do with the idea of mash. This is very clear in the Quran in which the punishment of sinners becoming apes and pigs is not described as mash at all. In fact, the root m.s.h. is employed in the Quran only once, and in a strict eschatological context. It occurs in a passage (36:63–67) describing the day on which the [non-Muslim] sinners will be shown the hell (gahannam) that was promised to them. On that day God will set a seal on their mouths, and if God wills, He will obliterate their eyes so that they will not find their way on the path (ṣirāt). Or He may change them (la-masalnāhum) where they are, so that they will not be able to proceed, or to go back.

The earliest Quran exegetes differ as to the exact significance of the eschatological mash awaiting the sinners, and suggest different possibilities: Changing them into stones, making them lame, or crippled in the legs and the arms (kush), or changing their outer appearance (halaq), or destroying (ahlaka) them where they stand. Two basic meanings can be detected here: transformation (including deformation) and destruction. They remind one of the Hebrew root h.f.k., which in the Bible has the same range of connotations. It signifies destruction (by overthrowing), as well as transformation. A variant form of the root found its way into the Quran in passages reflecting the biblical story of the destruction of Sodom, and in early hadīth this root (h.f.k.) is sometimes interchangeable with the root m.s.h. (see below).

As for m.s.h. in the sense of transformation, it is significant that the above exegetes have offered various possibilities, but none with apes and pigs:  

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3 Quran 2:65; 5:60; 7:166.  
5 Ṣaḥīḥ al-Razzāq, Taḥfīz, II, 145. The isnād: Ṣaḥīḥ al-Razzāq < Maʿmār < Qatāda. See also Syūṭī, Durr, V, 268. The same is also the sense of the interpretation of masaḥahu as aqaʿadahu. See Ḥuwawīrī, III, 439; Ṭabarī, Taḥfīz, XXIII, 18 (al-Ḥasan al-Ǧarīrī, Qatāda); Māwarzī, Nukat, V, 29; Zamaḥṣārī, Kaššāf, III, 329; Ibn al-Ǧawzī, Zād al-maṣārī, VII, 33; Qurṭubī, Aḥkām, XV, 50; Ibn Kaṭīr, Taṭbīq, III, 578. Syūṭī ṭaḥfīz: Ṣūṣī, Taḥyūn, VIII, 473.  
6 Māwarzī, Nukat, V, 29 (al-Suddī); Ibn Kaṭīr, Taṭbīq, III, 578.  
7 Ṭabarī, Taḥfīz, XXIII, 18 (Ibn ʿAbbās); Māwarzī, Nukat, V, 29; Ibn al-Ǧawzī, Zād al-maṣārī, VII, 33; Qurṭubī, Aḥkām, XV, 50; Ibn Kaṭīr, Taṭbīq, III, 578; Syūṭī, Durr, V, 268. The best-known example of the changing of sinners into stones is the case of the Meccan idols Isāf and Nāḥila who are said to have originally been a man and a woman who had fornicated in the Kaʿba, and therefore were turned into stones. See, e.g., Ibn al-Kalbī, Aṣnaḥām, 9; Ibn Abī l-Dunyāʾ, Uqūbat, nos. 304–305; Azraqqī, 49, 74.  
8 Genesis 19:29 (Sodom); Jonah 3:4 (Nineveh).  
9 Exodus 7:15 (the rod of Moses).  
10 Quran 9:70; 69:9; 53:53.
pigs. Only relatively late Quran commentaries interpret *masَh* as metamorphosis into apes and pigs.\(^{11}\) This is a clear indication that the idea of transformation into apes and pigs and the punishment of *masَh* awaiting the sinners in the eschatological future were only linked at a secondary stage.

The evidence of *haddīt* material seems to confirm the impression that the idea of the eschatological *masَh* was not always linked to the idea of punitive metamorphosis into apes and pigs. There are several traditions describing the eschatological *masَh* in which there is no mention of apes or of pigs. Let us take a look at these traditions.

