



## HELL II. ISLAMIC PERIOD

---

### HELL

#### ii. Islamic Period

*Duzak* (Mid. Pers. *dušox*, Av. *dušaṅhu*; *AirWb.*, col. 756) and *jahannam* are the terms commonly used in Persian for hell. Various lexicographers record the forms *duzak*, *saqar*, *merzān*, *marzaḡan*, *damaḡdān*, *jaḡim*, and *sa'ir* in the sense of hell. The rare forms *dužak* (Rawāqi, pp. 19, 80) and *darvazak* (drwzk) have also been reported (Moḡammad b. Monawwar, I, pp. 208, 278, II, p. 570). The most common form of the word in Persian is the loanword from Arabic, *jahannam*, which is of Hebrew origin (Hebrew *gēhinnūm*), and etymologies that suggest an Avestan origin for it are fanciful (Purdāwud, p. 78; for a description of the concept of hell in Jewish tradition, see Gaster, pp. 581-85).

Hell is a dark and dismal place of punishment (Thompson, motif A671). Though Mo'tazelites place its creation on the Day of Judgement (Meybodi, I, p. 107), most Muslim scholars believe that it has already been created and cite Qor'an 2:22 and other verses in support of their view (e.g., Surābādi, p. 60; Samarqandi, p. 80; Rawāqi, p. 60; Meybodi, X, p. 377). Unlike paradise, which is understood to be in the heavens, hell is believed to be somewhere in the earthly climes (Ebn Abi'l-Donyā, pp. 117-19), or even beneath the seven seas (Ebn Rajab, p. 44; Fayz Kāšāni, 2003, p. 219; idem, 2004, pp. 12-13). According to a Jewish statement that is said to have tacit approval from Imam 'Ali b. Abi Ṭāleb, it is housed in an unspecified sea (Fayz Kāšāni, 2003, p. 220; cf. Ebn Rajab, p. 46). Hell was created after the paradise in order to show the primacy



of God's grace over his vengefulness (Kolayni, VIII, p. 145), and unlike the paradise that has eight gates, it only has seven in order to communicate the same message (Abu'l-Fotuḥ, XVI, pp. 351–52). It is occasionally personified and speaks to God (Qor'ān 50:30; Abu'l-Fotuḥ, XIV, p. 199; cf. 'Āzemi, p. 6). According to one source, hell grows a head of fire with eyes, ears, and tongue, in order to be able to address God ('Āzemi, pp. 20–21). Its personification, however, is most vividly portrayed on the Day of Judgement when it will be brought to God in chains that are held by thousands of strong angels in order to control it (Ebn Abi'l-Donyā, pp. 96, 119; Jamm'ili, p. 70; Fayz Kāšāni, 2003, p. 264; 'Āzemi, pp. 13, 18).

According to the scripture, men and rocks fuel hell's fires (e.g., Qor'ān 2:24, 66:6; Meybodi, I, p. 106), which began to be heated from the day God sat upon his throne (Meybodi, I, p. 107). It has such a prodigious appetite for consuming sinners that, as much as God fills the jaws of hell with them, it continues to call out: "is there more?" (Qor'ān 50:30). A similar account of infernal insatiability is reported in Jewish sources (cf. Ginzberg et al., II, p. 311). Hell was heated for three thousand years until its temperature increased so much that its flames successively reddened, whitened, and finally blackened with heat (Ṭabari, VII, p. 1991; Ebn Abi'l-Donyā, pp. 31, 102–3; Meybodi, V., p. 496; Abu'l-Fotuḥ, XII, pp. 142, 348; Fayz Kāšāni, 2003, p. 263; Jamm'ili, p. 72; Ebn Rajab, p. 68). Because of hell's black heat, everything in it, including its flames, is black (Samarqandi, p. 83; Meybodi, I, p. 107; Abu'l-Fotuḥ, XII, p. 348; Ebn Rajab, p. 70). Indeed, it is so devoid of light that one legend of the creation of the day and night tells of how God ordered the caretaker of hell to gather every spec of light in his abode and bring it to the Lord who fashioned the daylight from it. Thus, it lost every particle of light. Night was by contrast created from the particles of darkness that were found in paradise, which explains its luminosity (Ṭusi, p. 611).

