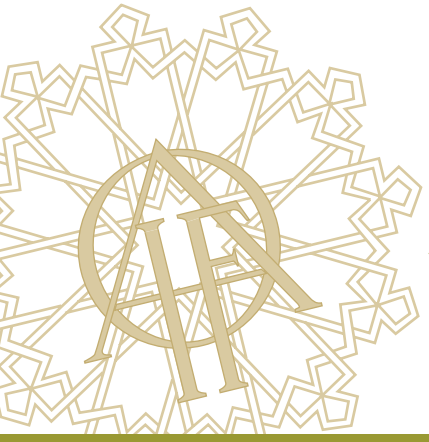
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Mateusz Wilk

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MATEUSZ WILK*

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◆ **RÉSUMÉ**

Le présent article analyse la place des femmes, des familles et de l'éthique sexuelle dans les compilations du *ḥadīṯ* apocalyptique réalisées en al-Andalus. En général, ces sources présentent les femmes comme un facteur important de la corruption graduelle de la religion et la moralité qui aura lieu avant la fin du monde. Une importance spéciale y est accordée à l'obésité des femmes et au lesbianisme. Le présent article passe en revue les traditions en question et les situe dans le contexte des angoisses collectives de la société musulmane au III^e^/IX^e^ siècle.

Mots-clés : eschatologie – traditions apocalyptiques – *ḥadīṯ* – femmes – famille – lesbianisme – homosexualité – obésité

◆ **ABSTRACT**

The present paper discusses the place of women, families and sexual ethics in the Andalusi compilations of apocalyptic *ḥadīṯ*. These sources tend to present women as instrumental in the gradual corruption of religion and morality that is to come at the end of time, putting special emphasis on obesity of women and lesbianism. The present article contains an overview of the relevant traditions aiming to put them into the context of the collective fears of the 3rd/9th century Muslim society.

Keywords: eschatology – apocalyptic – *ḥadīṯ* – women – family – lesbianism – – homosexuality – obesity

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Introductory Remarks

Families and family life are one of the most prevalent, yet understudied subjects in Islamic apocalyptic literature. In these sources one often finds a recurring theme: the gradual decay of social and religious norms, culminating at the end of times, when all religion and morality are forgotten and the Prophetic tradition is entirely replaced by harmful innovations. An important element of this process is the decay of families, often pictured as changes in their way of life, which can be seen as signs of the impending end of the world. Furthermore, the corruption of women, traditionally perceived as prone to frivolousness, is considered by the apocalyptic traditions as an important aspect of this decay. One of such changes is lesbianism which is portrayed as an unprecedented evil and a portent of the Last Hour (*al-sāʿa*).

Eschatological traditions concerning women and families can be of scholarly interest for several reasons. First of all, they can shed some light on the manner in which these questions were viewed in early Malikism, which is especially useful because our knowledge of the beginnings of the schools of law in al-Andalus remains limited in many aspects, despite considerable advances in recent years. Secondly, they can contribute to our understanding of collective fears present in the Andalusi (and in a broader sense, Muslim) society in the 3rd/9th century.

The aim of the present paper is to provide an introductory study of women, families, and lesbianism in the Andalusi compilations of eschatological traditions in the 3rd/9th century by exploring the place of families in the collective Andalusi imagination during this formative period. As this is an introductory essay, further study concerning these complex problems is certainly necessary.

Presentation of Sources

The majority of the preserved Andalusi sources written in the 3rd/9th century was compiled by two authors, ʿAbd al-Malik b. Ḥabīb (d. 238/853) and Muḥammad b. Waḍḍāḥ (d. 287/900).

Both of them can be considered early Malikis or, to employ a term used in more recent studies, "Proto-Malikis."[1] Ibn Ḥabīb is one of the outstanding figures of the intellectual life of al-Andalus in the 3rd/9th century and our knowledge of his life and works has greatly improved in the last twenty years, since the first full critical edition of his *Kitāb al-taʾrīḫ*.[2] Being one of

1. On this term see principally: Fierro, "Proto-Malikis". On the beginnings of Malikism in al-Andalus see, for example, Carmona, "The Introduction of Malik's Teachings in al-Andalus". I have recently tried to discuss the latter problem from a different, ideological and historiographical, angle in Wilk, "Le malikisme et les Omeyyades".

2. ʿAbd al-Malik b. Ḥabīb, *Kitāb al-taʾrīḫ*. (On the life and work of Ibn Ḥabīb see a very useful editor's introduction, especially p. 15-75). Earlier bibliography on Ibn Ḥabīb is rather scarce and often obsolete, but (despite the fact that some of Makkī's views have since been disproven by Aguadé or other scholars) see also the remarks of M. ʿA. Makkī on the links of Ibn Ḥabīb's chronicle with Egyptian historiography in the article constituting the most thorough study consecrated to this author before Aguadé's edition: Makkī, "Egipto y los origenes de la historiografía arabigo-española".