Most of the traditions about the eschatological *masَh* describe a triple calamity which portends the Hour, i.e., the eschatological phase of world history. Such traditions emerged as a result of the civil wars (*fitan*) which occurred among Muslims during the Umayyad period. The tribulations triggered an apocalyptic mood which gave rise to traditions predicting the impending end of the world, and the triple calamity is mentioned frequently among the apocalyptic events.

One of the three events of which the calamity consists is *masَh*, while the other two are usually *hāsَf* and *qaddَf*. The latter two, like the event of *masَh*, have a Quranic basis, signifying divine retribution. The root *hāsَf* is used quite frequently in the Quran,\(^{12}\) denoting the act of God in causing the earth to engulf the sinners, either in past history or in the eschatological future. An event of an army being swallowed up (*hāsَf*) on its way to Mecca is often described in apocalyptic visions alluding to the military clash in Arabia between 'Abdallāh b. al-Zubayr and the Umayyads.\(^{13}\) The act of *qaddَf* is less frequent in the Quran; it denotes the pelting of devils with shooting stars.\(^{14}\) Sometimes another event replaces one of the three, or appears as a fourth, namely *rāgَf*: “earthquake”. This, too, is a Quranic eschatological calamity.\(^ {15}\)

The earliest traditions in which the triple calamity is predicted were circulated in Syria, and mainly in Ḥimṣ, where messianic and apocalyptic

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12 Quran 16:45; 28:81; 29:40; 34:9; 67:16.


14 37:8.

expectations were nurtured especially in connection with holy war against
the nearby Byzantine empire.\textsuperscript{16} They are all recorded by Nu‘aym b.
Ḥammād (d. AH 229) in his Kitāb al-fitân. The triple calamity is included
in a series of events which are usually foreseen by the Prophet himself.
They are about to happen at various stages of the history of the Islamic
\textit{umma}, and specific dates are provided, which serve to authenticate the
apocalypse.

One of these traditions is quoted from three Ḥimṣī traditionists: Šarīḥ b.
ʿUbayd, Abū ʿAmir al-Hawzanī and ʿAmra b. Ḥabīb (d. AH 130). In it the
Prophet predicts disastrous events which are to befall the Muslims between
AH 210–300. The triple calamity (\textit{qaḍf-ḥasf-maslâh}) will be the first.\textsuperscript{17} In the
tradition of ʿUbayr b. Nufayr (Ḥimṣī d. AH 75), the events predicted by
the Prophet take place between AH 133–200. The triple calamity (pelting
with stones, ḥasf and \textit{maslâh}) is scheduled to occur in AH 172.\textsuperscript{18} In the Ḥimṣī
tradition of the Meccan Companion ʿAbdallāh b. Ṭūmar (d. AH 73), the
Prophet does not provide dates, but merely surveys a series of anticipated
earthquakes, which are accompanied in one instance by the triple calamity.
This tradition also refers to the stubbornness of the Muslim sinners, who
do not repent.\textsuperscript{19} Finally, there is also a short non-prophetic apocalypse,
transmitted by the Ḥimṣī ʿArṭāt b. al-Mundir (d. AH 163), referring only to
the triple calamity. In it ʿArṭāt provides a somewhat obscure indication of
the time of the event. He states that it will occur after the emergence of the
\textit{mahdī}, in the days of the Ḥāṣimī who will behave insolently in Jerusalem.\textsuperscript{20}

In the apocalyptic visions which were circulated outside Syria, the triple
calamity figures alone, with no other disasters. Here, too, the \textit{maslâh}
remains vague, with no mention of apes and pigs. These traditions are
usually based on a short uniform pattern. They open with the word \textit{yakûn}:
“there will be”, and proceed to specify the triple calamity. The utterance is
made by the Prophet in the first person, and he specifically declares that

