

# The Qur'an, Qur'anic Exegesis and Muslim Traditions: The Case of *zamharīr* (Q. 76:13) Among Hell's Punishments

In Islam, as in every other religious tradition, it is possible to distinguish different kinds of exegetical discourse. Taking as a reference point the relationship between the Qur'an and the exegetical narratives found in the *tafāsīr*, some of these narratives appear to be a direct product of the explicit wording of the Qur'an; others are the product of the need to explain a problematic or ambiguous word in the holy text; and finally other exegetical narratives appear to be not so explicitly related to the word of the Qur'an.<sup>1</sup> Different interrelationships between the Qur'an and exegesis also necessarily reflect a difference in the quantity of material and traditions. Where the Qur'an is consistent and rich with particulars, such as in some of the stories about the prophets, or in some descriptions of the eschatological abodes of Paradise and Hell, we usually have a profusion of later exegetical material further enriching the text. In this sense the work of the *mufassir* is one of collecting, selecting, choosing, or meaningfully omitting. As a small contribution to the study of the various exegetical attitudes, I shall here discuss a topic related to one individual Qur'anic word. What will emerge from this scrutiny is the outline of an exegesis that is partially *ex silentio*, and not a discussion on how various authors dealt with this particular term. Apart from the treatment of the word in the commentaries, we shall further review the traditional reports and later religious literature which mention the term to see how it is dealt with, thus delineating the relation of later literature to Qur'anic exegesis and to the Qur'anic text itself.

The word to be discussed here is *zamharīr*, a *hapax legomenon* appearing only in Q. 76:13 where, describing Paradise, it is stated that people *therein they shall see neither sun nor zamharīr*. This is the only aya in which this word appears and we have no other internal evidence from the Qur'an that sheds light upon its meaning. One quite logical explanation is that offered by those interpretations stating that the meaning of *zamharīr* is 'moon', an explanation which relies upon the meaning attested in an Arabic dialect.<sup>2</sup> Thus the aya means that in Paradise people will have neither sun nor moon.<sup>3</sup> A different explanation is posited by those hypotheses which state that *zamharīr* instead means 'cold', or better, 'bitter cold'.<sup>4</sup> This meaning is not contrary to the first one but probably bears the sign of a shift in the meaning from moon to lunar coldness and thus simply 'cold': the sun is accordingly to be understood as signifying heat. The aya consequently means that people in Paradise will be affected neither by excessive heat nor excessive cold.<sup>5</sup> This interpretation is suggested

as an explanation by the oldest surviving commentary, that of Muqātil ibn Sulaymān (d. 150/767), according to which ‘the cold of the *zamharīr* does not hurt them [i.e. people in Paradise] since in it [i.e. in Paradise] there is no winter nor summer’.<sup>6</sup> Lastly, but more significantly in terms of our discussion, there are *mufasssīrūn* who advocate the interpretation of *zamharīr* as cold, and who, relying upon traditions, ultimately state that it is a kind of punishment (‘*lawn min al-‘adhāb*’).<sup>7</sup> The meaning evoked by the use of the term ‘*adhāb*’ points clearly to the punishment of men after death, in the grave or in Hell, though this explanation is not explicitly stated in these exegetical reports.

In general, moving from the contents of exegetical reports to the attitudes of the exegetes collecting them, it can be said that the Qur’anic commentaries, here as in many other passages, list the various interpretations without stating an explicit preference for one of them. Clearly here, as in all cases, an indirect preference can be argued from *ex silentio* evidence. In fact only a few of them mention the brief statement that *zamharīr* is a kind of punishment and even fewer quote any of the main traditions on the subject that will be discussed below. The most detailed author on the subject is al-Qurṭubī, who explains that the punishment consists in subjecting the damned alternatively to cold and hot,<sup>8</sup> and that the damned are taken out of the fire and put into the icy cold of the *zamharīr*.<sup>9</sup> As is explained, this cold does not provide any help against the fire of Hell, since it is so intense that when the damned are put in, and there punished, they immediately ask God to be put back again in the fire which they consider more bearable.<sup>10</sup>

Apart from this, no further insights can be extracted from the commentaries to explain other ayas which have sometimes been read as referring to *zamharīr*, such as, above all, Q. 38:57–8. Here, among the punishments, there is mention of *ḥamīm*, *ghassāq* and *ākhar min shaklihi azwāj*, that is, ‘boiling water’, ‘infected liquid’ and ‘another of a similar kind’. All exegetes usually explain the second term or the third (indefinite) one as meaning cold, but only a few of them go any further. Some exegetes here suggest that this third punishment ‘of a similar kind’ is *zamharīr*, or state that *ghassāq* itself means *zamharīr*. All commentators, in any case, maintain that one or other term signifies a cold, cold punishment, adding nothing else to give further information. Nothing new comes from these passages: the simple reference to the *zamharīr* alludes to the beliefs discussed above, but the question of its precise meaning is never discussed here, though sometimes it is added that *zamharīr* burns like fire.<sup>11</sup>