Hell has seven gates, each one with a section that houses its own special fires and sinners (Qor'ān 4:145, 15:43-44, 16:29; El-Shamy, 1995, motif A671.0.5.1; Āyatollāhzāda, pp. 264, 280; Abu'l-Fotuḥ, XVI, p. 351; Meybodi, V, p. 317; cf. Hopkins, p. 112; Ginzberg et al., V, pp. 159, 418; Fayz Kāšāni, 2003, pp. 270–71). The Qor'ān speaks of canopies of fire that surround sinners from above and from below (39:16), and commentators explain that since the floor of each of hell's levels is the canopy of the level below, its residents live between two canopies of fire (Abu'l-Fotuḥ, XVI, p. 309). The names of hell's seven levels are known (El-Shamy, 1995, motif: A671.2.4.14.). Commentators on the Qor'ān



elaborate on the features and functions of these levels in their discussions of various verses (e.g., 2:113, 20:74, 54:47-48, 70:15, 76:4, 101:6, 104:4-5). The first is called Jahannam, which is reserved for Muslim sinners, who will suffer only the indirect heat of the infernal fires (*tābeš-e āteš*). The second, called Laḏā, is reserved for the Jews. Christians will experience the torments of the third level, called Ḥoṭama, and the Sabaeans will undergo the agonies of the fourth level, known as Sa'ir. The fifth level, called Saqar, will provide punishment for the Zoroastrians, and the sixth, by the name of Jaḥim, is reserved for the Arab pagans. The most terrible of all, Hāwia, is where those atheists who spread the seeds of discord among the Muslims by their hypocrisy [*monāfequn*], or alternatively, the impious scholars of the Qor'ān will find their punishment (Ebn Abi'l-Donyā, pp. 19–20; Meybodi, II, p. 336, V, p. 317-18, X, pp. 608-10; Abu'l-Fotuḥ, XVI, p. 351; Jamm'ili, p. 70; Ebn Rajab, pp. 50-52; Fayz Kāšāni, 2003, pp. 270-71 for explanations of the names). Hell is so deep that when something falls into it, it will descend between forty and seventy years before it reaches the bottom (Ebn Abi'l-Donyā, pp. 22-23, 37; Mostamli Boḳāri, IV, p. 1542; Meybodi, V, p. 319; Ebn Rajab, pp. 53-56, 88; Fayz Kāšāni, 2004, p. 17). Naturally, it smells foul, and its fires are seventy times more intense than the worldly flames (Ebn Abi'l-Donyā, pp. 99, 104, 265; Abu'l-Fotuḥ, XII, p. 143; Jamm'ili, pp. 67-68; Ebn Rajab, pp. 39, 139; Fayz Kāšāni, 2003, p. 224). This is alluded to even in classical Persian poetry (e.g., 'Onṣori, p. 300). Their ferocious intensity is such that the fires of each of hell's levels fear those of the lower level (Ebn Abi'l-Donyā, pp. 2, 101; Ebn Rajab, p. 59). There are places in hell with especially hot flames. One Shi'ite commentator tells of an infernal well that contains such heat that when other fires in hell need to be reinvigorated the cover of this well is slightly lifted (Abu'l-Fotuḥ, XIII, p. 99). Because of its intense heat, hell complained to God that it could no longer tolerate its own fires that were wildly consuming one another. In response, God gave it a cold breath called *zamharir* in order to balance its hot breath, called *samum* (Meybodi, I, p. 107, III, p. 606; Abu'l-Fotuḥ, XVI, pp. 286-87; Ebn Rajab, pp. 71, 73, 75; Ebn Abi'l-Donyā pp. 101-111, no. 10). Though the word *zamharir* is mentioned in the Qor'ān (76:13), the context of its scriptural occurrence is vague and its frostiness is referred to only in ancillary texts. By contrast, its hot breath, the *samum*, is mentioned in the Qor'ān in association with fire (e.g., 52:27, 56:42). In fact it is identified as the substance from which the genies (q.v.) were made (Qor'ān 15:27). In spite of this scriptural evidence at least one commentator claims that the *samum* is a frosty wind that blows from under one of hell's rocks (Meybodi, IX, p. 451). Be that as it may, hell is at the same time very cold (cf. Thompson, motifs, E481.7, E755.2.5, Icy hell), and



very hot (cf. some Jewish accounts of hell, according to which hell fire both burns and freezes; Ginzberg et al., V, pp. 159, 418, cf. idem, II, pp. 345, 359).