\textsuperscript{16} Wilferd Madelung, “Apocalyptic Prophecies in Ḥimṣ in the Umayyad Age”, \textit{Journal of
Semitic Studies} 31 (1986), 141–85 (repr. in Wilferd Madelung, \textit{Religious and Ethnic
Movements in Medieval Islam}, Variorum Reprints, 1992); Josef Van Ess, \textit{Theologie und
Gesellschaft im 2. und 3. Jahrhundert Hidschra: Eine Geschichte des religiösen Denkens im

\textsuperscript{17} Nu‘aym b. Ḥammād, \textit{Fitân}, 427. See an abridged version \textit{ibid.}, 376. See also Cook,
“Ibn Qutayba and the Monkeys”, note 32.

\textsuperscript{18} Nu‘aym b. Ḥammād, \textit{Fitân}, 422. See also Cook, “Ibn Qutayba and the Monkeys”, note
32 (where he suggests emending the reading from 172 to 192).

\textsuperscript{19} Nu‘aym b. Ḥammād, \textit{Fitân}, 374. See also Suyūṭī, \textit{Durr}, VI, 326. The \textit{isnâd}: Ḥudayr b.

\textsuperscript{20} Nu‘aym b. Ḥammād, \textit{Fitân}, 378. The \textit{isnâd}: al-Ḥarrāḥ b. Mulayḥ (Ḥimṣī) < ʿArṭāt b.
the triple calamity will occur in "my community". Some versions of the utterance appear in certain canonical ḥadīth compilations. Thus Ibn Māga (d. AH 275) has recorded in Kitāb al-fītan of his Sunan some prophetic utterances of this kind. One is quoted from the Prophet by the Quraṭr Companion ʿAbdallāh b. ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ (d. AH 63),21 and the other by the Medinan Companion Sahl b. Saʿd al-Ansārī (d. AH 88).22 A third version, of ʿAbdallāh b. Masʿūd, provides a specific apocalyptic designation of the time of the triple calamity: "Just before the Hour".23 Outside the canonical compilations there are more such versions, quoted from the Prophet by the Companions Anas b. Mālik (Basran d. AH 91–95),24 and by Saʿd b. Abī Rāshīd.25 A version of the Companion Abū Hurayra (d. AH 57) opens with the standard formula of the traditions about the portents of the Hour: "The Hour shall not come until there is in my community ḥasāf and mash and qadf".26

**ESCHATOLOGICAL APES AND PIGS**

The meaning of mash in the above traditions is no clearer than it is in the Quran, but the range of possible interpretations of the term is narrowed down considerably in further versions in which this term has been glossed by an explicit mention of apes and pigs. Sometimes the term is simply replaced by the statement about the apes and the pigs; this is the case in the following Syrian version of ʿAṭāʾ al-Ḥurasānī (d. AH 135) in which the Prophet declares: "There will be in my community ḥasāf, and ṭaqāf and apes and pigs".27


Such modified versions are the result of a process in which the theme of the apes and the pigs was transformed from its original Jewish-Christian (historical) denotation to an Islamic (eschatological) one. This process began independently of the idea of the triple calamity, and deserves to be examined more closely.

The adaptation of the theme of the punitive metamorphosis into apes and pigs to Muslim sinners in the eschatological future is connected with the general idea of a common sin linking Israelites and Muslims. The latter are accused of following the ways (sunna, sunan) of their sinful predecessors. The traditions conveying this idea reflect the aversion of Sunni Muslims to the spread of the Israelite (Jewish-Christian) heritage in Islamic society, which challenged the Islamic identity of the believers. This aversion gave rise to a series of traditions denouncing the assimilation of the sunan of the Children of Israel into the Islamic sunna. A typical presentation of the idea is given in the following statement attributed to the Companion Ḥudayfa b. al-Yamān (Medinan/Kūfān d. AH 36) on whose authority many apocalypses were circulated. The present one was recorded by ʿAbd al-Razzāq. It runs as follows:

> You (i.e., the Muslims) will follow the ways (sunan) of the Children of Israel (in precise symmetry), as one feather of an arrow matches another, and as one strap of a sandal matches another — if a man of the Children of Israel did this or that, a man of this community would surely do it as well.