The extent and the relevance of this ‘type of punishment’ explanation is made clear by a body of later traditions which are seldom included in commentaries. According to reports mentioned in Ḥadīth literature, eschatological literature, etc., *zamharīr* emerges as a place or a condition in Hell. Its peculiarity – following the meaning of the word as ‘bitter cold’ – is that the damned are punished in it or by it through its extreme cold. *Zamharīr* thus stands for the punishment of cold in Hell, thereby

introducing this type of punishment among the various other kinds which are mostly characterised by 'hot' and 'extremely hot' punishments. Muslim Hell, as we see from the Qur'an, is in fact above all a realm of fire.<sup>12</sup>

In Islamic literature, the most prominent occurrence of the term *zamharīr* is in a *ḥadīth* from the Prophet included in the *Ṣaḥīḥayn* of al-Bukhārī and Muslim in which it is stated, according to Abū Hurayra, that Hell complains to God because parts of it consume each other, due to their fire and heat. God permits it to take two breaths a year, one in summer and one in winter. According to some versions, the most extreme cold in winter comes from 'the *zamharīr* of Gehenna' ('*min zamharīr Jahannam*' / '*min zamharīrihā*') just as the most extreme heat in summer comes from the heat of Hell ('*min ḥarr al-nār*' / '*min samūmihā*' / '*min ḥarrihā*').<sup>13</sup> There can be no doubt: in Hell there is a *zamharīr* that means something cold, though it is not explicitly stated if it is a kind of punishment or a peculiarly cold place. But most relevantly, some other versions are less clear precisely on the point of interest to us. In these versions it is said that the Prophet simply said, following a similar introduction, that 'when Hell breathes in winter this is the *zamharīr*'.<sup>14</sup> This version can easily be understood as making reference to a peculiar kind of cold on earth which takes this name and thus does not originate from Hell.

The eschatological meaning of the word is, however, further attested in other reports mentioned in some literature of the same age. Ibn Abī'l-Dunyā (d. 281/894) quotes a number of reports on the question. In one of these it is stated explicitly that *zamharīr* is a particular place of cold in Hell, with the function of being a punishment. In one of the traditions he quotes, the inhabitants of Hell ask Hell's doorkeeper if they can leave, but when they are outside they are so tormented by cold and *zamharīr* that they come back to the hot Hell because the cold is so unbearable.<sup>15</sup> Furthermore, in another report going back to Mujāhid, 'in Hell there is a *zamharīr* by which [the damned] are punished. They escape from it [i.e. the Hell] towards that *zamharīr*, fall into it and their bones are broken into pieces to the point that their sound is heard.'<sup>16</sup>

Other reports in some later literature further explore this aspect, leaving no doubt that *zamharīr* is one of Hell's punishments. So, when listing their various forms, it is said that Hell's punishments include heat, cold (*zamharīr*), thirst, starvation, etc. *Zamharīr* in this case is the bitter cold by which disbelievers are punished in Hell.<sup>17</sup> In a tradition going back to Ka'b (al-Aḥbār) and quoted by Abū Nu'aym we find once again the motif that the *zamharīr* is such a cold place that the damned there implore to be put in the infernal heat of Gehenna.<sup>18</sup> And its effect is similar to that of fire: the *zamharīr* burns through its cold just as fire burns with its heat.<sup>19</sup> We also find a belief only signalled by Ibn al-Jawzī, according to which in Hell there are 32 grades or differing positions (*martaba*): sixteen of them involve *zamharīr* or something of that kind, while in the others there is fire (*ḥarīq*) or similar punishments.<sup>20</sup>

So far, in these reports, it is not stated beyond doubt that *zamharīr* is a particular place, but it can be easily understood as a condition, a state of peculiar coldness. In other reports, based on a tradition mentioned first by al-Bayhaqī and traced back to him in later literature, and which goes back to the companions Abū Hurayra or Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī, a further step is taken in this direction. It tells how, during extremely hot and extremely cold days, God listens to the believers. He hears them invoking God to be protected from the heat of the Gehenna and from the *zamharīr* of the Gehenna (*ʿajirnī min zamharīr jahannam*). God then informs Hell, in the case of cold, that He concedes protection when the believer asks for it from ‘its’ *zamharīr* (*ʿin ʿabdan ... istajāranī min zamharīriki*). To the further question (asked by people listening to this report) about what this *zamharīr* is, the answer is that it is a pit (*jubb*) where the bodies of the damned are broken into pieces.<sup>21</sup> What is more relevant here is the construction of the account: after the mention of the *zamharīr*, as in the *ḥadīth* from Abū Hurayra and other reports, it is necessary to ask what it is, and the answer given in response is that the *zamharīr* is a physical place in Hell.

