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OFER LIVNE-KAFRI

LUKA' B. LUKA' IN MUSLIM APOCALYPTIC TRADITIONS

Muslim terminology and conceptions concerning apocalyptic matters basically derive from the Qur'ān and from the huge treasure of the Muslim tradition, the Ḥadīth. Sometimes the meaning of a Qur'ānic term expanded because of religious and historical developments. For example, the term *fitan* ("trials", sg. *fitna*), which in the *ḥadīth* literature generally relates to inner tribulations arising from major disturbances, civil wars, and schism in the Muslim community, is an enlargement of the Qur'ānic sense of *fitna* as temptation or trial of faith.¹ Sometimes there are loan-translations from foreign languages such as Syriac or Hebrew. Examples are *al-dajjāl* (the antichrist of the Muslim tradition),² *malḥama* (pl. *malāḥim*) referring to

¹ On various aspects of this term and for its primary meanings see L. Gardet, "Fitna", *EI*, n. ed., vol. 2 (1965), pp. 930-931; E.W. Lane, *An Arabic-English Lexicon*, London 1865-1893, vol. 6, pp. 2335-2336. Cf. also the important observations in D. Cook, "Muslim Apocalyptic and Jihād", *JSAI* 20 (1996), pp. 77-79. On the connection of the Muslim apocalyptic and the *ḥadīth* literature in general see idem, "Ḥadīth, Authority and the End of the World: Traditions in Modern Muslim Apocalyptic Literature", *OM*, n.s. 21 (2002), pp. 31-53, especially his observations in pp. 31-35; R. Tottoli, "Ḥadīths and Traditions in Some Recent Books upon the Dajjāl (Antichrist)", *OM*, n.s. 21 (2002), especially pp. 57-63. For basic conceptions as reflected in the *ḥadīth* see M.J. Kister, "*Haddithū 'an banī isrā'īla wa-la-ḥaraja*", *IOS*, 2 (1972), p. 221 ff.; this article was published with additional notes in M.J. Kister, *Studies in Jāhiliya and Early Islam*, London 1980 (Variorum Reprints), Chapter XIV. For a detailed analysis of apocalyptic traditions (including the investigation of the *isnāds*), see, e.g., W. Madelung, "The *Sufyānī* between Tradition and History", *SI* 63 (1986), pp. 5-48; Id., "Apocalyptic Prophecies in Ḥimṣ in the Umayyad Age", *JSS* 31 (1986), pp. 141-185; U. Rubin, "Apocalypse and Authority in Islamic Tradition: The Emergence of the Twelve Leaders", *Al-Qanṭara*, 18 (1997), pp. 11-42. See also the important study of M. Cook, "The Heraclian Dynasty in Muslim Eschatology", *Al-Qanṭara*, 8 (1992), pp. 3-23; S. Bashear, "Apocalyptic and Other Materials on Early Muslim-Byzantine Wars: A Review of Arabic Sources", *JRAS*, III series, 1 (1991), pp. 173-207. For all of them Nu'aym's *Fitna* (note 7 below) was an important source.

² A. Abel, "al-Dajjdjāl", *EI*, n. ed., vol. 2 (1987), p. 75. According to Abel al-Dajjāl, the "deceiver", is an adjective of Syriac origin, joined to the word *m^eshihā* or *n^ebiyā* (Peshitto to Matt. 24:24). The most recent contribution to this subject is "Ḥadīths and Traditions... upon the Dajjāl (Antichrist)", by R. Tottoli (note 1 above), pp. 55-75. See

eschatological wars,³ and others.⁴ Muslim apocalyptic literature in light of Jewish and Christian apocalyptic traditions was the subject of some of my earlier studies.⁵ In certain cases this is most helpful for a better understanding, even for “historical apocalyptic tradition”.⁶ Regarding non-Muslim sources here, I offer some

there also the basic bibliography on p. 55, note 2 (in which the most important study is D.J. Halperin, “The Ibn Ṣayyād Traditions and the Legend of al-Dajjāl”, *JAOS* 96 (1976), pp. 213-225.