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the trusted lawyers of ʿAbd al-Raḥmān II (ruled 206-238/822-852), Ibn Ḥabīb played a crucial role in the spreading of the Maliki doctrine in al-Andalus in the 3rd/9th century.[3] He left a relatively high number of texts, almost exclusively collections of *ḥadīṯ*. Apart from the already mentioned *Kitāb al-ta'rīḫ* constituting the oldest preserved Andalusi chronicle,[4] the extant works of Ibn Ḥabīb include: *Muḫtaṣar fī-l-ṭibb*,[5] *Kitāb waṣf al-firdaws*, *Kitāb adab al-nisā'* and *Ašrāṭ al-sāʿa*. Apart from these compilations generally preserved in their integrality, we are in possession of fragments of other works, of which the most extensive are the preserved excerpts of the *Kitāb al-waḍīḥa*. Apparently, Ibn Ḥabīb also compiled some works that have not been preserved to our times,[6] but in the situation where so many texts from the 3rd/9th century have been lost, it may reasonably be concluded that the number of his extant works is relatively high, constituting the majority of preserved Andalusi texts from this period.

The case of Muḥammad b. Waḍḍāḥ (d. 287/900) is drastically different. He was a Cordoban *muḥaddiṯ*, ascetic and pious man. Although his biographers (compilers of biographical dictionaries) attribute to him a number of texts,[7] only the *Kitāb al-bidaʿ*, not mentioned in these biographies and compiled by Ibn Waḍḍāḥ's student, Abū al-Qāsim Aṣbaġ b. Mālik, is extant. Ibn Waḍḍāḥ also enjoyed a certain renown in the circles of Andalusi *ḥadīṯ* folk,[8] transmitted from many masters and had a very great number of disciples.[9] The *Kitāb al-bidaʿ* was known to later scholars, constituting the earliest known example of a treatise against innovations and influencing the later Andalusi tradition of this genre,[10] but it does not seem that Ibn Waḍḍāḥ enjoyed similarly high position and prestige as Ibn Ḥabīb. It is, however, worth noting that, generally speaking, their compilations have much in common, both in terms of the authorities present in the *isnād*-s (comprising such important figures as Asad b. Mūsā[11] or Layṯ b. Saʿd) and the ideas conveyed by many of these traditions.

One of the principal common points between many of Ibn Ḥabīb's compilations (including the *Kitāb al-ta'rīḫ*) and Ibn Waḍḍāḥ's *Kitāb al-bidaʿ* is the underlying eschatological and apocalyptic preoccupation. While this point is certainly too broad to be fully discussed in the present

3. See, for example, the recent article by Arcas Campoy, "La autoridad doctrinal de ʿAbd al-Malik b. Ḥabīb".
4. Generally speaking, the *Kitāb al-ta'rīḫ* is a universal history compiled in its extant form by Ibn Ḥabīb's student, al-Maġāmī, and consisting of some *ḥadīṯ*-s containing Islamic "salvation history", brief historical traditions on the life of the Prophet, early Islamic period and the conquest of al-Andalus, as well as eschatological predictions. The last preserved part is a fairly incoherent compilation on various subjects, with no apparent links to the preceding parts.
5. Bibliographical references to Ibn Ḥabīb's works can be found in the bibliographical section of this paper.
6. On this see Aguadé's introduction to the *Kitāb al-ta'rīḫ*, p. 57-75.
7. On this see the introduction to the edition of the *Kitāb al-bidaʿ*: Ibn Waḍḍāḥ, *Kitāb al-bidaʿ*, p. 39-44.
8. I employ here the term used by Melchert in his article "The Piety of the Hadith Folk".
9. Fierro proves that he had more than 150 masters (*Kitāb al-bidaʿ*, introduction, p. 15-23) and gives a full list of his 216 disciples (*ibid.*, p. 46-57).
10. Apart from the pages 117-119 of the introduction to Ibn Waḍḍāḥ's compilation, see: Fierro, "The Treatises against Innovations (*kutub al-bidaʿ*)".
11. This important Egyptian *muḥaddiṯ* (b. 132/750, d. 212/827) is the principal source of both the *Kitāb al-waraʿ* of Ibn Ḥabīb and the *Kitāb al-bidaʿ* of Ibn Waḍḍāḥ.

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paper, a perfunctory analysis of Ibn Ḥabīb's *Ašrāṭ al-sāʿa* (which seems to be his only compilation devoted entirely to the end of times, which is evident already in its title) or the *Kitāb al-taʾrīḫ* is sufficient to confirm this point. The *Ašrāṭ al-sāʿa* is a fairly short compilation (comprising only 43 traditions) containing various *ḥadīṯ*-s on the portents of the end of the world and the Hour of the Judgment (*al-sāʿa*). As to the *Kitāb al-taʾrīḫ*, it gives an overview of the history of the world from the moment of its creation, through the series of prophets and the coming of Islam. The age of the end times comes with the conquest of al-Andalus—the narrative in itself ends with apocalyptic predictions concerning the ill fate that will befall some of the cities of al-Andalus.[12]

As to the *Kitāb al-bidaʿ* of Muḥammad b. Waḍḍāḥ, very many traditions from this compilation convey the view of Islam as a decaying religion. Its demise progresses gradually, as piety and the Prophetic tradition (*sunna*) are being replaced by innovations (*bidaʿ*, sing. *bidʿa*) i.e. religious ideas not based upon the Qur'ān or the Prophetic tradition:[13]