Until now we have seen that while there can be no doubt about the meaning of *zamharīr* in connection to cold in traditional reports, it appears that the term can be intended as indicating a range of similar meanings: a peculiar extreme cold on earth, a cold originating and present as punishment in Hell, or even a place so characterised in Hell. Differing answers can be argued from the accounts. This is reflected also in some other occurrences of the term, in which *zamharīr* is proverbially quoted to point to a terrible cold, where it is not clear or explicit if reference is made to a punishment or to a place in Hell so called, or simply to the proper meaning of the word as denoting a painful cold. An episode of this kind is that recounting how a certain Zubayd al-Yāmī woke up during the night and reached for a vessel of water. Putting his hand inside it he found the water so cold that he mentioned *zamharīr*. Prodigiously, his hand stuck inside the vessel and he could not free it until the morning when the servant found him.<sup>22</sup> In other reports the term is used in similar ways, as a proverbial reference to a bitter cold.<sup>23</sup> Relevant also are the attestations of the same kind coming from non-religious literature. Ibn Faḍlān – famous for his account of his travels in Slavic territories – incidentally mentions the term when he says he arrived in a place so cold with snow and icy winds that he could only think he had arrived at a ‘door of the *zamharīr*’ (*ʿbāban min al-zamharīr*).<sup>24</sup> ‘Door’ is a term that could be related to the various levels or layers of Hell, or otherwise as pointing to a peculiar and definite place, and possibly a place in Hell. Also of relevance is one of the few instances of the term occurring in the geographical dictionary of Yāqūt where, to underline how cold a place is, comparison is made to the *zamharīr* with the addition that this is one of the punishments of the damned.<sup>25</sup>

All the material so far discussed attests to the use of the term and its meaning, and the early circulation of some accounts pointing to a punishment in hell of that kind, and to

*zamharīr* as meaning a proverbial terrible state of cold. The general impression is, however, that despite the progressive growth through the centuries of accounts on eschatological themes, the *zamharīr* did not receive significant attention. This is confirmed when one considers some genres of religious literature in which one would expect to encounter the term, and even further development of the beliefs surrounding it. In the narrative cycles of the *mi'raj*, for instance, there are some mentions of *zamharīr*, but the first impression is that these are less substantial than would be expected. The punishment by cold, ice and wind, that is by *zamharīr*, could have been enriched in details, following a pattern quite common in these so-called popular traditions. But this is not the case and above all it is not the case in those accounts which list so many categories of the damned and of punishments mostly connected to images of fire and heat. In a few of the various versions of the *mi'raj* work, and in particular in the versions attributed to Ibn 'Abbās, it is simply said that in Hell, along with fire, boiling substances, and animals torturing the damned, there are also seventy thousand pits (*bi'r*) of *zamharīr*.<sup>26</sup> But that is the extent of the descriptions among all the various versions, and in the long list of tortures and punishments given in all of these versions. Furthermore, in the scores of versions of the story of Jesus and the skull analysed elsewhere, which preserve long descriptions of Hell and its punishments, only in one of all of these is mention made of *zamharīr* as the name of the seventh layer of Hell.<sup>27</sup> Other references do not add further details, though they attest to the circulation of the term and concept. Al-Tha'labī, at the beginning of his *Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyā'*, in its cosmogonic introduction, states that 'God made the seventh earth a dwelling place for Iblīs and his hosts. In it is his nest, on one side of which is the hot wind (*samūm*) and on the other side the *zamharīr*'.<sup>28</sup> This term and belief is also fully attested in the *Futūḥāt* by Ibn al-'Arabī, according to whom the torment of the cold is the punishment of Iblīs and of the *shayāṭīn*.<sup>29</sup> In any case, all of these references constitute a scanty list of occurrences if compared to the hundreds of accounts and traditions concerning punishments involving heat and fire. It seems that *zamharīr* inspired prudence or otherwise did not inspire literary fantasies.

All the material relating as a whole to *zamharīr* in religious literature surely constitutes a further step towards the exegetical qualification of it as 'a kind of punishment', though later literature did not display any particular interest in the term and in the concept itself, nor did it attest to a wide circulation of traditional accounts on the subject. The peculiarities of the *zamharīr* we have described are taken from various sources, including ancient sources, but were not consistently widespread or evenly spread throughout the literature. In general, authors display a cautious attitude which complies with that of the exegetes mentioned above. It thus can be suggested that the meaning of the word *zamharīr* as indicating a punishment in Hell was considered either controversial or at least not worthy of deep discussion by medieval authors. The early evidence offered by Ḥadīth collections and Ibn Abī'l-Dunyā attest

that quite early, according to the *asānīd* in this literature, various reports regarding a punishment and a place in Hell called *zamharīr* were circulating and accepted by some. But this early acceptance did not gain wide relevance in literature. Doubts in some cases are also expressed directly, by authors who wanted to defend the belief. Commenting upon al-Bukhārī, Ibn Ḥajar states that *zamharīr* is bitter cold and that according to some there are doubts about its presence in Hell. He adds that instead there must be no doubts: in Hell there is a *zamharīrī* layer (*‘ṭabaqa zamharīriyya’*).<sup>30</sup> The same is admitted by al-Zurqānī, who states that it is not possible to deny (according to traditions) that in Gehenna there should be places (*zawāyā*) in which there is fire and others in which there is *zamharīr*, and that they must be different places and not conditions which are located next to each other in the same place.<sup>31</sup> It appears that these authors were not fully convinced about the concept but according to evidence – evidence mainly from the one *ḥadīth* from Abū Hurayra in the *Ṣaḥīḥayn* which they quote, and not from the Qur’anic aya – they accepted the possibility that there are states of coldness and cold punishments in Hell.