The tradition goes on to relate that upon hearing this, someone reminded Ḥudayfa that there had been apes and pigs among the Children of Israel, and Ḥudayfa retorted that apes and pigs would also be among this community. Thus the common fate shared by Israelites and Muslims involves not only identity of sin but also of punishment.

This version of the statement was transmitted on the authority of Ḥudayfa by the Bağrān Successor Qatāda b. Di‘āma (d. AH 117), but there is also a slightly different version of the same Companion transmitted by Abū l-Baḥṭarī Sa‘īd b. Fayruz (Kūfān d. AH 83). Here the statement is plain, with no similes. Ḥudayfa merely confirms that each act of the

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Children of Israel will be repeated by the Muslims, and that apes and pigs will be among them as well.  

There is also a Syrian version of the statement predicting a fate of transformation into apes and pigs for Muslims imitating the sins of their Jewish and Christian predecessors. The tradition describes a dialogue between the Syrian Companion ʿUbāda b. al-Ṣāmit (Anṣārī, d. AH 34–45) and another Muslim (Abū ʿAṭāʾ al-Yaḥbūrī). The former tells the latter that scholars and Quran experts will be persecuted, and that they will seek refuge with the beasts on the mountains, because Muslims will want to kill them. The latter does not believe it, claiming that such a sin could not be committed as long as the Quran exists among the Muslims. To this ʿUbāda replies:

Had not the Jews been given the Torah, but they went astray and abandoned it later on, and had not the Christians been given the Gospel, but they went astray and abandoned it later on? These are the ways (ṣūnān) that are followed everywhere, and by God, nothing happened among those who were before you, which will not take place among you as well.

In an extended version of the same dialogue, Abū ʿAṭāʾ al-Yaḥbūrī meets a few days later with the same ʿUbāda b. al-Ṣāmit and tells him that there were apes and pigs among “those before us”. ʿUbāda replies that he heard an unnamed person (jīlān) relating a tradition to the effect that before long, a group of this community will be transformed (tumsalt). Just as the apes and the pigs were turned from historical into eschatological, so the eschatological ḥasf became a historical one. This event — together with the other calamities — was built into some versions describing the transformation of the ancient Jews into apes and pigs. Thus a tradition of ʿIkrima (Medinan d. AH 105) relates that on the evening before the sinful Israelites were turned into apes and pigs, their righteous brethren had already warned them that God might kill them by ḥasf or qadf.

QADARĪS

But let us stay in the eschatological domain, which is reserved for the Muslims. There are more traditions which specify the exact group among

31 Ibn Abī Ṣayba, XV, 103 (no. 19227).
33 Ibn Abī l-Dunya, ʿUqūbāt, no. 347.
34 Ibid., no. 226.
the Muslims to whom the eschatological punishment of metamorphosis into apes and pigs will be meted out. They are the Qadarīs. This label stands for heretics who discuss the problem of the qadar (allaḏīna yaqūlūna ḥī l-qadārī), and deny (yukaddibūna) the totality of its effect. The term qadar itself means “destiny”, “decree”, and those who doubted its existence actually rejected the idea of predestination.

That heretics are likely to become apes and pigs has already been observed, but the reason why this fate shall affect them and not other Muslims has not yet been clarified. The reason seems to be connected with the fact that the views of the Qadarīs were condemned by their Muslim opponents as Jewish and Christian by origin. The evidence as to these accusations is abundant, contrary to the observation of Van Ess. Thus there are utterances attributed to the Prophet himself criticising the Qadariyya for their Christian-oriented views. One of them is of Ibn ʿAbbās who is quoted by his mawla ʿIkrima. In it the Prophet warns the Muslims against conducting debates on the qadar, because this kind of deliberation is a branch (ṣuʿba) of Christianity. In another Meccan tradition the Prophet predicts the emergence of people who will deny that God decreed the sins of man, and declares that they will have borrowed their views from the Christians. There is also a statement of the Kūfīn Saʿīd b. ʿUbayr (d. AH 95) to the effect that the Qadarīs are “Jews”. These are only a few examples out of many more.