> Asad [b. Mūsā] transmitted: Ismāʿīl b. ʿIyāš transmitted the following from ʿUqayl b. Mudarrik al-Sulāmī from Luqmān, from Abū Idrīs al-Ḫawlānī who said: "I prefer to hear that one of the sides of a mosque is on fire, rather than hear of an innovation in that mosque that nobody intends to correct.[14] No community comes up with an innovation without God taking away from this community a corresponding *sunna*[15]."
>
> Abū Ayyūb told me from Saḥnūn[16] who said: "Someone who heard it from al-Awzāʿī[17] informed me that the latter narrated from Ḥassān al-ʿAṭiya the following: 'Innovators[18] never introduce any novelty to their religion without God taking a similar *sunna* away from them, which He will not return to them until the Day of Resurrection.'"[19]

This spread of harmful novelties contributing to the distortion or disappearance of correct religious practices taught by the Prophet or his Companions results in the pillars of religion

12. Various narratives on cities (including the ones on their destruction) are one of the most prevalent themes in classical Islamic apocalyptic. See, for example, Cook, *Studies in Muslim Apocalyptic*, especially p. 254-268.
13. On the notion of *bidʿa* see Fierro's introduction to the *Kitāb al-bidaʿ*, p. 92-117.
14. *Bi-bidʿa fī-hi laysa la-hā muġayyir.*
15. *Kitāb al-bidaʿ* V/1, p. 181 (Spanish translation: p. 301).
16. Saḥnūn b. Saʿīd al-Tanūḫī (d. 240/854-855). On this important early Maliki jurist from Qayrawān who exerted a certain influence in the spread of Malikism in al-Andalus, see: Carmona, "The Introduction of Malik's Teachings in al-Andalus", p. 49, Fierro, "Proto-Malikis" esp. p. 59-60. For his *Mudawwana*, one of the most important compilations in the Malikī *maḏhab*, see: Saḥnūn, *al-Mudawwana al-kubrā*, [no name of the editor], Cairo 1905, 16 vols.
17. Abū ʿAmr ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. ʿAmr al-Awzāʿī (d. 157/774) was an important jurist whose students created a separate school of law (*maḏhab*). According to older theories the Awzāʿī school was supposedly dominant in al-Andalus before the advent of Malikism. I analyse certain weaknesses of such view, as well as some links of Andalusi "Proto-Malikis" to Awzāʿism in Wilk, "Le malikisme et les Omeyyades" (on *fiqh* in al-Andalus before Malikism, see esp. p. 102-110 and the references indicated therein). On al-Awzāʿī and his *maḏhab* see for example Judd, "Al-Awzāʿī and Sufyān al-Ṯhawrī".
18. *Qawm al-bidʿa.*
19. *Kitāb al-bidaʿ* V/4, p. 182 (Spanish translation: p. 301). For other traditions in this compilation referring to the idea of *sunna* being replaced by *bidʿa* see *ibid.*, V/5, 6, 9, 10; XII/28.

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falling into oblivion[20] to the extent that, as it is often said in these traditions, the Prophet or a Muslim from his times would not have recognised the Islamic community from later times.[21] Simultaneously, the people able to teach true religion and to discern right from wrong will gradually die out and Islam will be subject to ultimate corruption (*fasād*) and destruction. Traditions of this kind in Ibn Waḍḍāḥ's compilation are too numerous to be fully quoted here and thus I only limit myself to one of the most characteristic passages:

> Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad told me from ʿAwn, from Ibrāhīm b. Nāfiʿ al-Qurašī that ʿAbd Allāh b. al-Mubārak[22] said: Know, my brother, that to die today is a grace for every Muslim, for he meets God in accordance with *sunna*.[23] Verily, we belong to God and to Him we shall return! To God we bewail our solitude, the passing of our brothers, the scarcity of those which can aid us and the appearance of innovations. To God we bewail the terrible things which happened to this community, namely the passing of scholars and those who knew *sunna*, as well as the appearance of innovations.[24] It befell us to live in very harsh times and during terrible, violent disorder.[25] The Messenger of God (on whom be peace and prayers) feared lest we fall in error and what would become of us. He warned us of what would come as it is transmitted by Abū Hurayra: The Messenger of God (on whom be peace and prayers) said: "Conflicts (*fitan*) shall come upon you like the darkest part of night, where a believer at dawn shall be an infidel in the evening and an infidel at dawn shall be a believer in the evening and where people shall sell their religion for the glamour of this world."[26]

This moral decay is an utterly deterministic process that seems to be independent from human beings and inherent to history itself. It also begins already in the primeval times of Islam, as it is attested by this tradition:

> Muḥammad b. Waḍḍāḥ told me:[27] Muḥammad b. Saʿīd transmitted: Asad transmitted from Muḥammad b. al-Fuḍayl, from Hārūn b. Abī Wakīʿ from his father who said: The verse "This day have I perfected your religion for you"[28] was revealed on the day of greater pilgrimage[29] and