Because of this it is not unusual that authors of religious literature are explicit in their cautious attitude towards *zamharīr*. It is interesting to note that the major work on the afterlife, the *Tadhkira* of al-Qurṭubī, makes mention of *zamharīr* in only three places.<sup>32</sup> Though al-Suyūṭī includes a chapter entitled *‘Wuqūd jahannam wa-shiddat ḥarrihā wa-zamharīrihā ...’*,<sup>33</sup> this is brief and secondary in relation to the other chapters about Hell’s punishments. Al-Ghazālī mentions *zamharīr* only once in the chapter on death in his *Iḥyā’*.<sup>34</sup> Ibn Kathīr, in his *Nihāya* includes only the two main traditions, those from al-Bukhārī and from al-Bayhaqī. Only Ibn Rajab, much later, has a longer chapter titled *‘Fī shiddat ḥarrihā wa-zamharīrihā’* including a paragraph bearing the title *‘Faṣl fī zamharīr jahannam’*, where the most significant traditions are mentioned.<sup>35</sup>

A few conclusions can now be suggested. The first question to be addressed is the significance of the belief in the concept of *zamharīr* in Islamic tradition. It is true, as maintained in previous studies, that amongst its punishments the Islamic Hell also includes the punishment of cold, but the literature as a whole displays differing attitudes. The common basis is the acceptance of a generic belief which accords with some versions of a saying going back to the Prophet which is consistent with the Qur’anic aya where this term appears. Some of the oldest reports more clearly specify that this *zamharīr* is not only a punishment, but also a particular place in Hell and that the punishment there is caused by extreme cold. The following authors display differing attitudes and do not seem to be completely convinced in the way that an author such as Ibn Abī’l-Dunyā is. This is, by far, more evident not in the explicit discussions of the question but in the generally sparse attention that is given to *zamharīr* in literature about the afterlife, where this punishment barely rates a mention when compared to the punishments involving heat and fire.

A number of hypotheses can be suggested to explain this situation. First of all, the various meanings suggested for the term when quoted in the Qur'an are largely similar. It is probable that *zamharīr* was originally used somewhere in the Arabian Peninsula to refer to the moon and to lunar coldness. As regards the reluctance of exegetes above all, but also medieval authors and collectors of religious traditions, to address the term in detail it is not easy to find an answer. As already mentioned by Miguel Asin Palacios in his famous essay discussing the Muslim sources of Dante's *Divina Commedia*, belief in a cold Hell was also known in Zoroastrian and Buddhist traditions.<sup>36</sup> Notwithstanding the origin of the belief itself, it can be suggested that maybe this belief was felt to be typical of other religious cultures and thus was highly suspect.<sup>37</sup>

Coming now to the exegetical questions introducing this short essay, it can be stated that the exegetes, in general, did not consider this belief related to the Qur'anic occurrence of the word or at least had strong doubts about it. The more logical explanation that *zamharīr* means 'moon' is only sometimes followed by the explanation that it may also mean a 'kind of punishment', and this appears as a result of the circulation of traditions in that direction. In fact only a few *mufasssīrūn* give a simple statement that *zamharīr* is also a kind of punishment, while some even remain silent on the point, but that silence could not be the rule on this point is to be connected to the mention of the term in the *ḥadīth* of the Prophet. It thus appears that the narratives on *zamharīr* – that is the accounts relating to it – are not the product of exegetical work on the term appearing in the Qur'an *per se*, but, nevertheless, since the word *zamharīr* is quoted in the Qur'an exegetes could not help but allude to these traditions in their exegeses. The scanty attention *zamharīr* received in popular literature and reports amongst other literary genres attests that this belief was not considered significant in regard to Hell's punishments. No exegetical effort gave rise to this tradition of the *zamharīr*, but exegetes as a whole employed silence or brief references to minimise what was, after all, perceived as a secondary aspect of eschatological descriptions and, thus, not even deserving of a more refined polemical attitude.

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#### NOTES

1 I have discussed this composite relation and the interplay between Qur'anic ayas and the exegetical discourse of the various genres of Muslim literature in R. Tottoli, 'Qur'anic Narratives' in A. Rippin (ed.), *The Blackwell Companion to the Qur'an* (Malden, Oxford, Victoria: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2006).