A single link of hell's fiery chains is so hot that if it were placed upon a worldly mountain it would melt the whole thing (Meybodi, III, p. 606, V, p. 496), and the breath of its residents is so searing that if it were to blow upon a mosque with one hundred thousand worshippers in it, it would reduce them all to cinders (Ebn Ab'l-Donyā, p. 98; Fayz Kāshāni, 2003, p. 266; cf. El-Shamy, 1995, motif A671.2.4.). According to an explanatory legend concerning the origin of the sparks generated by flintstone, God sent the archangel Gabriel to hell for a bit of fire for Adam to cook with. Hell's warden asked Gabriel how much fire he required, and when the angel asked for enough to cover the surface of a human nail, the warden refused and warned that so much hell-fire would melt the seven earths and heavens. Gabriel agreed to settle for half as much, but the warden refused on the grounds that even that amount would dry up all vegetations and stop all rains. Finally, they agreed on a particle (*darra*), which Gabriel cooled in seventy rivers before giving it to Adam. But as soon as Adam placed that speck of hell-fire on the mountain, the particle melted the mountain and ate its way back to hell. However, in going through the earth, it left a trace of its fiery nature in flint stones and iron; and that is why sparks fly when the two are struck together (Fayz Kāshāni, 2003, p. 266). Although it is not explicitly stated in the narrative, the fact that Gabriel cooled the speck of hell-fire in "seventy" rivers before giving it to Adam, implies that the particle's intense heat evaporated the seventy streams. Clearly such fierce fire may not be meaningfully used against average size sinners, because it would instantaneously destroy the damned, thus rendering the idea of inflicting eternal pain and suffering upon them impossible. Muslim theologians, who must have been mindful of this problem, get around it by two strategies: First, they posit that sinners grow to gigantic size upon entering hell. They develop such colossal bodies that it would take a swift rider between three to five days to traverse the distance between their shoulder blades. Second, their skin grows to a thickness of forty-two cubits (Ebn Abi'l-Donyā, p. 29; Meybodi, II, p. 543; Jamm'ili, pp. 75-78; Ebn Rajab, pp. 131-34; Fayz Kāshāni, 2003, pp. 75-78). Additionally, the burned and ravaged bodies of the damned are constantly renewed so that they may experience their torments anew (Meybodi, II, pp. 543-44; Abu'l-Fotuḥ, XII, p. 133).

The topography of hell is quite interesting. It has mountains, rivers, valleys, wells, and springs, many of which have names, and buildings (e.g., Ṭabari, IV,



p. 1012; Ebn Abi'l-Donyā, pp. 26, 36-39, 41-44, 57, 69; Meybodi, I, p. 245; Abu'l-Fotuḥ, XII, p. 370, XIII, pp. 98–99; Ebn Rajab, pp. 90-93). One of its valleys, called the *lamlam*, is so hot that the other valleys “seek refuge from it in God” (Ebn Abi'l-Donyā, p. 38). Another branches off to three hundred and thirty ravines in each of which there are three hundred and thirty palaces, each of which has three hundred and thirty rooms with four chests in the corners of each chamber. The chests contain serpents each of which carries three hundred and thirty scorpions on its head. Every one of the scorpions is endowed by a painful sting of three hundred and thirty poisons (Ebn Abi'l-Donyā, p. 74). Meybodi (V, p. 331) increases the number of these valleys to seventy thousand, which increases their attendant horrors proportionally.

The flora and fauna of hell are also diverse and designed to inflict maximum torment. There is an especially nasty tree of fire, called the tree of Zaqqum, which grows at the bottom of hell and bears a terrible fiery fruit on which the damned are fed (Qor'ān 44:43-44; Ebn Abi'l-Donyā, p. 64; Abu'l-Fotuḥ, XVI, pp. 192-93; Meybodi, V, pp. 575-76; Fayz Kāshāni, 2004, pp. 67-68; Jamm'ili, pp. 80-81). The fruits of the Zaqqum resemble heads of demons (Meybodi, VIII, pp. 268, 275, IX, p. 452; Abu'l-Fotuḥ, XVI, pp. 192-93; El-Shamy, 1995, motif: A671.2.3.1.). It is so poisonous that a mere drop of its juice could destroy the world's eco-system (Meybodi, IX, p. 113). A similar tree of torture is mentioned in the later Indic and Zoroastrian sources (Hopkins, p. 111; *Ṣad dar*, p.170; Unvala, ed., I, p. 150).

Leaving demons aside, hell's fauna is largely made of creepy-crawlies. Though brief references to beasts and dogs of fire are made, it is massive snakes and colossal scorpions, some as large as camels, that predominate (Ebn Abi'l-Donyā, pp. 70-80, 86; Samarqandi, p. 83; Ebn Rajab, pp. 110-11; Jamm'ili, p. 89). The snakes are kept in the fifth and the scorpions in the sixth level of hell (Ebn Abi'l-Donyā, p. 72).

Hell's residents have black faces and green eyes (Meybodi, VI, p. 89; Abu'l-Fotuḥ, XIII, p. 187). They are made to wear garments of liquid pitch (*qaṭrān*) and fire and their faces are covered with fire (Qor'ān 14:49-50, 22:19; Abu'l-Fotuḥ, XI, pp. 283, 299; Āyatollāhḡada, p. 257; Samarqandi, p. 59; Jamm'ili, pp. 96-97), and live in residences of which the walls, floors, and furnishings, are made of fire (e.g., Ebn Abi'l-Donyā, pp. 41, 57; cf. Qor'ān 7:41, 17:8). Satan will be the first who will be clothed in hell's fiery garbs (Abu'l-Fotuḥ, XIV, p. 21; Fayz Kāshāni, 2003, p. 71). The damned constantly suffer from hunger and are occasionally fed on filthy and poisonous drinks and a diet of rocks that glow