Whether or not the association of the Qadarīs with Jews and Christians is historically justified, the mere association reflects the contempt of the Sunnīs for these heretics who shattered the unity of the Islamic community. The damage they caused to Islamic solidarity was blamed on their Jewish and Christian orientation.

Orthodox contempt for the heretics is demonstrated further in traditions attaching to them the most typical Jewish-Christian stigma: apes and pigs. This is indicated in a series of traditions condemning heretics in general, in which the heretics are on a par with Jews and Christians, as well as with apes and pigs. In some of these traditions the Basran Abū l-Ḡawzāʾ (Aws

37 In art. “Ḵadariyya”, EP (p. 371b), he says that the traditions against the Qadarīs “speak of the ‘Magians’ instead of the ‘Christians’ of this community”. Cf. also idem, Theologie und Gesellschaft, II, 53.
38 Ibn Abī Ṭāḥīta, Sunna, no. 332; Ṭabarānī, Ḳabīr, XI, no. 11680; Lālīkāʾī, II, no. 1128; Maṯmaʿ al-zawāʾīd, VII, 205.
40 Lālīkāʾī, II, no. 1267.
b. ‘Abdallāh al-Rabaṭī (d. AH 83) states that being a neighbour to apes and pigs is more desirable for him than to be a neighbour to heretics (ahl al-ahwāʾ). A similar statement is reported in a Kūfan tradition on the authority of Abū Mūsā al-Asʿarf (Abdallāh b. Qays, Companion d. AH 42–53); he says that he prefers to have Jews and Christians and apes and pigs as neighbours, rather than to live next to a heretic.

The association of heretics with apes and pigs seems also to be demonstrated in traditions placing the apes and the pigs in the context of resurrection. The Syrian Šahr b. Hawšab (d. AH 100) quotes an apocalypse heard from the Prophet by ‘Abdallāh b. ‘Amr b. al-Ṭāṣ. The Prophet states that the evil-doers (šiīrūr) among the people will be resurrected by a cataclysmic fire together with the apes and the pigs. A more detailed Ḥimṣi apocalypse of Ka‘b al-Aḥbār (d. AH 32) says that the evil ones will be resurrected in Palestine (al-Ṣām), and they will be those who have forgotten the Quran and the sunna, abandoned the worship of God, indulged in fornication, and said that there is no god in heaven. The title “evil ones” (šiīrūr) is usually attached to Islamic heretical groups.

Therefore, the present traditions, too, seem to point to the association of heretics with apes and pigs.

The anti-Qadari traditions also predict for them actual transformation into apes and pigs. Such traditions are numerous. A realistic description of the fate awaiting the Qadāris is found in a Ḥijāzī tradition of the Anṣārī Companion Abū Sa‘īd al-Ḥudrī (d. AH 65); the Prophet says that at the end of time a bride shall come into her canopy and find her groom there metamorphosed (musiḥa) into an ape, because he denied the qadar.

There is another tradition describing a similar event, but the sin for which the person has become an ape is not stated explicitly. Ḥudayfa b. al-Yāmān says: “What will you do if one of you goes out of his tent (ḥaġala) to his garden (ḥiṣṣ), and comes back metamorphosed (wa-qad musiḥa) into an ape; he will look for his family, but they will run away from him.”