2 The dialect of the Ṭayy<sup>3</sup>. A verse by al-Tha<sup>4</sup>lab with the meaning of 'moon' is usually quoted along with this explanation; see °Abd Allāh ibn °Abbās, *Kitāb gharīb al-Qur'ān*, ed. Aḥmad Būlūt (Cairo: n.p., 1993), p. 74; Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *al-Tafsīr al-kabīr* (32 vols. Beirut: Dār

al-Fikr, n.p., 1990), vol. 30, p. 219; al-Tha<sup>c</sup>labī, *al-Kashf wa'l-bayān* (10 vols. Beirut: Dār Ihyā<sup>a</sup> al-Turāth al-<sup>c</sup>Arabī, 2002), vol. 10, p. 98; al-Māwardī, *al-Nukat wa'l-<sup>c</sup>uyūn* (6 vols. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-<sup>c</sup>Ilmiyya, 1992), vol. 6, p. 169; Muḥammad Nawawī al-Jāwī, *al-Tafsīr al-munīr* (Cairo: n.p., 1355 AH), p. 417; al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-ta<sup>a</sup>wīl fī ma<sup>c</sup>ānī al-tanzīl* (7 vols. Cairo: Maktabat al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1955), vol. 7, p. 192; al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf <sup>c</sup>an ḥaqā<sup>a</sup>iq al-tanzīl wa-<sup>c</sup>uyūn al-aqāwīl fī wujūh al-ta<sup>a</sup>wīl* (4 vols. Cairo: Maktabat Wahba, 1972), vol. 4, p. 197; Ibn al-Jawzī, *Zād al-ma<sup>c</sup>ād fī <sup>c</sup>ilm al-tafsīr* (Beirut: al-Maktab al-Islāmī – Dār Ibn Ḥazm, 2002), p. 1499.

3 It has its own light and thus has no need for sun nor moon: al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-ta<sup>a</sup>wīl*, vol. 7, p. 192.

4 Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi<sup>c</sup> al-bayān <sup>c</sup>an tafsīr āy al-Qur<sup>a</sup>ān* (Cairo: n.p., 1968), vol. 29, pp. 213–4; al-Tha<sup>c</sup>labī, *al-Kashf wa'l-bayān*, vol. 10, p. 98; al-Wāḥidī, *al-Wasīṭ fī tafsīr al-Qur<sup>a</sup>ān al-majīd* (4 vols. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-<sup>c</sup>Ilmiyya, 1994), vol. 4, pp. 402–3: '*al-bard al-shadīd*'; al-Māwardī, *al-Nukat wa'l-<sup>c</sup>uyūn*, vol. 6, p. 169; al-Jāwī, *al-Tafsīr al-munīr*, p. 417; al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-ta<sup>a</sup>wīl*, vol. 7, p. 192; Ibn al-Jawzī, *Zād al-ma<sup>c</sup>ād*, p. 1499; al-Tha<sup>c</sup>ālibī, *al-Jawāhir al-ḥisān* (3 vols. Sayda, Beirut: al-Maktaba al-<sup>c</sup>Aṣriyya, 1997), vol. 3, p. 242; Abū'l-Layth al-Samarqandī, *Baḥr al-<sup>c</sup>ulūm* (3 vols. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-<sup>c</sup>Ilmiyya, 1993), vol. 3, p. 431: '*it is the winter cold*'; al-Suyūṭī, *al-Durr al-manthūr fī'l-tafsīr al-ma<sup>c</sup>thūr* (8 vols. Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1983), vol. 8, p. 373; Hūd ibn Muḥakkam, *Tafsīr kitāb Allāh al-<sup>c</sup>aẓīz* (4 vols. Beirut: Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī, 1990), vol. 4, p. 449; al-Tha<sup>c</sup>labī, *al-Kashf wa'l-bayān*, vol. 10, pp. 97–8: '*it is winter*'.

5 Al-Suyūṭī, *al-Durr al-manthūr*, vol. 8, pp. 372–3; al-Rāzī, *al-Tafsīr al-kabīr*, vol. 30, p. 219; Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur<sup>a</sup>ān al-<sup>c</sup>aẓīm* (4 vols. Beirut: Dār al-Ma<sup>c</sup>rifa, 1983), vol. 4, p. 715; Hūd ibn Muḥakkam, *Tafsīr*, vol. 4, p. 449.

6 Muqāṭil ibn Sulaymān, *Tafsīr* (4 vols. Cairo: al-Hay<sup>a</sup> al-Miṣriyya, 1979–89), vol. 4, p. 527. From Muqāṭil, also in al-Wāḥidī, *al-Wasīṭ*, vol. 4, pp. 402–3.

7 Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi<sup>c</sup> al-bayān*, vol. 29, p. 214; al-Māwardī, *al-Nukat wa'l-<sup>c</sup>uyūn*, vol. 6, p. 169; Ibn Abī Ḥātim, *Tafsīr al-Qur<sup>a</sup>ān al-karīm* (10 vols. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-<sup>c</sup>Ilmiyya, 1999), vol. 10, p. 3391 n. 19083; al-Suyūṭī, *al-Durr al-manthūr*, vol. 8, p. 373; al-Tha<sup>c</sup>labī, *al-Kashf wa'l-bayān*, vol. 10, p. 98.

