

A note on Gog and Magog in Tashelhiyt Berber of South Morocco

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1. INTRODUCTION

In this contribution I present two Tashelhiyt Berber texts on Gog and Magog. This is simply a note with no goal other than to illustrate the existence of textual evidence on this well-known¹ eschatological concept among the berberophone Muslims of South Morocco.² Both texts are from the *Fonds Arsène Roux*³ at Aix-en-Provence.

The first text given below (see sections 2.1 and 2.2) is based on a transcribed text from *Fonds Arsène Roux / Boîte 26.1.5 Légendes religieuses (extr. des manusc.)*.⁴ The original consists of one A-4 page of typewritten text containing the title plus 21 lines of text and eight lexical notes in the hand of Roux. A note at the bottom of the page says that it is written in the *Ashtukn* dialect of Tashelhiyt Berber

1 For excellent introductions to the scholarly literature on Gog and Magog, see van Donzel and Ott 2002 and for ad-Dajjâl, 'the Donkey-rider' who, on the Day of the Final Judgment, precedes the arrival of Gog and Magog, see Abel 1965.

2 There are approximately 25-30 million speakers of Berber in North Africa. In Morocco, Berber is spoken in the Rif (Tarifit), in the Middle Atlas (Tamaziyt) and in the High Atlas, the Sous plains and the Anti-Atlas (Tasusiyt, Tašlhiyt), by an estimated 45% of the total population of 30 million people. In Algeria, Berber languages are spoken in Kabylia, in the Aurès mountains and in the Mزاب areas, by a total of 25% of the population, also of 30 million people. Tuareg Berber is found in the south of Algeria, in Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso. Smaller groups of berberophones live in Tunisia, Libya and Egypt. Berber immigrant communities of various origins are settled in France, Belgium, The Netherlands, Germany and Israel. Of all the Berber languages, Tashelhiyt Berber is the one with the highest (estimated) number of speakers: some 8 to 9 million.

3 Arsène Roux was a well-known French Berberologist and Arabist. He was born on the 5th of February 1893 at Rochegude, Drôme, France. He received primary and secondary education in Algeria. In 1913 he entered military service and left for Morocco, where he worked as a translator in Central Morocco from 1913 to 1919. From 1919 to 1927, he was a teacher of Arabic at the École Militaire and the Lycée at Meknès and in charge of public courses of Arabic and Berber. In 1927 he founded the Collège berbère d'Azrou, an institution in which he was the Director from 1927 to 1935. During these years he was also responsible for public courses of Berber at Azrou. From 1935 to 1944, he was Director of the Collège Moulay Youssef at Rabat. From 1935 to 1956 he was Professor in Berber dialectology at the Institut des Hautes études marocaines and chief inspector of the courses of Arabic at the Moroccan lycées and collèges. After the independence of Morocco in 1956 he went to Bayonne, France, where he had various responsibilities in relation to the teaching of Arabic in France. He traveled to Morocco several times to check his Middle Atlas Berber texts. Arsène Roux died in Pau on the 19th of July 1971. Today the Fonds Roux, an archive containing mainly documents from the Middle Atlas Berber and the Tashelhiyt Berber regions, is located in the IREMAM, (Institut de recherches sur le monde arabe et musulman, CNRS - Universités d'Aix-Marseille), an institute that recently (2004) moved to the so-called Maison méditerranéenne des sciences de l'homme (MMSH) in Aix-en-Provence.

4 See Stroomer and Peyron, *Catalogue des archives berbères du "fonds Arsène Roux,"* Cologne 2003: 27.

spoken south-east of Agadir in the Biougra region. This text was hitherto unpublished.⁵

We can make the following observations concerning this text: firstly, this text has *Hajuj* instead of the more frequently found *Yajuj*. Note that Tashelhiyt Berber reduces the long vowels of Arabic *Yājūj* and *Mājūj*. Secondly, the motif of the personification of *Insha'allah* as a young man, attested for instance by Mommersteeg for Djenné (Mali),⁶ can also be seen in this text. Thirdly, the tale motif of a creature drinking the sea can also be found in a popular, etiological Moroccan folktale that 'explains' how the water of the sea became salty.⁷ Perhaps there is a parallel between the sea and Gog and Magog, as both of them threaten to overflow the world and destroy mankind.