20. See *ibid*., XI/1, 3, 11, 23, 24, 26, 29; XII/14, 38, 39a.
21. See *ibid*., XI/7-9, 28-30, 32.
22. Abū ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ʿAbd Allāh ibn al-Mubārak (d. 181/797), a scholar originating from Merv and said to be a disciple of, among others, Abū Ḥanīfa and Mālik b. Anas, is one of the most important authorities in the *ʿilm al-ḥadīṯ* of the 2nd/8th century and left two preserved early compilations of *ḥadīt*, i.e. the *Kitāb al-ǧihād* and the *Kitāb al-zuhd wa-l-raqā'iq*. He appears as a transmitter of numerous traditions to be found in the compilation of Ibn Waḍḍāḥ (I/4; II/4; V/11; XI/26, 32, 40; XII/11, 23, 27, 52, 60).
23. *Laqiya Allāh ʿalā sunna*.
24. *Ilā Allāh naškū ʿaẓīm mā ḥalla bi-hāḏihi al-umma min ḏihāb al-ʿulamā' ahl al-sunna wa-ẓuhūr al-bidaʿ*.
25. *Wa-qad aṣbaḥnā fī-zamān šadīd wa-harǧ ʿaẓīm*. Ibn al-Mubārak may refer here to the Abbasid revolution of which he was a contemporary, but it is worth noticing that disorders, conflicts and massacres (*fitan*, sing. *fitna*, *malāḥim*, sing. *malḥama*) which are to come in the final days are one of the most important Muslim apocalyptic themes (see Cook, *Studies in Muslim Apocalyptic*, p. 19-25 and the numerous references quoted therein).
26. *Kitāb al-bidaʿ*, XII/27, p. 222 (Spanish translation p. 349-350). For other traditions in this compilation warning against disappearance of scholars see III/26; XI/45; XII/25, 26, 30, 37, 37a.
27. I.e. the final compiler, Abū al-Qāsim Aṣbaġ b. Mālik, disciple of Ibn Waḍḍāḥ.
28. The Qur'ān 5:3 in M. Pickthall's translation.
29. I.e. on the Day of Sacrifice (10 of ḏū al-ḥiǧǧa).

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> ʿUmar[30] burst into tears. The Messenger of God (on whom be peace and prayers) said: "What is making you cry, O ʿUmar?" and ʿUmar responded: "O, Messenger of God! We have been living in times when our religion was growing. Now it is perfected and nothing is ever perfected that does not begin to diminish at this very moment!"[31] The Prophet (on whom be peace and prayers) said: "You have spoken the truth."[32]

It is then possible to conclude that the works of both Andalusi authors convey a strong sense of historicity. In Ibn Ḥabīb's *Kitāb al-taʾrīḫ* the history of the world enters the eschatological age with the conquest of al-Andalus, which in some way completes the age of conquests and ends the "salvation history[33]." Other eschatological compilations of Ibn Ḥabīb do not provide a coherent narrative as in case of the *Kitāb al-taʾrīḫ*, nor do we find in them recurrent or dominant themes that could serve to support a vision of history as strong as in case of Ibn Waḍḍāḥ's *Kitāb al-bidaʿ*. Although it is evident that as a compilation of Prophetic traditions it generally lacks any kind of formal chronological or narrative arrangement, its thematic coherence is so strong that it is possible to perceive a certain concept of history in this material, which is much more difficult in a case such as that of Ibn Ḥabīb's *Ašrāṭ al-sā*

ʿa, even though this compilation deals specifically with the portents of the end of the world.

It is also crucial to note that the culmination of this decay of religion is, according to the compilers, visible in the corruption of morals and social life. While such traditions are virtually absent from the *Kitāb al-taʾrīḫ*, they are very numerous in the *Ašrāṭ al-sāʿa* and the *Kitāb al-bidaʿ*—in both of these compilations they are signs of imminent doom, the end of religion and the impending Hour of Judgment.[34] One of the themes often appearing in this category is the conduct or life of women.[35] The present paper intends to discuss the place of women and families in the Andalusi eschatology of the 3rd/9th century.

Women and Families in Andalusi Eschatology in the 3rd/9th Century

A cursory glance at the preserved Andalusi texts from the 3rd/9th century reveals that the most extensive source dealing with women is a vast compilation by ʿAbd al-Malik b. Ḥabīb entitled *Kitāb adab al-nisāʾ*. Given its compiler and his other works, it may be somewhat surprising that eschatological traditions are rather scarce in this text, as their majority concerns

30. I.e. ʿUmar b. al-Ḫaṭṭāb, the future second caliph.
31. *Innā kunnā fī ziyāda min dīninā fa-ammā iḏ kumila fa-lam yukmil šayʾ qaṭṭ illā naqaṣa.*
32. *Kitāb al-bidaʿ*, XI/34, p. 210-211 (Spanish translation p. 336). See also the tradition directly preceding this one (i.e. XI, 33), where ʿAbd Allāh b. al-Mubārak states that Islam is decaying like a colour fading on a textile and like a thinning pack animal.
33. To some extent, it is possible to view the conquest of al-Andalus in Ibn Ḥabīb's chronicle as a "historical apocalypse" as defined by David Cook (*Studies in Muslim Apocalyptic*, p. 34-84, esp. 54-66).
34. Thus, these traditions fall into the category of "moral apocalypse" introduced by D. Cook (*Studies in Muslim Apocalyptic*, p. 230-254, see also introductory remarks on the ubiquitousness of such themes on p. 13-14).
35. Cf. *ibid.*, p. 9-10, 14, 99-100 and in numerous other places.