8 Al-Qurṭubī, *al-Jāmi<sup>c</sup> li-ahkām al-Qur<sup>a</sup>ān* (20 vols. Cairo: Dār al-Kitāb al-<sup>c</sup>Arabī, 1967), vol. 19, p. 295.

9 Al-Qurṭubī, *al-Jāmi<sup>c</sup> li-ahkām*, vol. 10, p. 164.

10 Al-Qurṭubī, *al-Jāmi<sup>c</sup> li-ahkām*, vol. 19, p. 138, and cf. vol. 19, p. 180, explaining Q. 78:24 where it is said that the damned in Hell will not taste *bardan wa-lā shirāban*; al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi<sup>c</sup> al-bayān*, vol. 29, p. 214.

11 See Ibn Qutayba, *Tafsīr gharīb al-Qur<sup>a</sup>ān*, Beirut 1978, p. 381, commenting on aya 58, as in Hūd ibn Muḥakkam, *Tafsīr Kitāb Allāh*, vol. 4, p. 26; al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi<sup>c</sup> al-bayān*, vol. 23, p. 178; al-Qurṭubī, *al-Jāmi<sup>c</sup> li-ahkām*, vol. 15, p. 223; al-Ṭabrisī, *Majma<sup>c</sup> al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur<sup>a</sup>ān* (10 vols. Beirut: Mu<sup>a</sup>ṣṣasat al-Ta<sup>a</sup>rīkh al-<sup>c</sup>Arabī, 1992), vol. 8, p. 622, from al-Ṭabarī > Ibn 'Abbās, quoted also in al-Suyūṭī, *al-Durr al-manthūr*, vol. 7, p. 199; al-Samarqandī, *Tafsīr*, vol. 3, p. 134; al-Māturidī, *Ta<sup>a</sup>wīlāt ahl al-sunna* (5 vols. Beirut: Mu<sup>a</sup>ṣṣat al-Risāla, 2004), vol. 4, p. 280; al-Tha<sup>c</sup>labī, *al-Kashf wa'l-bayān*, vol. 8, p. 213; and cf. Ibn Wahb, *al-Tafsīr al-musammā al-wāḍiḥ* (2 vols. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-<sup>c</sup>Ilmiyya, 2003), vol. 2, p. 233: '*zamharīr burns them like fire burns them*'; Ibn al-Jawzī, *Zād al-masīr*, p. 1219; al-Qanūjī al-Bukhārī, *Yaqẓat ūlī al-<sup>c</sup>tibār mimmā warada fī dhikr al-nār wa-aṣḥāb al-nār* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-<sup>c</sup>Ilmiyya, 2004), p. 66; al-Bayhaqī, *Kitāb al-ba<sup>c</sup>'th wa'l-nushūr* (Beirut: Markaz al-Khadamāt wa'l-Abḥāth al-Thaqāfiyya, 1986), p. 291. In some exegetical literature it is stated that the meaning of the term *al-ghassāq* is *zamharīr*, see for instance al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi<sup>c</sup> al-bayān*,

vol. 30, p. 14, p. 15, as already pointed out by J. Meyer, *Die Hölle im Islam* (Basel: Unpublished DPhil. thesis, 1901), p. 51. Cf. instead some of the older commentaries which do not mention *zamharīr* but simply state that it is cold, see Muqātil, *Tafsīr*, vol. 3, p. 651; al-Farrā', *Ma'ānī al-Qur'ān* (Cairo: n.p., n.d.), vol. 2, p. 410.

12 So states Ş. El-Şaleh, *La vie future selon le Coran* (Paris: Vrin, 1986), p. 51.

13 Ibn Abī Shayba, *al-Muṣannaḥ* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 1995), no. 34137 (from CD-Rom *al-Maktaba al-alfiyya* (Amman, 1999)); °Abd al-Razzāq, *Tafsīr* (al-Riyadh: Maktabat al-Rushd, 1989), vol. 2, p. 337; al-Suyūṭī, *al-Durr al-manthūr*, vol. 8, p. 372; Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad* (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā' al-Turāth al-Islāmī, 1992), no. 7708, no. 9114, no. 10545; al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān*, vol. 29, p. 214; al-Qurṭubī, *al-Jāmi' li-ahkām*, vol. 19, p. 137; al-Zurqānī, *Sharḥ Muwaṭṭa' al-imām Mālik* (4 vols. Cairo: Muṣtafā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1962), vol. 1, p. 60, attributing this version to Muslim; see also Ibn Rajab, *al-Takhwīf min al-nār* (Beirut: Dār Ibn Zaydūn, n.d.), p. 88: versions with *zamharīrihā* from the two *ṣaḥīḥ*; see also al-Suyūṭī, *al-Budūr al-sāfira fī umūr al-ākhira* (Cairo: Maktabat al-Qur'ān, 1990), p. 324; Ibn Kathīr, *Nihāyat al-bidāya wa'l-nihāya*, (Cairo al-Maktaba al-Qayyima, 1981), p. 367.