with heat (e.g., Ebn Abi'l-Donyā, pp. 59-69; Abu'l-Fotuḥ, XI, pp. 263-64, XVII, pp. 201, 289; cf. Thompson, motif: \*Q560ff). They are kept in chains of fire, beaten by iron clubs (Ebn Abi'l-Donyā, pp. 52-53; Abu'l-Fotuḥ, XIII, pp. 314), and tormented by extreme cold (Ebn Abi'l-Donyā, pp. 100-1) as well as by severe itching of their bodies due to scabies (Ġazālī, I, p. 414; Ebn Abi'l-Donyā, p. 88).

Whereas most of hell's punishments may fall under the category of general retribution, some sinners, such as women who abort their fetuses, usurers, abusers of orphans, and the like are subjected to specially harsh treatments (e.g., Abu'l-Fotuḥ, XII, pp. 153-54, XIII, pp. 98-99; Ebn Abi'l-Donyā, pp. 86-130, 140; Ebn Rajab, pp. 140-53; cf. Tubach, types 63, 2518). Those who have committed suicide are forced to repeat their sins for eternity and suffer the pains of losing their lives endlessly (Meybodi, II, p. 481). What is more is that hell's residents, most of whom according to some traditions are women (Meybodi, I, p. 620; Āzemi, p. 13), are deprived of the benefits of the dictum: "misery likes company." None of them can see the others' sufferings, and each one is made to suffer his punishment in utter loneliness (Ebn Abi'l-Donyā, pp. 77, 107). The seclusion of the damned is tragically represented in one of hell's worst terrors, a place called "the pit of sorrow" *jobb al-ḥozn*, where the sinner is kept in utter helplessness and solitude (Ebn Abi'l-Donyā, pp. 40, 70; Ebn Rajab, pp. 92-97; Āzemi, p. 53; cf. Meybodi, III, p. 606).

On the basis of a tradition that speaks of the sinner's grave as "an infernal dungeon," some authorities stipulate that the experience of hellish existence really begins from the grave (Āyatollāhzāda, p. 80; Samarqandi, pp. 55-56, 62, 64; Ġazālī, I, pp. 91, 427; Mostamli Boḳāri, IV, p. 1745; cf. Fayz Kāšāni, 2003, pp. 72, 77; see also [BURIAL](#)). Perhaps the loneliness of the grave has something to do with the idea of the isolation of the "pit of sorrows." Sinners cry out their regret and pain during their punishment (Qor'ān 11:106; cf. Meybodi, IV, p. 447; Abu'l-Fotuḥ, X, p. 326). One of the infernal valleys, called *wayl*, is so great that it takes its residents forty autumns before they can sink to its bottom. Its name is by one account a cryptic reference to the utterance of its inhabitants, who chant, in the Persian language, the following four laments: *wāy az nām*, *wāy az nang*, *wāy az niāz*, *wāy az āz* (Ebn Abi'l-Donyā, p. 127; Meybodi, I, p. 245; Rawāqi, p. 17). The translators of Ṭabari's commentary claim that *wayl* is a mountain rather than a valley (Ṭabari, IV, p. 1012).

Although hell's gates are locked and its residents have no way out (e.g., Qor'ān 104:8; Ṭabari, VII, p. 2051), it occasionally flares up and tosses the sinners out; and they quickly gather themselves and try to escape. However, the angels of



torment, called Zabāniya (Qor'ān 96:18), catch up with them and cast them back into the flames by blows of their iron maces (Abu'l-Fotuḥ, XIII, p. 314; Ġazāli, I, p. 243; Manučehri, p. 58; Meybodi, VI, p. 350, IX, p. 453; Qaṭrān, p. 387; El-Shamy, 1995, motif: A671.1.1.5.; Thompson, motifs: E752.1.2.1, Q560ff). A similar catalogue is found in the Jewish sources in the details of Abraham's visit to hell (Ginzberg et al., II, pp. 311-13). The Zabāniya are so hideous and foul of smell that if normal men could see or smell them, they would die of dread and disgust (Ebn Abi'l-Donyā, p. 104; Ebn Rajab, p. 139; Abu'l-Fotuḥ, XII, p. 135; Fayz Kāšāni, 2003, p. 224).