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individual piety, as well as family life and sexual ethics with no eschatological content other than individual salvation or condemnation. In other words, it is quite striking that seldom do we find in these traditions[36] any references to the last days or descriptions of women or their customs as portents of the end. The only tradition explicitly pointing to the final days concerns the practice of severe correction of women and family members:

> From Rāḍī b. ʿAṭāʾ who said: the Messenger of God (on whom be peace and prayers) said: "One of the portents of the Last Hour is the abandonment of correction, so change your attitude towards your families," which means severity in correction.[37]

While this is certainly an eschatological tradition stressing the corruption of moral norms in the final days (i.e. women will no longer be chastised by their husbands and will become corrupted), it is coherent with the general themes of the compilation focusing upon general ethics and conduct of women. Other examples that may be relevant to our discussion include prohibitions on women to adopt male clothing[38] and recommendations for them to use henna, *kuḥl* and perfumes in order to distinguish themselves from men.[39] One tradition also prohibits the sharpening of teeth (*wašr*), tattooing (*wašm*), depilation (*namṣ*) and artificial prolongation of hair (*waṣl al-šaʿr*) by women,[40] though another one authorizes such prolongation by means of wool, but not natural hair.[41] It is true that Islamic apocalyptic often evokes the image of women similar to men and men to women, cross-dressing, etc., as a sign of debauchery which is to come in the final days;[42] it has to be noted, however, that traditions in Ibn Ḥabīb's *Kitāb adab al-nisāʾ* dealing with these questions do not explicitly mention the end of the world or the final days. Apart from the tradition on the castigation of women quoted above, the only ones in the *Kitāb adab al-nisāʾ* which may implicitly refer to eschatology deal with lesbian practices and I will return to them later on. It can, however, be safely concluded that eschatology constitutes at best a secondary theme in this compilation, though one can ask to what extent

36. The compilation contains 264 separate paragraphs containing one or several traditions (in Turkī's edition paragraphs 265 and 266 belong to the colophon of the work) which makes it relatively vast in comparison with other Andalusi sources of this genre and from this period, second only to the *Kitāb al-bidaʿ*.

37. *Min ašrāṭ al-sāʿa an yarğiʿa al-adab fa-tanakkarū li-ahlikum, yaʿnī šiddat al-adab. Kitāb adab al-nisāʾ*, 183, p. 251. One of the meanings of *tanakkara* in Lane's dictionary is "to become changed or altered" and *tanakkara lī* is defined as "Such a one [became changed, or altered, in countenance to me by anger so that I did not know him; or] met me in a morose manner". The second reason why I translate this linguistically obscure tradition in this particular way is the fact that it belongs to a series of much clearer traditions on beating of women and families and to a chapter dedicated to this question (*Bāb mā yağūzu li-l-riğāl bi-ḍarb nisāʾihim*, *ibid.*, p. 247-251.)

38. *Ibid.*, 112, p. 206-207.

39. *Ibid.*, 113-117, p. 207-210.

40. *Ibid.*, 141, p. 224.

41. *Ibid.*, 142, p. 226.

42. See, for example, similar traditions in the *Kitāb al-bidaʿ* XI/6, 43 with clear eschatological elements (in the latter one men use perfumes, though some traditions do authorize the use of adornments by men in order to please their wives, cf. *Kitāb adab al-nisāʾ* 48, p. 167-168).

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the concern with good conduct of women stems from eschatological anxieties prevalent in other compilations of Ibn Ḥabīb, as well as in the *Kitāb al-bidaʿ* of Ibn Waḍḍāḥ and the texts of many of their contemporaries from the Islamic East. In other words, it is possible that this preoccupation with womanly piety and marital and sexual ethics originates from the desire to denounce the real or imagined perversions which may bring about the end of times—as David Cook has it, there is a direct connection between the apocalyptic events and the moral attitudes of the society.[43]

In the *Kitāb ašrāṭ al-sāʿa*, Ibn Ḥabīb's short compilation focusing on the end of the world, we find very few mentions on women and families. One of the traditions states that the Last Hour will not come before, among other things, women become partners in trade for their husbands,[44] which can be perceived as yet another example of the previously discussed undesirable confusion of social roles of men and women directly preceding the last days. Another one draws the familiar picture of open debauchery committed even in public places, with somewhat disturbing description of the adulterers' laughter:

> Abū Muġīra told me from al-Huzayl b. Šuraḥbīl from Ibn Masʿūd: the Hour will come upon the worst of men,[45] who will neither command right nor forbid wrong[46] and who will mate like wild animals.[47] This will reach such degree that when a woman goes about her business, a man will rise and have his way with her. They will laugh to one another and their laughter will be like bubbling of water unsuitable for drinking because of its bitterness.[48]

The only two other instances where women actually appear in this short compilation counting 41 *ḥadīṯ*-s is when it is predicted that men will be very scarce, to the point where women having husbands will be rare,[49] and it is said that one of the portents of the Hour and the fulfillment of the verses 9 and 10 of the surah 75 of the Qur'ān[50] will be when the sun and the moon rise in the West and set in the East. On that day mothers will abandon their children and pregnant women will miscarry.[51] When we add to this a brief mention from the *Kitāb al-ta'rīḫ* predicting that during the massacre of Córdoba before the end of times neither