14 Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, no. 617 (from CD-Rom *al-Maktaba al-alfiyya*); al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, no. 512, no. 3087 (from CD-Rom *al-Maktaba al-alfiyya*). Cf. also the version given by al-Tirmidhī, *Jāmi'*, no. 2592: '*zamharīr* is the breath that Hell breathes in winter, while *samūm* is that of summer'; from al-Bukhārī in Ibn al-Jawzī, *al-Muqliq* (Tanta: Dār al-Şaḥāba li'l-Turāth bi-Taṅṭā, 1991), p. 81; Ibn Abī'l-Dunyā, *Ṣifat al-nār* (Beirut: Dār Ibn Ḥazm, 1997), p. 101, no. 154; al-Suyūṭī, *al-Budūr al-sāfira*, p. 324, going back to al-Bazzār; see also al-Bayhaqī, *Kitāb al-ba'th wa'l-nushūr*, p. 138.

15 Ibn Abī'l-Dunyā, *Ṣifat al-nār*, pp. 100–1, no. 152.

16 Ibn Abī'l-Dunyā, *Ṣifat al-nār*, p. 76, no. 102; Ibn Rajab, *al-Takhwīf min al-nār*, p. 90.

17 Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Nihāya fī gharīb al-āthār* (4 vols. Cairo: °Isā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1966), vol. 2, p. 314, s.v. *zamharīr*.

18 Ibn Rajab, *al-Takhwīf min al-nār*, p. 90. See also M. Asin Palacios, *La escatologia musulmana en la Divina Comedia* (Madrid: Real Academia Española, 1919), p. 138, n. 3.

19 Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, *Badā'ī' al-fawā'id*, vol. 2, no. 442 (from CD-Rom *Maktabat al-shaykh [Ibn Taymiyya] wa'tilmidhihi* (Amman, 1999)).

20 Ibn al-Jawzī, *Talbīs Iblīs* (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1992), p. 88.

21 Al-Suyūṭī, *al-Budūr al-sāfira*, pp. 324–5; al-Qurṭubī, *al-Tadhkira* (Cairo: al-Maktaba al-Tawfiqiyya, n.d.), p. 442; al-Sha'rānī, *Mukhtaṣar tadhkirat al-Qurṭubī* (Cairo: Muṣtafā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1939), p. 82; al-Qanūjī al-Bukhārī, *Yaqzat ulī al-i'tibār*, p. 83; Ibn Kathīr, *Nihāyat al-bidāya*, p. 387, but with a differing version; see also al-Wāsiṭī, *Ta'rikh Jurjān* (Beirut: n. p. 1406 AH), no. 978; Ibn Rajab, *al-Takhwīf min al-nār*, p. 90. See already in Asin Palacios, *La escatologia musulmana*, p. 139, quoting al-Qurṭubī. A variant is also attested in al-Suyūṭī, *al-Durr al-manthūr*, vol. 8, p. 373, where the answer is given by Ka'b al-Aḥbār, who states that it is a building (*bayt*) instead of a pit.

22 Ibn Ḥayyān al-İṣfahānī, *Kitāb al-°azama* (5 vols. Beirut: Dār al-°Āşima, n.d.), vol. 1, pp. 310–1, no. 53; Ibn Rajab, *al-Takhwīf min al-nār*, p. 91.

23 See °Abd al-Raḥīm ibn Aḥmad al-Qāḍī, *Daqā'iq al-akhbār fī dhikr al-janna wa'l-nār*, (Beirut: Muṣtafā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī 1984), p. 21: 'the face of the dead is as cold as the *zamharīr*'. Other reports on this proverbial use are in Majlisī, *Bihār al-anwār* (110 vols. Beirut: Dār al-Irshād al-Islāmī, 1983), vol. 49, p. 337; vol. 75, p. 31; vol. 75, p. 454 (from CD-Rom *Noor 2* (Najaf, 2000)), where a tradition mentions 'something colder than the *zamharīr*'; see also Ibn Bābūye, *al-Amālī*, vol. 1, p. 244 (from CD-Rom *Noor 2*); Ibn Bābūye, *al-Khiṣāl*, vol. 2, p. 348 (from CD-Rom *Noor 2*). And see also Nu'aym ibn Ḥammād, *Fitan* (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, n.d.),

no. 1657, where the adjective *zamharīrī* is mentioned; Ibn Abī al-Dunyā, *Ṣifat al-nār*, p. 101, no. 153: 'it is the unbearable cold'.

