

Recommended Reading for SHWEP Episode 223: Early Islamic ‘Mahdism’: Radical Politics, Apocalyptic, and the Esoteric

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1 On the Roots of ‘Mahdism’

The AbuSulayman Center for Global Islamic Studies at George Mason University has a great [online bibliography on Islamic Messianism and Muslim Messianic Movements](#).

Brill’s *Encyclopædia of Islam* has articles which provide good orientation, especially Wilferd Madelung. ‘al-mahdī’. In P. Bearman et al., editor, *Encyclopædia of Islam* 2, volume V.3, pages 1230–40. Brill, Leiden, 1986 and Armand Abel. al-Dadjdjal. In *Encyclopædia of Islam*, volume II, pages 76–77. Brill, Leiden, new edition, 1965.

Also recommended:

Jan-Olaf Blichfeldt. *Early Mahdism: Politics and Religion in the Formative Period of Islam*. Number 2 in *Studia Orientalia Lundensia*. Brill, Leiden, 1985.

Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje. Der Mahdi. In *Verspreide geschriften van C. Snouck Hurgronje*, pages I, 145–81. Kurt Schroeder, Bonn, 1923.

H. Kennedy. Al-Mahdī. In *Encyclopædia of Islam* 2, volume V.3, pages 1230–39. Brill, Leiden, 1986.

Wilfred Madelung. *Religious Trends in Early Islamic Iran*. Persian Heritage Foundation, Albany, NY, 1988.

Abdulaziz Abdulhussein Sachedina. *Islamic Messianism: the Idea of Mahdī in Twelver Shī‘ism*. State University of New York Press, Albany, 1981.

2 On Islamic Apocalyptic Texts, Various

Michael Cook. An Early Islamic Apocalyptic Chronicle. *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, 52:25–29, 1993 [a good summary of Nu‘aym al-Marwazī’s chronicle, which you can read in English in Cook 2017, cited below].

David Cook. *Studies in Muslim Apocalyptic*, volume 21 of *Studies in Late Antiquity and Early Islam*. Darwin, Princeton, NJ, 2002a.

David Cook. Hadith, Authority and the End of the World: Traditions in Modern Muslim Apocalyptic Literature. *Oriente Moderno*, 82(1):31–53, 2002b [a discussion of some modern, conspiracy-immersed neo-apocalyptic authors writing in Arabic].

David Cook, editor. *"The Book of Tribulations": The Syrian Muslim Apocalyptic Tradition. An Annotated Translation of Nu‘aym b. Ḥammād al-Marwazī*. Edinburgh Studies in Islamic Apocalypticism and Eschatology. University of Edinburgh Press, Edinburgh, 2017 [an annotated translation of the apocalyptic chronicle discussed in the episode].

Michael A. Sells. *Approaching the Qurʾān: The Early Revelations*. White Cloud Press, Ashland, OR, 1999 [a cool introduction to the Makkan surahs of the Qurʾān; gives some of the flavour and a way in to how tricky they are to interpret].

Ofer Livne-Kafri. Some Notes on the Muslim Apocalyptic Tradition. *Quaderni di Studi Arabi*, 17:71–94, 1999.