Hell's guardian is called Mālek-e Duzak, or simply Mālek (e.g., Abu'l-Fotuḥ, XVII, p. 191; El-Shamy, 1995, motif: A671.1.1.1). Mālek, who sits upon a throne of fire in the middle of hell, wears a perpetual frown and has never smiled (Meybodi, V, p. 496; Abu'l-Fotuḥ, XII, p. 141; Fayz Kāšāni, 2003, p. 274). In the course of his heavenly excursion, the prophet noticed Mālek and his scowling host and asked Gabriel about their grim countenance, and the archangel informed him that God has not endowed hell's attendants with the ability to smile or to be joyful (Meybodi, III, p. 606, IX, p. 84-85). The prophet spoke to Mālek, who allowed him a glimpse of hell (see [ME'RĀJ](#)) and answered his questions about it (Meybodi, III, p. 606, V, pp. 496-97). Aside from the prophet Moḥammad, only Enoch (Edris) seems to have reached to and inspected hell (Meybodi, VI, pp. 57-58; cf. El-Shamy, 2004, type 806A; Tubach, types 2500, 25414).

Aside from the one that many people will have an opportunity to visit, two other hells are mentioned in the Muslim tradition. One is a magical construction of Dajjāl (q.v.) and is designed to lure people into believing in him (Surābādi, p. 147; Meybodi, II, p. 142; Mostamli Boḳāri, III, p. 978; El-Shamy, 1995, motif F705). The other one is made by the ancient king, Šaddād b. 'Ād, to whom the construction of a paradise replica is also attributed. In popular stories related by professional storytellers (*naqqāl*), Šaddād's hell is destroyed by the Persian hero Sām, who defeats his forces in battle (Afšāri and Madāyeni, p. 133).

Much ink has been spilled on the question of whether the punishment of the damned is eternal or temporary. The text of the Qor'ān explicitly supports the everlasting nature of their punishment (e.g., Qor'ān, 3: 112, 9:17, 43:74) and a number of commentators go along with the literal interpretation of the text (see Meybodi, II, pp. 336, 481, IV, p. 448). Most, however, leave a way out of the fire. Some Sunni and Shi'ite scholars have argued that no monotheist will



enter hell, because the saints will intercede with God on his behalf (e.g., Ġazāli, I, p. 129; Fayż Kāšāni, 2003, p. 72; idem, 2004, p. 89; El-Shamy, 1995, motif: V521). Some say that not only the prophet and the saints intercede on behalf all Muslims, but also the residents of paradise who may plead on behalf of their own friends and relatives (e.g., Meybodi, VII, p. 123). One prophetic tradition assigns the act of interceding to an unlikely agent and asserts that after the sinners ask the fires of hell to take pity on their misery seven times, the hell-fires, presumably moved by their pleas, intercede on their behalf (‘Āzemi, p. 6).

Most authorities state that, whereas there may be no doubt about punishment in hell, its torments will not last forever (Mostamli Bokāri, III, p. 1316; Meybodi IV, p. 448). Some base this interpretation on Qor’ān 20:74, in which the sinner is said to be neither dead nor living “until he is released.” Naturally, the wording of the verse implies that the sinner’s punishment is not everlasting, and that he will be eventually released from hell (Abu’l-Fotuḥ, XIII, p. 170). The intensity and duration of the sinners’ punishments will fit the nature of their transgressions (Ġazāli, I, p. 129; Qalānesi Nasafi, p. 115; Meybodi, III, p. 316, V, p. 317, VIII, p. 265; cf. ‘Āzemi, p. 89; El-Shamy, 1995, motif: Q563), and once they are adequately punished they are allowed to leave hell and enter into paradise (Meybodi, IV, p. 447). Hell’s torments are so frightening that the archangels Gabriel, Michael, the host of angels closest to the divine throne, and all of the pious either cry with fear of them or have stopped smiling since hell was created (Ebn Abi’l-Donyā, pp. 104, 135-36; Jamm’ili, pp. 108-9; Ebn Rajab, pp. 28-29, 36; ‘Āzemi, pp. 9, 29). Neither the saved nor the angels are completely immune from the horrors of hell, because they are made to look at it (Abu’l-Fotuḥ, XVI, p. 191). At least one tradition states that none of the residents of the paradise or hell may proceed to their final destination before first looking upon the other place (Meybodi, III, p. 616).

Sufis’ interpretation of hell is understandably different. They believe that the soul (*ruh*) is made of a cool heavenly breeze, while the ego (*nafs*) is made of a hot wind of hellish origin (Qalānesi Nasafi, p. 7). Many mystics consider hell to be an allegory for the ego; to Abu Sa’id Abi’l-Ḳayr (q.v.) hell is where the ego rules while heaven is where it is absent (Abu Sa’id, I, pp. 205, 287; 295-96; Rumi, I, vv. 1375-82; Foruzānfar, s.v. *duzak*). According to Sanā’i Ġaznavi, even if man gains martyrdom a hundred time a day, he will still be an unbeliever if his ego is allowed to interfere with his enlightenment (Sanā’i, p. 708; cf. Aṭṭār, 1985, p. 316). Abu Sa’id interprets the word “hell” in the Hadith according to



which Muslims will branch into over seventy sects, of which all but one will be in hell, as “the fires of their own egos” (Abu Sa’id, I, p. 298), and ‘Aṭṭār follows him in this interpretation by referring to the ego as “an inferno full of flames” (‘Aṭṭār, 1985, p. 320, vv. 1991-94).