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41 Ibn Bāṭṭa, Iblāni, II, nos. 466–68; Lālīkābī, I, no. 231.
42 Ibn Bāṭṭa, Iblāni, II, nos. 469, 471. The isnād: Layḥ b. Abī Sulaym (Kūfan d. AH 143) < anonymous < Abū Mūsā.
45 E.g., Ibn Abī ‘Āṣim, Sunna, no. 350; Tābarānī, Awsaf, VI, no. 5905; Maḡma‘ al-zawī‘id, VII, 202.
46 Tābarānī, Awsaf, VIII, no. 7146. See also Damūrī, Ḥayawān, II, 203; Maḡma‘ al-zawī‘id, VII, 209 (from Tābarānī, Awsaf).
47 Ibn Abī l-Dunnāy, Ḫabībāt, no. 284 (printed: Ḫabīhā); Dānī, Fītan, no. 349.
As sinners doomed to metamorphosis (mash) into apes and pigs, the Qadarís also became a natural target for the triple calamity, in which mash figures as one of the events. The triple calamity is meted out to the Qadarís in a lengthy Hijázi tradition transmitted on the authority of the Anšárf Companion Ráfi’ b. Ḥadíq (d. ca. AH 59-74). The Prophet describes the basic tenets of the Qadarís, and emphasizes that they are like the Jews and the Christians who already before them denied the sacredness of their own scriptures and discredited whole parts of them. Then the Prophet predicts the triple calamity which will strike the Qadarís, and this time it consists of járún (plague), hasf and mash. The latter event is glossed by an explanation to the effect that God will metamorphose (yamsahu) them into apes and pigs. In the second part of his statement, the Prophet says that the main reason why the Children of Israel perished was that they denied the qadar. Finally, the Prophet explains the dogmatic meaning of the qadar.\(^{48}\)

There is one more tradition in which the triple calamity is linked to the Qadarís, but this time without explicit mention of apes and pigs. This is a Medinan prophetic version of Ibn ʿUmar (d. AH 73), in which the Prophet declares: “There will be in my community (or: in this community) mash and hasf and qadf”. This is glossed by the words: “and this will happen among the people of the qadar”.\(^{49}\) The gloss is also available in an extended version including the Zindiqiya as well.\(^{50}\) With such a gloss the term mash has evidently come to mean transformation into apes and pigs.

The eschatological curse of the apes and the pigs was applied not only to groups, but to places as well. Baṣra was renowned for the prevalence of Qadarí thinking in it,\(^{51}\) and therefore it was presented as a zone in which people are particularly likely to be transformed into apes and pigs. The triple calamity was linked to this place, too. Thus the Prophet tells the Baṣran Companion Anas b. Mālik (d. AH 91-95) that the Baṣrans will be hit by hasf and qadf and rāqf, and that some people will go to bed and will wake up in the morning as apes and pigs.\(^{52}\) In another version of the same warning, the apes and the pigs are not mentioned explicitly, but the term mash evidently conveys the idea. The Prophet warns Anas not to enter the


\(^{50}\) Aḥmad, Musnad, II, 108 (mash only), 137; Lālikāʾī, II, no. 1135. See also Mafmaʿ al-zawāid, VII, 206.

\(^{51}\) On the Qadariyya and Baṣra, see Van Ess, Theologie und Gesellschaft, I, 23.

\(^{52}\) Abū Dāwūd, II, 428 (36:10).
public places in Basra, telling him that at the end of days some of its inhabitants will suffer ḥasf and masǧ and qaḍf. This will take place when there is no more justice there, and when oppression, prostitution and false testimony prevail.53

SLAVE-GIRLS, WINE, ETC.

The eschatological metamorphosis into apes and pigs did not always remain confined to heretics accused of Israelite orientation. Other kinds of sin — outside the sphere of dogma — were also linked to the same punitive metamorphosis. The sins are wine (ḥamr) drinking, as well as playing music in the company of singing slave-girls. Occasionally, wearing silk (harēr) clothes is added to the list, as well as false testimony and taking usury. At least some of these types of sin were associated with Jews and Christians (usury, wine, music), as well as with non-Arabs in general (silk54). These practices were considered a threat to the distinctive Islamic identity, and in order to diminish their prevalence Muslim tradition linked them to the classical Jewish-Christian type of punishment.