24 Ibn Faḍlān, *Rihla* (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1992), p. 114.

25 Yāqūt, *Muʿjam al-buldān*, vol. 5, p. 412 (from CD-Rom *al-Maktaba al-alfiyya*).

26 Ibn ʿAbbās, *al-Isrāʾ wa'l-miʿrāj* (Cairo: Muṣṭafā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1946), pp. 17–8; and see also later on, p. 22, where it is said that the *zamharīr* is the punishment of a category of damned women upon whom hot water (*al-ḥamīm*) and cold (*al-zamharīr*) are poured; cf. also *Kitāb miʿrāj al-nabī*, MS Turin, Biblioteca del Dipartimento di orientalistica (Biblioteca Kahle), no. 179, p. 39. It is to be noted that in other versions of this story, mention is not made of the term *zamharīr*, see e.g. Ibn al-ʿAbbāsī (sic), *al-Isrāʾ wa'l-miʿrāj* (Cairo: Dār Shaqrūn, 2002); al-Ghayṭī, *Qiṣṣat al-miʿrāj* and Aḥmad al-Dardīr, *Ḥāshiya ʿalā qiṣṣat al-miʿrāj*, published together (Cairo: Muṣṭafā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1949). Neither is *zamharīr* mentioned in the long tradition on *miʿrāj* in al-Suyūṭī, *al-Laʾālī al-maṣnūʿa fi'l-aḥādīth al-maṣnūʿa* (2 vols. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 1996), vol. 1, pp. 62–74, already mentioned by Asin Palacios.

27 See R. Tottoli, 'The Story of Jesus and the Skull in Arabic Literature: The Emergence and Growth of a Religious Tradition', *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 28 (2003), pp. 225–59, p. 248, quoting Ms Kobenhaven, Kongelige Bibl. No. 234, f. 34a. See also Meyer, *Die Hölle im Islam*, p. 30. According to another version of this story it is stated that one of the doors of Hell leads to a place where prostitutes are punished through the punishment of *zamharīr*.

28 Al-Thaʿlabī, *Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyāʾ* (Cairo: Muṣṭafā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1958), p. 7, here in the translation of W.M. Brinner, *ʿArāʿis al-Majālis fi Qiṣaṣ al-Anbiyāʾ or 'Lives of the Prophets' as Recounted by Abū Ishāq Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm al-Thaʿlabī*, ed. W.M. Brinner (Leiden, Boston, Köln: E.J. Brill, 2002), p. 13. The term is mentioned in a similar vein in the *Arabian Nights*; see R. Burton, *A Plain and Literal Translation of the Arabian Nights Entertainments* (London: n.p., 1885), vol. 4, tale 43.

29 See Palacios, *La escatologia musulmana*, pp. 138–9 quoting two passages from the *Futūḥāt al-makkiyya*.

30 Ibn Ḥajar, *Fath al-bārī* (20 vols. Cairo: Muṣṭafā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1955), vol. 2, p. 19; see also further discussions of these variants in Ibn ʿAbd al-Bārr, *Tamhīd*, vol. 5, p. 8 (from CD-Rom *al-Maktaba al-alfiyya*).

31 Al-Zurqānī, *Sharḥ Muwaḥḥaʾ*, vol. 1, p. 60.

32 But see above the discussion of his commentary, since he is the *mufasssir* who makes the most frequent reference to it as punishment of Hell.

33 Al-Suyūṭī, *al-Budūr al-sāfira*, p. 321.

34 *The Remembrance of Death and Afterlife. Kitāb dhikr al-mawt wa-mā baʿdahu. Book XL of The Revival of the Religious Sciences (Iḥyāʾ ʿulūm al-dīn)*, ed. and tr. T.J. Winter (Cambridge: Islamic Texts Society, 1989), p. 224.

35 Ibn Rajab, *al-Takhwīf min al-nār*, p. 88, p. 90.

36 Asin Palacios, *La escatologia musulmana*, pp. 137–9. Asin Palacios mentioned some of the most relevant traditions on the subject and connected the belief to the Qurʾānic passage mentioning the word. It is most interesting that Asin Palacios starts from the fact that the punishment of cold is attested in Dante's *Commedia (Inferno, XXXII, 22–124, XXXIV, 10ff.)* and points out that this kind of punishment is not attested in Jewish and Christian traditions. The presence of cold punishments in the Islamic Hell had already been mentioned by J. Meyer in his dissertation on Hell in Islam (see *Die Hölle im Islam*, pp. 36–7).

37 According to Asin Palacios, *La escatologia musulmana*, pp. 138–9, the origin of the belief in Islam is Zoroastrian. He makes reference here to a statement by al-Jāhīz, according to whom

people of the *kalām* maintain that Zarathustra preached this because – along with the sacredness of the fire – his followers were mountain people and the punishment of exposure to cold made more sense to them than exposure to heat (as preached by Muhammad to people of the desert). See al-Jāhīz, *Kitāb al-ḥayawān*, ed. Hārūn (8 vols. Cairo: Muṣṭafā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1966), vol. 5, p. 67. It is interesting to note that while a punishment of cold, as far as I know, is not attested in Jewish and Christian tradition, it is in fact mentioned in Zoroastrian literature and, further east, above all in Buddhist traditions. Along with the references given by Asin Palacios, see G. Verardi, 'Gli inferni buddhisti' (unpublished paper to appear in a forthcoming collective work), where it is stated that in Buddhist traditions cold hells are on the same level as hot ones, since there are ten cold hells. For references to Zoroastrian cold hell punishments, see L.H. Gray, 'Zoroastrian Elements in Muhammedan Eschatology', *Le Muséon* 21 (1902), pp. 153–84, p. 174.