Ġazālī posits two types of heaven and hell: the physical and the spiritual. He states that most theologians (*‘olamā*) are either unaware of this fact or deny it altogether (Ġazālī, I, pp. 81-2). He goes on to explain that the spiritual hell and paradise are always with man, and cites Qor’ān 9:49 as proof (Ġazālī, I, p. 97). He believes that spiritual hell is more intense than the physical, and contains three varieties of fires: fires of deprivation, fires of remorse, and fire of separation from God and his glory (I, pp. 102-9). This is probably why the mystic Fożayl b. ‘Eyaż (d. 187/803) used to say that he prefers to be sent to hell after living a pious life rather than going to heaven following an impious life because, although there is pain in hell, at least he will not have to answer the embarrassing question: “why did you do such and such?” (Mostamli Nasafī, p. 195). Generally, Sufis have a cavalier attitude towards heaven and hell. Bāyazid Beṣṭāmī (q.v.) wishes to be sent to hell so that, by exposing his ego to the torments of hell, he may get even with the ego that tormented him so much in life (Meybodi, VIII, p. 399). More radical than Beṣṭāmī is Shaikh Abu Sa’id Abi’l-Ḳayr, who tells a person who wishes the shaikh to go to paradise: “I hope not. We have no need of heaven that is full of weaklings and the poor. There is nothing in it but the crippled, the blind, and the meek. We prefer hell; Jamšid and Pharaoh, etc. are there” (Moḥammad b. Monawwar, I, p. 208). Such an attitude towards hell and heaven would have amounted to apostasy in his time.

Some Sufis consider hell merely a means of purification and refer to it as the soul’s bathhouse (*garmāba*). The soul may become so luminous through purification in hell that its luminosity may distress that dark and dismal place (Meybodi, VI, p. 89). Others believe that men of God may not enter into hell at all (Qalānesi Nasafī, p. 237). Many interesting anecdotes about the adventures of the “believing” sinners in hell exist in standard Sufi sources (e.g., Meybodi, II, p. 742, VI, pp. 89-90, IX, p. 435). One Sufi dreams that he is in hell, but the fires don’t burn him. He is then told by God that hell-fires were not allowed to touch the followers of his Sufi master (Moḥammad Ġaznavi, p. 156). Less orthodox mystics have a charming tale of the role of hell in the spiritual biography of man. According to ‘Aṭṭār, before the completion of the material creation, all existence had a spiritual form. When the world was finally



created nine out of ten spiritual beings chose it. Then God created heaven on the right side of the remaining souls. Nine out of ten, chose heaven. Then hell was created to the left side of the rest. Nine out of ten souls, escaped it in terror. Only a small number of souls were left, who ignored all of God's creations, including paradise and hell. These are the souls of the true Sufis who desire only God (Aṭṭār, 1972, pp. 126-28). Evidently some sinners may be delivered from hell by divine grace and be assigned to a place that is neither hell nor paradise, but a secret place of God's own (Aṭṭār, 1972, pp. 55-56).

The folk perception of hell is a mixture of reinterpreted mystical beliefs, and ancient pagan notions. The punishment begins at death with meeting of an unpleasant being, who will accompany the soul and torment it in the grave until the day of resurrection (Loeffler, pp. 105, 149). Many who fall in the two extremes of economic spectrum consider hell to be experienced in this world in the form of poverty, and heaven in the form of worldly comforts (Loeffler, pp. 209-10, 217). Others view the whole thing as no more than a metaphor for the quality of one's life. If one has a good life, one is in heaven in this world, and if one leads a miserable worldly life, then it is his hell (Loeffler, pp. 67-68). Still others, who hold more conventional views of hell, understand it to be a place of punishment, where one's sentence matches on's crime. Even among this group, however, few reluctantly allow for eternal punishment (Loeffler, pp. 24-25, 57, 177; cf. p. 74 for an account of the gendarmerie as a metaphor for hell). There is even the possibility that oppressors may have to assume a portion of the punishment that their victims have earned for their own evil deeds (Loeffler, p. 107).

Şādeq Hedāyat (q.v.) reports that, if a person can't fall sleep all night long, it is because one of his dead kinfolks is being tormented in hell. He reports the belief among many that the child who incurs the curse of his parents will forever be tormented in hell (Hedāyat, pp. 68, 96). There are also a series of dream interpretations that concern dreaming of hell or aspects thereof. For instance, dreaming that one is kindling a fire near hell is a sign of some hardship that may come to the dreamer from the king, and dreaming of an angel who grabs one by the hair and casts him into hell bodes of immanent calamity (Hobeyš, p. 172; cf. Šahmardān, p. 472).