A group of traditions linking the punishment of the apes and the pigs to these sins was circulated by Farqad b. Yaʿqūb al-Sabaḥī (Baṣrān d. AH 131). His traditions are traced back to the Prophet through Syrian and Iraqi isnāds of Abū Umāma al-Bā hilī (Syrian Companion d. AH 81–86), ʿUbāda b. al-Šāmit (Syrian Anṣārif Companion, d. AH 34–45), ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. ʿAmm al-ʿAṣʿarī (Syrian d. AH 78) and Ibn ʿAbbās. In all of these versions the Prophet states in the first person that people of “my community” will spend the night rejoicing and exulting (ʿalā asār wa-baṭār) and enjoying themselves playfully, and will wake up in the morning as apes and pigs. This will happen because they desecrated forbidden women and slave-girls, drank wine (ḥamr), took usury, and wore silk clothes.55

Another version of Farqad links the same statement of the Prophet to the triple calamity. Farqad quotes the statement in response to a question of whether the tradition about the ḥasf and the qaḍf was uttered by the

54 For silk clothes and the manners of the Ḥaşim (non-Arabs), see Abū Dāwūd, II, 371 (31:8); Nasair, Kubra, V, no. 9366 (80:25); Ahmad, Musnad, IV, 134.
55 Ahmad, Musnad, V, 329. See also Ṭabarānī, Kabir, VIII, no. 7997; idem, Ṣaḥīḥ, I, 62. A similar statement is contained in a tradition of the Companion ʿAbdallāh b. Bishr. See Maṣmaʿ al-zawāid, VIII, 14 (Ṭabarānī).
Prophet himself. In the version quoted by Farqad on this occasion, the sinners are not only turned into apes and pigs, but their families are carried away by wind. However, there is no explicit ḥasf or qadāf here.

Elements of the triple calamity are present more explicitly in the version of Qābiṣa b. Ɗu‘āyb (Medinan Successor d. AH 86) as recorded by Nu‘aym b. Ḥammād. In it the Prophet describes transformation (conveyed here by the root ṣ.f.k.) of people into apes and pigs, as well as their being engulfed by the earth (ḥasf). This is a punishment inflicted for drinking wine, wearing silk clothes and playing music.

The same combination of disasters (transformation into apes and pigs and ḥasf) appears in a Syrian tradition in which the Prophet predicts that people will drink wine (ḥamr) while calling it otherwise, and will enjoy singing and music. God will cause the earth to engulf them, and will turn them into apes and pigs. This tradition is of the Companion Abū Mālik al-Asḵarī and was recorded in several hadīṭ compilations, including canonical ones.

The sin of enjoying the above unlawful kinds of pleasure was also built into independent statements about the triple calamity in which no explicit mention of apes and pigs is made. Such versions appear in the canonical compilations. Al-Tirmidī has recorded a tradition of the Meccan Companion Ṭimrān b. Ḥusayn (d. AH 52) in which the Prophet states: “[There will be] in this community ḥasf and qadāf and maslīf.” Someone asks the Prophet: “When will it be?” The Prophet: “When slave-girls and musical instruments appear, and when wine is drunk.”

A very similar dialogue is described in traditions of the Companion Abu Malik al-Asqarī, and the Anṣārī Companion Abū Sa‘īd al-Ḥudhrī (d. AH 65). The same discourse appears in an extended version of the triple calamity of the above-mentioned Sahl b. Sa‘d al-Anṣārī. A version of Abū Hurayra adds homosexuality to the list, and also the sin of false testimony.