43. Cf. Cook, *Studies in Muslim Apocalyptic*, p. 14.
44. Ibn Ḥabīb, *Ašrāṭ al-sāʿa* 2, p. 79. This seems to be a *topos* in Islamic apocalyptic (cf. Cook, *ibid.*).
45. I.e. those will be the worst men in the entire history of humanity.
46. The abandonment of the duty of commanding right and forbidding wrong (*al-amr bi-l-maʿrūf wa-l-nahy ʿan al-munkar*) is another very frequently mentioned portent of the Hour. For similar traditions see for example Ibn Waḍḍāḥ's *Kitāb al-bidaʿ* XI/5, 14 – this compilation also contains other traditions on commanding right and forbidding wrong, not referring explicitly to eschatology. On the duty of commanding right and forbidding wrong see Cook, *Commanding Right and Forbidding Wrong in Islamic Thought*, especially the first part of this very thorough study (p. 3-82 of the first edition).
47. *Yatahārağū kamā tatahārağu al-bahā'im.*
48. *Fa-yaḍḥaku ilayhā fa-taḍḥaku ilayhi ka-raġraġat al-mā' lā yuṭʿamu yaʿnī min marāratihi. Ašrāṭ al-sāʿa* 9, p. 92.
49. *Ibid.*, 10, p. 94. This paucity of men is another *topos* of Islamic apocalyptic (cf. Cook, *Studies in Muslim Apocalyptic*, p. 14).
50. In Pickthall's translation: "And sun and moon are united // On that day man will cry: Whither to flee!"
51. Ibn Ḥabīb, *Ašrāṭ al-sāʿa* 17, p. 109.

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women nor children will be spared and warning the inhabitants of the city against letting their families live near the "congregation of the house of iniquity" (*maǧmaʿ bayt al-ẓulm*) or near the principal mosque, for the worst slaughter is supposed to take place there,[52] we can conclude that although eschatology plays an eminent role in many of the preserved compilations of ʿAbd al-Malik b. Ḥabīb, women and families are only a minor theme in his apocalyptic imagery (or, to be more precise, the imagery of the traditions he transmitted). Ibn Ḥabīb's unambiguously apocalyptic traditions concerning women are rather scarce and place themselves within the scope of well-known apocalyptic *topoi* evoking the idea of corruption of family and society, either for "natural" reasons (as in case of paucity of men or the sun and the moon rising in the West) or due to the progressive dissolution of all morality which is to take place in the last days.

As we have seen, such gradual corruption of all norms (*fasād*) is one of the underlying ideas in the *Kitāb al-bidaʿ* of Muḥammad b. Waḍḍāḥ. Traditions on women included in this compilation fully inscribe themselves in the vision of deterministic degeneration of society and disappearance of religion. On the whole, in the *Kitāb al-bidaʿ* there are seven eschatological traditions mentioning women (which makes this question rather secondary for Ibn Waḍḍāḥ, but given the considerable variety of subjects discussed in the compilation, it is hardly the least important theme, either). Of these, four are quite thematically disparate, except, of course, for the common theme of *fasād*. One foretells the gradual disappearance of the pillars of Islam and one of the signs of this process will be women praying during their menstruation (i.e. with no regard to the required ritual purity).[53] Another one states that in the end of times the number of ignorant ones[54] will increase, "women will rebel"[55] and the duty of commanding right and forbidding wrong will disappear.[56] The third tradition from this group merely predicts that in the year 140 there will be corruption of women and children and if there is someone alive in 179, he had better take his horse and sword and save himself.[57] In the last one we encounter a dark vision of abandoned religion, where the believers turning away from it are compared to "a woman who gives herself to anyone who wants it."[58]

This leaves us with the last three traditions on women, which are quite peculiar to Ibn Waḍḍāḥ's compilation because of their insistence upon lesbian practices (present in two of them) and obesity of women (present in all three). The idea that underlies the view of lesbianism (which, together with obesity of women and the practice of exhumations, form a rather curious "triad" in this respect) is that although the Islamic community is bound to repeat all the errors

52. Ibn Ḥabīb, *Kitāb al-ta'rīḫ* 450, p. 153.
53. *Kitāb al-bidaʿ* XI/3, p. 202 (Spanish translation: p. 325).
54. *Ǧuhhāl*, i.e. people with no knowledge of religion.
55. *Ṭāġat nisā'ukum*.
56. *Kitāb al-bidaʿ* XI/5, p. 205 (Spanish translation: p. 327). On the disappearance of commanding right and forbidding wrong cf. *supra*, n. 46.
57. *Kitāb al-bidaʿ* XI/16, p. 206 (Spanish translation: p. 330-331). Maribel Fierro points out that although these dates do not seem to have any particular sense or refer to particular events, traditions of this kind are common in Islamic apocalyptic of this period, especially in the important *Kitāb al-fitan* of Nuʿaym b. Ḥammād.
58. *Kitāb al-bidaʿ* XII/12, p. 219 (Spanish translation: p. 345-346).