## BIBLIOGRAPHY

Mehrān Afšāri and Mahdi Madāyeni, *Haft laškar: ṭumār-e naqqālān, az Kayumarṭ tā Bahman*, Tehran, 1998.

Antti Aarne and Stith Thompson, *The Types of the Folktale: A Classification and*, 2nd rev. ed., Folklore Fellows Communications 184, Helsinki, 1973.

Abu'l-Fotuḥ Rāzi, *Rawż al-jenān wa rawḥ al-janān fi tafsir al-Qor'ān*, vols. 9-17, ed. Moḥammad-Mahdi Nāṣeḥ and Moḥammad-Ja'far Yāḥaqqi, Mashad, 1987 (facs. ed.).

Shaikh Farid-al-Din 'Aṭṭār, *Elāhi-nāma*, ed. Fo'ād Roḥāni, Tehran, 1972.

Idem, *Moṣibat-nāma*, ed. Nurāni Weṣāl, Tehran, 1985.

Idem, *Manṭeq al-ṭayr*, ed. Moḥammad-Rezā Šafi'i Kadkani, Tehran, 2004.

Mortazā Āyatollāhzāda, ed., *Bakš-i az tafsir-i kohan ba pārsi*, Tehran, 1997.

Fahd b. Wabdān 'Āzemi, *Dār al-fajjār: ṣefat al-nār wa ahlohā wa 'adābohā wa al-takwif menhā*, Kuwait, 1994.

Abu 'Ali Moḥammad Bal'ami, *Tāriḳ-e Bal'ami*, ed. Moḥammad-Taḳi Bahār, 2 vols., Tehran, 1975.

'Abd-Allāh b. Moḥammad Ebn Abi'l-Donyā, *Ṣefat al-nār*, ed. Moḥammad Kayr Ramažān Yusof, Beirut, 1997.

'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Aḥmad Ebn Rajab, *al-Taḳwif men al-nār wa'l-ta'rif be-ḥāl dār al-bawār*, ed. Moḥammad J. Ġāzi, Cairo, 1981.

Hasan M. El-Shamy, *Folk Traditions of the Arab World: A Guide to Motif Classification*, 2 vols., Bloomington, 1995.

Idem, *Types of the Folktales in the Arab World*, Bloomington, 2004.

Mollā Moḥsen-Moḥammad b. Šāh Mortazā Fayz Kāšāni, *'Ālam mā ba'd al-mawt: al-ensān fi manāzel kalqeh wa mawteh wa ba'deh*, ed. Moḥsen 'Aqil,



Beirut, 2003.

Idem, *Mer'āt al-āķera wa zīā' al-qalb*, ed. Sayyed 'Ali 'Ašur, Beirut, 2004.

Badi'-al-Zamān Foruzānfar, *Farhang-e Foruzānfar: šāmel-e eštelāhāt-e 'erfān, kalām, ṭebb, nojum, feqh, musiqi, ...*, ed. Maryam-al-Sādāt Ranjbar, Isfahan, 1995.

M. Gaster, "Hebrew Version of Hell and Paradise," *JRAS*, 1893, pp. 571-611.

Abu Ḥāmed Moḥammad Ġazāli, *Kimiā-ye sa'ādat*, ed. Ḥosayn Kādivjam, Tehran, 1982.

Idem, "Resāla-i dar ma'refat-e āķerat," *Tarjama-ye resāla-ye adhawiyah-ye Šayk al-Ra'īs Abu 'Ali Sinā*, ed. Ḥosayn Kādivjam, Tehran, 1985, pp. 119-49.

Sadid-al-Din Moḥammad Ġaznavi, *Maqāmāt-e žanda pil*, ed. Ḥešmat-Allāh Moayyad, Tehran, 1966.

Louis Ginzberg et al., *The Legends of the Jews*, 7 vols., Philadelphia, 1909, repr. Philadelphia, 1968.

Šādeq Hedāyat, *Neyrangestān*, Tehran, 1963.

Ḥobayš b. Ebrāhim Teflisi, *Matn-e kāmel-e ta'bir-e k'āb*, Tehran, 1994.

Edward Washburn Hopkins, *Epic Mythology*, New York, 1966.

Abu Moḥammad 'Abd-al-Ġani b. 'Abd al-Waḥid Jamm'ili, *Dekr al-nār*, ed. Adib Moḥammad Ġazzāwi, Beirut, 1994.

Abu Sa'd 'Abd-al-Malek Kārguši, "Behešt o duzak," tr. Najm-al-Din Maḥmud Rāvandi, ed. Moḥammad Rowšan, in Ḥabib Yaġmā'i and Iraj Afšār, eds., *Nāma-ye Minovi*, Tehran, 1971, pp. 217-26.