³ For a possible connection to the Old Testament *milḥamot* (in Hebrew), as the wars of God see T. Fahd, “malḥama”, *EI*, n. ed., vol. 6 (1995), p. 247. Cf. H. Lazarus-Yafeh, “Is There a Concept of Redemption in Islam?” in *Types of Redemption, Contribution to the Theme of the Study – Conference at Jerusalem, July 1968*, eds. R.J.Z. Werblowski and C.J. Bleeker, Leiden, 1970, p. 51, note 16 (quoting H. Rabin) on the connection with the Hebrew word, which in the Dead Sea Scrolls denotes the Last War. See also D.B. Macdonald, “Malāḥim”, *EI*, vol. 3 (1936), pp. 188-189.

⁴ See, e.g., my suggestion concerning the Arabic word *jaylān* (or *jayalān*, depending on different readings, and in association with *jilliyān*), an old (and rare) usage in Arabic for “apocalypse”, and relating to a similar usage in Hebrew and Syriac, in O. Livne-Kafri, “Some Notes on Muslim Apocalyptic Literature in Light of the Jewish and Christian Apocalyptic Traditions”, forthcoming in *SI* (chapter “An Example Concerning Terminology”). Cf. Id., “Some Notes Concerning Muslim Apocalyptic Tradition”, *QSA* 17 (1999), p. 72.

⁵ The sources mentioned in notes 4, 6; cf. also O. Livne-Kafri, “A Muslim Apocalyptic Tradition Attributed to Daniel (in Light of a Jewish Tradition)”, *The Bulletin of the Middle East Medievalists (al-ʿUsur al-Wusta)*, 17/1 (2005), pp. 7-9; Id., “Jerusalem in Early Islam: The Escha-tological Aspect”; forthcoming in *Arabica*; Id., “Is There a Reflection of the Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius in Muslim Tradition?”, forthcoming in *Proche-Orient Chrétien*; Id., “Muslim Eschatology: Some Observations on the Migration of Apocalyptic Features”; Id., “Women and Their Image in Muslim Apocalyptic Traditions” (the last two articles have been submitted for publication). In fact my studies to date treat mainly different aspects of the relation of Arabic language and Islam to the Judeo-Christian world. See e.g., O. Livne-Kafri, “Early Muslim Ascetics and the World of Christian Monasticism”, *JSAI* 20 (1996), pp. 105-129; Id., “Muslim Traditions on Jerusalem between Judaism and Christianity”, *Cathedra*, 83 (1997), pp. 45-54 (in Hebrew; the original English version is entitled “A Note on Some Traditions of Faḍāʾil al-Quds”, *JSAI* 14, 1991, pp. 71-83); Id., “A Note on Coptic and Judeo-Arabic on the Basis of a Bilingual Manuscript of the Pentateuch”, *Massorot*, 12 (2002), pp. 97-101 (in Hebrew); Id., “The Book of Habakkuk by the Karaite Yapheth b. ʿAlī”, *Sphunot*, 21 (1993), pp. 73-105 (Judaean-Arabic and Hebrew), and others.

⁶ Cf., e.g., O. Livne-Kafri, “Jerusalem in Muslim Traditions of the End of Days”, *Cathedra*, 86 (1998), pp. 50-56 (in Hebrew). The issue of *isrāʾīliyyāt* (materials connected to Jewish and Christian subjects) in general, and concerning apocalyptic matters in particular, is not a simple matter: they are not homogeneous, they require sometimes the study of non-Muslim sources, and they are closely connected to the different processes that Muslim society underwent in the first centuries of Islam. The role of Jewish converts was very important in that respect. See, e.g., Kister, “*Ḥaddithū*

explanations for a certain apocalyptic name: Luka^c b. Luka^c, whose meaning was long a riddle to me. I do not claim that my interpretations are definitive, but I hope that they may make a modest contribution, for methodology also.