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and perversions of the religious communities which preceded it and ultimately will share their fate, these three practices are abominations without precedents, as it is evident from these two traditions:

> Muḥammad b. Waḍḍāḥ told me:[59] Muḥammad b. Saʿīd transmitted the following: Nuʿaym b. Ḥammād transmitted from ʿUṯmān b. Kaṯīr, from Muḥammad b. Muhāğir who said: Ayyūb b. Ğundub b. Bišr transmitted from Ḥuḏayfa who said: "The pillars of Islam will disappear one by one, until there is no believer who would say: 'O Most High! O Most High!'[60] You will follow step by step the path of the communities before you and you will not be able to go astray. Even if there were a community before you in which fresh or dried excrements were eaten, you would eat them too, but you would surpass them by three grades. In the previous communities there were no exhumations from graves, nor fattening of women—[now] a young woman is fattened almost to death from obesity. This will reach such extremes that men will satisfy themselves with men, disdaining women and women will satisfy themselves with women, disdaining men. I swear by God that these things are happening! If any of the preceding communities had practiced this, God would have wiped them from the face of the Earth and stoned them like he had done with the people of Lot. By God, this is not my own opinion, but the evident truth".[61]
>
> Ibn Waḍḍāḥ informed me:[62] "There are things in this community which have not taken place in others, namely the fattening of slim women,[63] exhumations from graves and lesbianism." He said: "It is said that fattening of young girls before they reach puberty leads to tuberculosis."[64]

In addition, in the compilation in question we find a tradition stating that on the Day of Resurrection, obese (literally "fattened" – *al-mutasammināt*) women shall be fed with mud.[65] There is one more tradition on obese women, where ʿĀ'iša refuses to pray over a little girl saying to her parents that they have fattened her with *sawīq*,[66] but it does not contain any explicit eschatological elements.[67]

This insistence upon obesity and lesbianism can be perceived as a certain peculiarity of the *Kitāb al-bidaʿ* (I deliberately leave out the problem of exhumations as it is beyond the scope of the present article). On the practice of "fattening" of slim women in order to make them obese not much can be found either in Andalusi texts from this period, or in earlier Eastern compilations of *ḥadīṯ*. Of the two most important compilations of the earliest known *ḥadīṯ*: the *Muṣannaf*-s of ʿAbd al-Razzāq (d. 211/826-827, so he can be situated a generation earlier

59. Cf. *supra*, n. 27.
60. I follow here the translation of Maribel Fierro.
61. *Kitāb al-bidaʿ* XI/ 41, p. 212 (Spanish translation: p. 338).
62. Cf. *supra*, n. 27.
63. *Tasmīn al-ḥāmišāt*.
64. *Kitāb al-bidaʿ* XI/46a, p. 213 (Spanish translation: p. 340).
65. *Ibid*., XI/50, p. 214 (Spanish translation, p. 341).
66. In classical Islamic texts this word seems to be used to describe many kinds of dishes, but in general it is a dish composed of wheat and fat.
67. *Ibid*., XI/47 (Spanish translation p. 340). For examples of obese men castigated in the traditions see: XI/48, 49, 51, with no apparent eschatological elements.

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than Ibn Ḥabīb)[68] and Ibn Abī Šayba (d. 235/849-850), only the first one contains any traditions on obesity and, while both contain several on lesbianism, it hardly can be qualified as a very important theme in these sources. On the whole, there are four traditions on obesity in ʿAbd al-Razzāq's *Muṣannaf*:[69] one, where the Prophet predicts that every generation after him will be worse than the previous one and in the end obese men will appear,[70] seems to convey an idea of deterministic decay similar to the one present in Ibn Waḍḍāḥ's compilation. Nothing, however, is explicitly said on female obesity.

As to lesbianism, in both ʿAbd al-Razzāq's and Ibn Abī Šayba's *Muṣannaf*, traditions dealing with it are very scarce, especially when one considers the very considerable dimensions of these compilations. None goes beyond saying that it is an abomination loathed by God,[71] with no apparent eschatological senses and without open religious qualification of lesbianism (*siḥāq*) as *bidʿa* (innovation). However in the *Kitāb adab al-nisāʾ*, we find traces of a similar view of lesbianism. There are six traditions on lesbianism in this compilation, grouped in a separate chapter[72] and two refer to eschatology. In the first one the Prophet states that five things in his community will bring doom (*fa-ʿalayhim al-damār*): mutual cursing (*al-talāʿun*), alcohol, silk (i.e. luxury clothing), cymbals (*al-maʿāzif*, i.e. music), and men satisfying themselves with men and women with women.[73] This tradition assimilates lesbianism to male homosexual practices in the same way as one of the traditions from the *Kitāb al-bidaʿ* quoted above. But it remains an open question whether lesbianism is something that appears only in Islam as *bidʿa* and was unknown in earlier communities, as we are told in traditions gathered in the *Kitāb al-bidaʿ*. Although this exceeds the scope of the present work, it is worth noting that this seems to pertain only to lesbianism, not to homosexuality in general, as in classical Islam it was generally held that male homosexuality was the "sin of Lot's people" (*liwāṭ*).[74] The second tradition in question is even more explicit:

> From al-Ḥasan [al-Baṣrī]: The Messenger of God (on whom be peace and prayers) said: "After me there will be people whose hearts will be prone to novelty. Their dreams will be turned to dust and their deeds will turn away from them[75]. They will be expert in many kinds of falsity! Men will satisfy themselves with men and women with women. And when they do this they shall see the punishment from God Most High"[76].