Abu Ja'far Moḥammad Kolayni, *al-Oṣul men al-kāfi*, ed. 'Ali-Akbar Ġaffāri, 8 vols., Tehran, 1988.

Marcus Landau, *Hölle und Fegfeuer in Volksglaube, Dichtung und Kirchenlehre*, Heidelberg, 1909.

Reinhold Loeffler, *Islam in Practice: Religious Beliefs in A Persian Village*, New York, 1988.



Manučehri Dāmḡāni, *Divān-e Manučehri Dāmḡāni*, ed. Moḡammad Dabirsiāqi, Tehran, 1991.

Rašid-al-Din Aḡmad b. Moḡammad Meybodi, *Kašf al-asrār wa 'oddāt al-abrār*, ed. 'Ali-Ašḡar Ḥekmat, 10 vols., Tehran, 1978.

*Minu-ye kerad*, tr. Aḡmad Tafazzoli, Tehran, 1975.

Moḡammad b. Monawwar, *Asrār al-tawḡid fi maqāmāt al-Šayḡ Abi Sa'id*, ed. Moḡammad-Rezā Šafi'i Kadkani, 2 vols., Tehran, 1987; tr. John O'Kane as *The Secrets of God's Mystical Oneness, or, The Spiritual Stations of Shaikh Abu Sa'id*, Costa Mesa, Calif., 1992.

Abu Ebrāhim Esmā'il b. Moḡammad Mostamli Boḡāri, *Šarḡ al-ta'arrof le-maḡhab al-tašawwof*, ed. Moḡammad Rowšan, 5 vols., Tehran, 1984-87.

'Onšori, *Divān-e 'Onšori*, ed. Moḡammad Dabirsiāqi, 2nd ed, Tehran, 1984.

Ebrāhim Purdāwud, *Ānāhitā: panjāh goftār-e Purdāwud*, ed. Ebrāhim Gorji, Tehran, 1964.

Abd-Allāh b. Moḡammad b. Abi Bakr Qalānesi Nasafi, *Eršād dar ma'refat wa wa'z wa aklāq*, ed. 'Āref Nawšāhi, Tehran, 2005.

Abu Manšur Qaṭrān, *Divān-e Ḥakim Qaṭrān Tabrizi az ru-ye nosḡa-ye Moḡammad Nakjavāni*, Tehran, 1983.

'Abbās b. Moḡammad-Rezā Qomi, *Safinat al-beḡār wa madinat al-ḡekam wa'l-ātār*, 2 vols., Beirut, 1985(?).

'Ali Rawāqi, ed., *Tafsir-e Qor'an-e pāk*, Intro. by M. Širāni, Tehran, 2004.

Jalāl-al-Din Moḡammad Balki Rumi, *Maṭnawi*, ed. and tr., Reynald A. Nicholson, 8 vols., 1925-60.

*Sad dar Nasr va Sad dar Bundeheš* [sic], ed. Bahmanji N. Dhabhar, Bombay, 1909.

Šahmardān b. Abi'l-Ḳayr, *Nozhat-nāma-ye 'alā'i*, ed. Farhang Jahānpur, Tehran, 1983.

Ešḡāq b. Moḡammad b. Esmā'il Samarḡandi, *al-Sawād al-a'zam*, ed. 'Abd-al-



Ḥayy Ḥabibi, Tehran, 1969.

Abu'l-Majd Majdud b. Ādam Sanā'i, *Divān*, ed. Moḥammad-Taḳi Modarres Rażawi, Tehran, 1976.

Abu Bakr 'Atiq Surābādi, *Tafsir-e Qor'ān-e karma*, facs. ed., Tehran, 1966.

Moḥammad b. Jarir Ṭabari, *Tarjama-ye tafsir-e Ṭabari*, ed. Ḥabib Yaḡmā'i, 7 vols., Tehran, 1960.

Stith Thompson, *Motif-Index of Folk-Literature: A Classification of Narrative Elements in Folktales, Ballads, Myths, Fables, Mediaeval Romances, Exempla, Fabliaux, Jest-books, and Local Legends*, rev. ed., 6 vols., Bloomington, 1955.

Frederic C. Tubach, *Index Exemplorum: A Handbook of Medieval Religious Tales*, Helsinki, 1969.

Moḥammad b. Ḥosayn b. 'Ali Ṭusi, *al-Mabsuṭ fi'l-feqh al-emāmiya*, ed. Moḥammad-Bāqer Behbudi, 8 vols., Tehran, 1967-73.

Rustamji Maneckji Unvala, ed., *Dârâb Hormazyâr's Revâyat*, 2 vols., Bombay, 1922.

Moḥammad-Ja'far Yāḡaqqi, *Farhang-e asâṭir*, Tehran, 1990.

(Mahmoud Omidşalar)