1. A tradition on the authority of the Prophet Muḥammad, transmitted by the Companion Ḥudhayfa b. al-Yamān, says: “The Hour (of the resurrection) will not take place, unless the happiest man in it will be Luka^c b. Luka^c”. It is included in the most important collection of apocalyptic traditions by Nuʿaym b. Ḥammād al-Marwazī (d. 842 AD).⁷ The editor also refers to the existence of this tradition in the important collections of al-Tirmidhī (d. 892 AD) and Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal (d. 855 AD).⁸ Another tradition, also ascribed to the Prophet Muḥammad, says, “This world will not pass away unless it will belong to Luka^c b. Luka^c”.⁹ These traditions are quoted in Nuʿaym’s book in the chapter ‘On the emergence of the ʿAbbāsids’ (*fi khurūj banī al-ʿabbās*), which includes apocalyptic traditions of their rising against the Umayyads. One tradition says (also in the name of the Prophet), “Luka^c b. Luka^c will get control over this world”. An additional comment by ʿAbd al-Razzāq (al-Ṣanʿānī; d. 827) from Maʿmar b. Rāshid, says that it refers to Abū Muslim (al-Khurasānī, who headed the ʿAbbāsid revolution).¹⁰ Later in Nuʿaym’s book the Prophet says that “Luka^c b. Luka^c is about (*yūshik ʿan*) to overcome the world”.¹¹

2. From the different meanings given to this name, the most likely is “the vile, infamous, the contemptible”, and even the “the [vile] slave”.¹² It is a wicked personality that will rule the world in the manner expected from the *dajjāl* or the

⁷ *ʿan banī isrāʾīla*”, pp. 221-222; Ph. S. Alexander, “Jewish Tradition in early Islam, The Case of Enoch/Idris”, in *Studies in Islamic and Middle Eastern Texts and Traditions in Memory of Norman Calder*, ed. G.R. Hawting, J.A. Mojaddedi and A. Samely (*JSS Supplement* 12) Oxford 2000, pp. 11-13; Tottoli, “The Dajjāl”, p. 60.

⁸ *Kitāb al-ḥitan wa-l-malāḥim*, ed. Majdī b. Maṣṣūr b. Sayyid al-Shūrā, Beirut 1997, p. 131, no. 541. On Ḥudhayfa b. al-Yamān (d. 36 AH) see, e.g., Khayr al-Dīn al-Ziriklī, *al-Aʿlām*, Beirut 1980, vol. 2, p. 171; Ibn Saʿd, *Kitāb al-ṭabaqāt al-kabīr*, Leiden 1904-1940, vol. 5, p. 385.

⁹ *Ibid.*; cf. Abū ʿIsā al-Tirmidhī, *al-Jāmiʿ al-Kabīr*, Beirut 1998, vol. 4, p. 70, the editor’s references in note 3; cf. Abū al-Fidāʾ, Ismāʿīl b. Kathīr, *Kitāb al-nihāya aw al-ḥitan wa-l-malāḥim*, Cairo 1969, vol. 1, p. 177. This tradition belongs to necessary events that should precede the Hour (*ibid.*, p. 175).

¹⁰ Nuʿaym, *al-Fitan*, p. 131, no. 540.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 130, no. 536 (according to the editor’s note it was also quoted by Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal).

¹² Nuʿaym, *al-Fitan*, p. 321, no. 1213.

¹³ Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān al-ʿArab*, Cairo 1300-1307 AH, vol. 10, pp. 198-200; J.G. Hava, *Al-Faraid, Arabic-English Lexicon*, Beirut 1987, p. 695.

sufyānī, which correspond to the antichrist figure in Christianity,¹³ but unlike them it is very rare.