68. On this author and his compilation see: Motzki, "The Muṣannaf of ʿAbd al-Razzāq al-Ṣanʿānī".
69. ʿAbd al-Razzāq, *al-Muṣannaf*, no. 19994-19998, vol. XI, p. 84-89.
70. *Ibid.*, no. 19996.
71. *Ibid.*, vol. VII, no. 13382-13384, p. 334-335. Ibn Abī Šayba, *al-Muṣannaf*, vol. XIV, no. 29622, 29623, p. 604.
72. *Kitāb adab al-nisāʾ* 109, 110, p. 204-205.
73. *Ibid.*, 109, p. 204.
74. *And Lot! (Remember) when he said unto his folk: Lo! ye commit lewdness such as no creature did before you.// For come ye not in unto males, and cut ye not the road (for travellers), and commit ye not abomination in your meetings ? But the answer of his folk was only that they said: Bring Allah's doom upon us if thou art a truthteller!// He said: My Lord! Give me victory over folk who work corruption.* (The Qurʾān, 29; 28-30 in M. Pickthall's translation). See also "Liwāṭ".
75. *Qawm tuḥdiṯu qulūbuhum wa-tadiqqu aḥlāmuhum wa-tatawallā aʿmāluhum.* (I.e. their good deeds will be worthless in the eyes of God).
76. *Kitāb adab al-nisāʾ* 109, p. 204.

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We can notice obvious similarities with Ibn Waḍḍāḥ's traditions because of the common elements like the decay of religion which is to come after the Prophet, the overall propensity to luxury and dissolution of morals, the impending divine punishment and, perhaps most importantly, homosexuality (at least lesbianism) viewed as an innovation (the quoted tradition speaks of "people whose hearts will be prone to novelty"). In my opinion, this view of women and lesbianism makes for a certain peculiarity of the Andalusi eschatological tradition.

Conclusions

Debauchery and homosexuality certainly constitute common themes in Islamic eschatology as signs of the moral corruption of the last days. Obesity seems to occur less frequently in these traditions, but it seems that when it does, it can be viewed as another aspect of the sinful luxury of the eschatological age. However, it is interesting to note that the role of women in Andalusi eschatology of the 3rd/9th century is almost exclusively (we have seen the exceptions above) reduced to obesity and lesbianism, which are aspects of the gradual deterministic corruption of morality and religion (*fasād*) caused by the appearance of innovations (*bidaʿ*). This impression is further strengthened when one notices that two of the only three traditions in Ibn Ḥabīb's rather vast *Kitāb adab al-nisā'* explicitly referring to eschatology mention lesbianism.[77] Of course, all those portents of the Hour are signs of the corruption of families, as in the classical Islamic world (at least in normative texts) women are subject to family control. The traditions in question describe either the loss of this control (the abandonment of castigation of women by heads of families, lesbianism) or its corruption (the obesity of young girls and women resulting from fattening them, presumably by family members). Another interesting aspect is the idea that lesbianism and fattening of women (together with exhumation from graves) will appear at the end of times and will constitute an innovation (*bidʿa*) in the sense that they will be the only abominations appearing in the Muslim community unprecedented in religions which came before, thus in a way constituting the worst perversities of all.

General conclusions are, however, somewhat difficult to draw and the question of the extent to which this view of women, families and lesbianism is peculiar to al-Andalus should be discussed with utmost caution. While it is true that a vast majority of preserved Andalusi texts from the 3rd/9th century are compilations of more or less eschatological traditions, the overall number of sources preserved from this period is scarce and it is difficult to apprehend their role, diffusion and reception. It is also impossible to determine what percent they constituted of the entire Andalusi literary output of that period. In other words, while on the basis of preserved sources one has an impression that eschatological preoccupations were highly prevalent in al-Andalus in the 3rd/9th century, it is far from certain. Perhaps further studies on pre-canonical *ḥadīṯ* will shed more light on the problem of this supposed peculiarity of

77. We have seen that the third one concerns castigation of women and family members. Cf. *supra*. However, the possible eschatological preoccupation of the entire *Kitāb adab al-nisā'* should be taken into account, as mentioned above.

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al-Andalus and on the question of the role of women and families in Islamic eschatology of the 3rd/9th century.

Lastly, it can be concluded that the present work might contribute to a better understanding of the status of lesbianism in classical Islamic culture. This is an understudied topic[78] and the studies that do exist seem to approach this problem on the basis of medical and literary texts, as well as from the point of view of manuals of *ars amatoria*.[79] Camilla Adang dedicates to homosexuality in *ḥadīṯ* a short paragraph of her valuable study on homosexuality in Ibn Ḥazm's writings and the Zahiri school of law and provides some insight on the status of lesbianism in Zahirism,[80] but on the whole the lack of detailed studies in this field is sorely felt. The present work can then be treated as an introductory study to the status of women in pre-canonical *ḥadīṯ* and Islamic apocalyptic, as well as lesbianism in classical Islamic culture and society.

78. See: Juynboll, "Siḥāḳ". The book on lesbianism in classical Islam G.H.A. Juynboll announces at the end of this article (in its bibliography) has, to my best knowledge, never seen the light of day, neither has the monograph on homosexuality in traditional Islam announced by E. K. Rowson.

79. See primarily: Amer, "Medieval Arab Lesbians and Lesbian-like Women;" see also Roscoe, Murray, "Introduction" and Murray "Woman-Woman Love in Islamic Societies" in Murray, Roscoe (eds.), *Islamic Homosexualities. Culture, History and Literature*, p. 3-13 and 97-106, respectively, but these studies (as well as many others in this volume) generally discuss questions outside the scope of classical Islam.

80. Adang, "Ibn Ḥazm on Homosexuality". (On *ḥadīṯ*, p. 8-9, on lesbianism p. 25-28).

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