However, the apes and the pigs did not always retain their Jewish-
Christian connotation, and they eventually became a general metaphor for desecration, beastliness and corruption. This seems already to be the case with respect to some of the above sins, but it comes out far more clearly in the political sphere. There is a series of anti-Umayyad utterances of the Prophet in which this dynasty is likened to monkeys as well as to pigs. These traditions describe a dream of the Prophet in which he sees the Umayyads use his own minbar (pulpit) for their public addresses, and he is deeply grieved by the sight. There are numerous versions of the dream, and in a Medinan one of Abū Hurayra the Umayyads [the Marwānid] are seen jumping up and down on Muḥammad’s minbar like monkeys. The monkeys here illustrate the desecration of the minbar of the Prophet by the Umayyads. In another very rare version of Saʿīd b. al-Musayyab (Medinan d. AH 94), the Umayyads climbing the minbar are seen by the Prophet in the form of “apes and pigs”.

CONFRMING VERSIONS

Finally, some versions about the above kinds of unlawful pleasure contain additional remarks designed to confirm that the punitive transformation into apes and pigs will indeed befall Muslims. Such expanded versions were needed because the notion that a Jewish-Christian type of punishment could befall good obedient Muslims just for not drinking the right beverage or wearing the right cloth looked absurd to people still convinced of the unique virtues of the Islamic community, and of its superiority to non-Muslim communities.

Thus in a version of the Companion Abū Hurayra, the Prophet declares that at the end of days people of his community will be metamorphosed into apes and pigs. Someone asks him whether this will be the fate of those who profess the šahāda and observe the duty of fasting, and the Prophet confirms it. He then goes on to explain that this will be their fate because of the pleasure they used to take in music and in slave-girls, and because

64 E.g., Ṭabarī, Taṣfīr, XXX, 167 (on Sūrat al-Qadar); Āḥmad, Musnad, II, 385, 522; Bayحاqi, Dalā’il, VI, 509–510 (with editor’s references); Ṭabarānī, Kabīr, I, no. 1425.
66 Tārīḥ Baγdad, IX, 44; Ğawrakānī, Abāṣīl, 1, no. 238. The isnād: Sufyān al-Ṭawrī (Kūfān d. AH 161) < ʿĀlī b. Zayd b. ʿAbdallāh b. ʿUdūdān (Baṣrān d. AH 131) < Saʿīd b. al-Musayyab < Prophet. But in a parallel version of the same tradition no mention is made of apes and pigs. See Tārīḥ Baγdad, IX, 44; Ibn Kaṭīr, Bidīya, VI, 243.
they drank wine. They will spend the night enjoying these things, and will become apes and pigs in the morning.67

A similar confirmation was offered in connection with the triple calamity. A version of the Meccan Successor ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Sābīt (d. AH 118) contains an additional remark of the Prophet to the effect that indulgence in the above unlawful pleasures will result in the triple calamity, even if the sinful Muslims stick to the ʿaḥāda, i.e., the initial tenet of the Islamic creed.68

The same message is conveyed in the version of ʿĀʾiša of the dialogue appended to the announcement about the triple calamity. This version was recorded by al-Tirmīḍī.69 The Prophet here stresses that the calamity will not be prevented even if the Muslims have righteous individuals (ṣāliḥūn) among them. This means that Muslim sinners will not enjoy the intercession of the righteous.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the existence of so many versions of traditions applying to Muslims the Jewish-Christian type of punitive metamorphosis, including some which gained entrance into canonical ḥadīṯ compilations, indicates fear for the unique Islamic identity. This identity was supposed to be based on unity and on morality, and both were threatened by Muslims imitating Jewish and Christian ways. Unity was shattered by heretics suspected of following Jewish and Christian dogma, and morality was corrupted by people assimilating profane aspects of Jewish and Christian culture. To confront these trends, traditions were circulated which were designed to expose their Jewish and Christian backgrounds, and thus help eliminate them from Islamic society. This was also the aim of the traditions about the apes and the pigs, the most characteristic symbols of Jewish-Christian historical punishment.

68 Ibn Abī ʿŚayba, XV, no. 19391; Nuʿaym b. Ḥammād, Fitan, 375; Dānī, Fitan, no. 339. Tirmīḍī/Tuhfa, VI, no. 2280 (31:21). See also Dānī, Fitan, no. 341.
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