One sense of the term might be a vile figure of low origin, also "having little understanding, stupid"¹⁴ (which might relate in a way to some of the conditions that must precede the Last Day (*ashrāt al-sā'a*) in which the normal order of society will be turned upside down. Among them are "Knowledge (*ilm*) will pass away, and ignorance (*jahl*) will be evident...";¹⁵ or: "the Hour shall not come unless each tribe will be governed by its ignobles".¹⁶ The attribution of the tradition to Abū Muslim might be connected with his being of a very base origin.¹⁷ I believe that the Luka^c b. Luka^c tradition was ancient, and was later related to Abū Muslim in what we may call "political" or "historical" apocalyptic traditions.¹⁸ As in another case, his personality might have been so influential in his day as to attract apocalyptic traditions around it.¹⁹ In any event I suggest that Luka^c b. Luka^c should to be translated as "The Vile one, son of a Vile one".

3. I would like to propose another explanation, which for now is still a possibility; future findings will show if it is relevant or not: I wonder whether, when Luka^c (an Arabic adj.) was chosen, there was an association with the sound of the Greek *lúkos* (especially in gn. *lúkous* [or pl. *lúkoí*]), basically a wolf; "applied figuratively to cruel, greedy, raparous, destructive men", like Matt. 7:15²⁰ ("Beware of false prophets, who come to you dressed up as sheep while underneath they are savage

¹³ Also *al-ṣakhrī*; see Livne-Kafri, "Jerusalem in Muslim Traditions of the End of Days", pp. 54-55; Madelung, "The Sufyānī" (note 1 above). *Al-ṣakhrī* and *al-sufyānī* generally appear in historical apocalyptic traditions while traditions on *al-dajjāl* are generally ahistorical (but cf. Cook's definitions in "Muslim Apocalyptic and Jihād", p. 67 of the historical apocalypse and the metahistorical apocalypse).

¹⁴ Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān*, p. 198

¹⁵ See, e.g., 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Ṣan'ānī, *al-Muṣannaḥ*, Beirut 1970-1972, vol. 11, p. 381. See similarly in Ibn Māja al-Qazwīnī, *Sunan*, Cairo 1972, vol. 2, p. 1343; Ibn Kathīr, *al-Nihāya*, p. 176. Cf. D. Cook's observations in "Moral Apocalyptic in Islam", *SI*, 86 (1997), p. 56. For parallels in Jewish sources see Livne-Kafri, "Jerusalem in Muslim Traditions of the End of Days", p. 42, note 98.

¹⁶ Ibn Kathīr, *al-Nihāya*, p. 177.

¹⁷ See S. Moscati, "Abū Muslim", *EI*, n. ed., vol. 1 (1960), p. 141.

¹⁸ One tradition says that Abū Muslim heard the tradition of the "black banners" when he was still a youth: 'Alī b. al-Ḥasan Ibn 'Asākir, *Tahdhīb Ta'rikh Dimashq al-Kabīr*, Beirut 1979, vol. 2, p. 294. That he was the cause of the Luka^c b. Luka^c traditions is also possible, although it seems to me less likely.

¹⁹ Cf. Livne-Kafri, "Jerusalem in Muslim Traditions of the End of Days", p. 52, note 159.

²⁰ *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, being Grimm's Wilk's Clavis Novi Testamenti*, translated, revised and enlarged by J.H. Thayer, Edinburgh 1961, p. 383.

wolves"). Since the *dajjāl* is perceived also as a false prophet,²¹ and the image of wicked men as wolves appears in Muslim traditions too,²² such an association might have existed at the time when the Luka^c b. Luka^c traditions were created.²³ This explanation still needs more evidence; as an example of a method of work, though, it might be helpful.

Conclusion

Despite the publication of important studies on the Muslim apocalyptic, the present state of research is far from satisfactory. General lines have been identified, but many individual traditions and issues still need more investigation. In this note I have tried to find the meaning of Luka^c b. Luka^c as another layer in the great puzzle of Muslim apocalyptic traditions. As mentioned, I do not claim that my interpretations are conclusive but they may make a contribution to methodology also.

