The Muslim afterworld, with its imagery rich in sensual promises, has shaped Western perceptions of Islam for centuries. However, to date, no single study has done justice to the full spectrum of traditions of thinking about the topic in Islamic history. The Muslim hell, in particular, remains a little-studied subject. This book, which is based on a wide array of carefully selected Arabic and Persian texts, covers not only the theological and exegetical but also the philosophical, mystical, topographical, architectural, and ritual aspects of the Muslim belief in paradise and hell, in both the Sunni and the Shi‘i world. By examining a broad range of sources related to the afterlife, Christian Lange shows that Muslim religious literature, against transcendentalist assumptions to the contrary, often pictures the boundary between this world and the otherworld as being remarkably thin, or even permeable.

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Paradise and Hell in Islamic Traditions

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Acknowledgements

The research for, and writing of, this book was carried out in the framework of the research project “The here and the hereafter in Islamic traditions” (HHIT), which I had the good fortune to oversee, as Principal Investigator, at the University of Utrecht from March 2011 to April 2015 (http://hhit.wp.hum.uu.nl/). I want to acknowledge the European Research Council for funding this project (ERC Starting Grant, project no. 263308) as well as thank my co-investigators Pieter Coppens, Eric van Lit, Simon O’Meara, and Yunus Yaldiz for going the distance with me. Our joint journey through the vast horizons of Islamic eschatology, whether in our weekly Arabic and Persian reading workshops or in three memorable heidesessies in Eckwarden (2012), Frankfurt (2013), and Doetinchem Castle (2014), has shaped, in profound ways, the structure and argument of this study. I owe a particularly great deal to Simon O’Meara, who, at the eleventh hour, selflessly read the entire manuscript and saved me from many blunders and infelicities.

Next to the members of HHIT, I should also like to thank Ghassan El Masri, Bill Graham, Ahmet Karamustafa, Christopher Melchert, Harald Motzki, Mohammed Rustom, Tommaso Tesei, Jamel Velji, and my much admired teacher, Josef van Ess, for reading parts of this book and providing helpful suggestions for improvement. Scholars with whom I had the pleasure of discussing specific points include Frederick Colby, Michael Ebstein, Maribel Fierro, Christiane Gruber, Sebastian Günther, Carole Hillenbrand, Robert Hillenbrand, Jon Hoover, Remke Kruk, Herman Landolt, Pierre Lory, Kevin Reinhart, Nicolai Sinai, Daniel de Smet, Wheeler Thackston, Roberto Tottoli, and Wim Raven. The two anonymous reviewers of the original proposal steered my thinking in important directions, and I’m deeply grateful to both. Colleagues in Utrecht and other Dutch universities have likewise enriched the process of researching and writing this book in significant ways, among them Bob Becking, Nico Landman, Birgit Meyer,
Eric Ottenheijm, Marcel Poorthuis, Arjan Post, Bernd Radtke, Amr Ryad, and Joost Vanderlijn. It goes without saying that I don’t mention these learned friends and teachers in order to claim their credentials; I merely wish to express my gratitude for their support and readiness to provide advice. I alone remain responsible for any shortcomings there may be in this book.

I also want to salute a number of people who provided logistical and editorial support. Kobi Gal, in unfailing friendship, regaled me with PDFs that I could only get through him. My department’s librarian, Joost van Gemert, tirelessly tried to cater to my research needs. At Cambridge University Press, Marigold Acland and Patricia Crone launched me on this book, which would never have come about without their initial support and inspiration. Because it grew out of size, the book could not be published in Patricia’s series Themes in Islamic History, for which it had been originally commissioned. I am grateful to the Cambridge University Press for allowing me to publish it as a stand-alone title. Kate Gavino, Will Hammell, and Maria Marsh saw the manuscript through press, while Nishanthini Vetrivel and Christine Dunn guided me patiently through the painstaking process of copy editing the final version.
Abbreviations


BSOAS  Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies


CMR  Christian-Muslim relations: A bibliographical history. Edited by David Thomas and Barbara Roggema. Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2009–. Online publication


EI1  The encyclopaedia of Islam. Edited by T. Houtsma et al. 5 vols. Leiden: Brill, 1913–34


EI3  The encyclopaedia of Islam: THREE. Edited by Kate Fleet, Gudrun Krämer, Denis Matringe, and Everett Rowson. Leiden: Brill, 2007–. Online publication

EIr  Encyclopaedia Iranica. Edited by Ehsan Yarshater et al. Bibliotheca Persica Press, 1985–. Online publication

Abbreviations

GAL       Brockelmann, Carl. Geschichte der arabischen Litteratur.  
First published 1898. Leiden: Brill, 1943–9
GAS       Sezgin, Fuat. Geschichte des arabischen Schrifttums.  
Leiden: Brill, 1967–
IOS       Israel Oriental Studies
JAOS      Journal of the American Oriental Society
JIS       Journal of Islamic Studies
JQS       Journal of Qur’anic Studies
JRSA      Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society
JSAI      Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam
Maisonneuve et Larose, 1972
MIDEO     Mélanges de l’Institut Dominicain d’Études Orientales du 
Caire
MW        Muslim World
OTP       The Old Testament pseudoepigrapha. Edited by James H. 
Charlesworth. 2 vols. First published 1982. Peabody, MA: 
Hendrickson Publishers, 2011
REI       Revue des Études Islamiques
SI        Studia Islamica
TG        van Ess, Josef. Theologie und Gesellschaft im 2. und 
3. Jahrhundert Hidschra: Eine Geschichte des religiösen 
Denkens im frühen Islam. Berlin and New York: de Gruyter, 
1991–7
ZDMG      Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft
Note on Dates, Citation, Translations, and Transliteration

In the text, Islamic dates for the premodern era are given both according to the Islamic hijri calendar and the Julian/Gregorian calendar. For convenience, in this book I have used the term Late Medieval to refer to the post-Mongol period of Islamic history up to the nineteenth century CE. In the bibliography, books issuing from Iran are occasionally listed according to their year of publication in the Iranian solar calendar, and accordingly marked with “sh.” Throughout this book, footnotes only show the short title of books and articles; full information is given in the bibliography at the end. Abbreviations that appear in the footnotes, including the less frequently used ones, are explained in the List of Abbreviations. Entries from the Encyclopaedia of Islam, the Encyclopaedia of the Qurʾan, and the Encyclopaedia Iranica do not feature in the bibliography; they only appear in the footnotes. Hadiths from the Six Books are quoted following the convention established in Arent Jan Wensinck’s Concordance et indices de la tradition musulmane, that is, by the name of the kitaḥ and number of the bãb. To facilitate use of my references, I have also provided the title of the bãb (if applicable) and page numbers referring to the printed editions that I have consulted.

All translations into English from the Arabic, Persian, and European languages are mine unless otherwise indicated. As for translations from the Qurʾan, I have mostly relied on Alan Jones’s rendering, although I have in places diverted from it if the argument seemed to call for it. The transliteration of foreign words in this book follows the rules applied in the third edition of The Encyclopaedia of Islam. However, I have chosen to use a simplified transliteration of Persian words in which vowels are reduced to the three long and short vowels (ä/ā, į/i, û/ū) of the Arabic alphabet and labiodental v becomes w (as in Mathnawi, instead of Mathnavi). No transliteration has been used for place names and for anglicized words such as hadith, houri, and Kaaba.