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SUMMARY

Luka^c (the vile, infamous, the contemptible) b. Luka^c, as reflected from his name, appears in Muslim apocalyptic literature as a wicked personality that will rule the world in the manner expected from the dajjāl or the sufyānī, which correspond to the antichrist figure in Christianity. Unlike them it appears very rarely. This note tries to find the meaning of that figure. In one tradition it is referred to ḡs Abū Muslim al-Khurasānī, who headed the 'Abbāsīd revolution and as such it is part of the 'political' or 'historical' Apocalyptic traditions; it might related also in a way to some of the conditions that must precede the Last Day (ashrāt al-sā'a) in which the normal order of society will be turned upside down. The meaning of Luka^c (an Arabic adj.) is brought from the Arabic dictionaries and there is also a suggestion to connect the word to non-Arabic Christian sources.

²¹ Cf. note 2 above, Peshitto to Matt. 24:24.

²² See 'Abd Allāh b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Dārimī, *Sunan al-Dārimī*, Medina 1966, vol. 1, p. 315.

²³ Cf. the intransitive verb *dha'ba* in the sense of "to be wicked, bad, deceitful, or crafty like the wolf (*dhi'b*)" which is mentioned in Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, vol. 3, p. 948; Hava, p. 225. If our assumptions are correct and there is a connection of Luka^c b. Luka^c to non-Muslim sources, it was probably influenced by the Greek. The following is also interesting: according to W.E. Crum, *A Coptic Dictionary*, Oxford, 1979, p. 139, the adjective *louklak* means bad, wicked.

CARMEN BARCELÓ

UN EPITAFFIO ISLAMICO PROVENIENTE DA MAJORCA PORTATO
A PISA COME TROFEO DI GUERRA?

Pisa era una città importante in epoca medievale e questa sua importanza si manifesta sia in tutti i monumenti architettonici – come la Torre campanile e il Battistero – sia nelle diverse opere d'arte che si custodiscono nelle sale dei musei e nei tesori delle chiese. Tra queste troviamo anche manufatti di arte islamica, come il noto grifone – posto in tempi assai remoti sulla sommità del tetto della navata centrale della cattedrale, dalla parte dell'abside – che si conserva oggi al Museo dell'Opera del Duomo e che si associa a un bottino di guerra, ottenuto forse in una delle battaglie dei pisani contro i musulmani.

Reperti della produzione artistica islamica ci sono rimasti anche in altri luoghi della città, tra i quali la chiesa romanica di San Sisto, dove esiste una stele araba frammentaria, di provenienza sconosciuta, contenente un'iscrizione funeraria. Alla base della lapide figura un foglio contenente il testo dell'iscrizione letto da Carlo A. Nallino e da lui datato al 786/1385.

Tra le riproduzioni fotografiche della lapide, una di eccellente qualità è stata pubblicata da Giovan Battista Pellegrini (1972, II: 576); un'altra figura nell'articolo scritto successivamente da Maria Giovanna Stasolla, la quale studia e pubblica per la prima volta questa iscrizione araba, come era stato sollecitato dallo stesso Pellegrini (1972, II: 411, n. 14).

La lapide è incompleta e divisa in tre frammenti; manca il margine laterale sinistro e la metà sinistra del testo delle ultime sei righe. Le sue dimensioni sono: altezza 76 cm e larghezza 45 cm. Il campo epigrafico, circoscritto da un arco sorretto da due colonnette (di cui rimane solo quella di destra), è diviso in 14 righe (4,5 cm e l'ultimo 3,5 cm). La scrittura è in cufico eseguito in rilievo.

Questi sono il testo e la traduzione proposti da Stasolla (1980: 100):

«¹ بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ² * يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّ وَعْدَ اللَّهِ حَقٌّ³ فَلَا تَغْرِبَنَّكُمْ
الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا وَلَا تَغُرُّ⁴ نَفْسُكُمْ بِاللَّهِ الْغَرُورِ * تَوَفَّى الْأَمِيرَ ⁵ أَبُو؟⁵ نَصْرًا - نَضَرَ اللَّهُ
وَجْهَهُ - أَبِي مُحَمَّدٍ <عَبْدُ>⁶ اللَّهُ بْنُ أَغْلَبٍ فَجَرَّ يَوْمَ السَّبْتِ⁷ لَارْبِعِ عَشْرَةَ لَيْلَةً⁸