The second text (see sections 2.3 and 2.4) begins with the widely-known story of *ad-Dajjāl* the Donkey-rider, one of the signs of the approaching end of the world. The arrival of *ad-Dajjāl* precedes the arrival of Gog and Magog. This text seems to follow the traditional lines known from other accounts. The only 'Moroccanism' I noticed is the phrase: 'Mountains are (the size of) couscous and bread to him.' This text was provisionally published in a mimeographed schoolbook by Arsène Roux.⁸ It is the fourth of five religious legends, *Cinq légendes religieuses*. In the introduction to these legends,⁹ Roux gives no clue as to the Berber manuscript from which it was taken:

Cette légende et les quatre suivantes, sont extraites d'un manuscrit berbère écrit en caractères arabes. Cet ouvrage est une sorte de manuel de morale musulmane à l'usage des berbérophones. L'auteur étant anonyme, l'on ne peut pas préciser dans quel parler il a été rédigé. On remarque que la langue de ces récits contient

5 I thank Madame Claude Brenier-Estrine, former keeper of the Fonds Arsène Roux, for her kind and cordial cooperation during my many visits to the Fonds. I thank the Director of the IREMAM, Prof. Eberhardt Kienle, for allowing me to publish this document. I thank my friend and colleague Mohamed Saadouni for his help and encouragement and Mr. John Cooper (Norwich, United Kingdom) for his kindness in correcting the English text.

6 Mommersteeg 1998: 87-88.

7 For a Tashelhiyt Berber variant of this tale from Tazerwalt, see Stroomer 2002: 226-227: 'Once upon a time, when its water was still sweet, the sea wanted to flood the whole world. God wanted to calm it down. He ordered the mosquito to come and said to it: "Go and drink the sea." The mosquito went and drank the sea, until it was drinking its sand. (Then) God said to it: "Throw it up again!" The mosquito threw it up. The sea had become calm, because the smallest creature in the world drunk it. From that time onwards the sea was salty, as it passed through the stomach of a mosquito.' For a variant from Essaouira, see *Contes et légendes du Maroc*, 2001: 15-16.

8 Roux 1942: 112-115. This work has been published in a linguistically reanalysed form and with an English translation, see Stroomer 2003.

9 Roux 1942: 109

une proportion d'emprunts arabes plus importante que la langue courante.

Texts such as the ones given below belong to the Tashelhiyt Berber literary tradition of South Morocco, consisting of manuscripts written in Arabic characters. The earliest known manuscript from this tradition dates from the 14th, the latest from the 20th century. During these seven centuries, local Tashelhiyt Berber scholars created a large number of manuscripts, dealing mainly with religious topics, to instruct the berberophone people. Of this tradition, only the tip of the iceberg is visible today: many works remain to be discovered.¹⁰ The works belonging to this tradition had a distribution that coincided with the distribution of Tashelhiyt Berber as a language. As such they represent a local, pre-modern and pre-globalized Islam that was common in the South of Morocco until the middle of the 20th century.

Arsène Roux was one of the few scholars who has fully understood the importance of this tradition and collected these manuscripts. It is quite probable that the texts given below were transcribed from one of the Berber manuscripts he owned.

These original text transcriptions by Roux show some fairly obvious mistakes and typing errors, which I have corrected to the best of my knowledge. The transcription of the Tashelhiyt Berber texts, given below, follows in all details the one used in my other Tashelhiyt text-editions.¹¹ The translation follows the Tashelhiyt text as closely as English usage permits.

2. TASHELHIYT BERBER TEXTS AND THEIR TRANSLATIONS

2.1 Hajuj u Majuj

Illa yan udrar x grax d Hajuj u Majuj. Kra igan ass ar ttarsn (qqazn) fad ad d six ffyn. Ar gis skarn išnbi anškk n tiṭṭ n uglmzim. Mišš ix lkmnt tiwutštši, nkrn f ššyul. Ix ddan ar ttinin: “Azkka rat t nkmml, nffy (nak^wi nn) s mddn.” Ix d uḍan (gllbn) azkka, afin d adrar iga yikli

10 See Nico van den Boogert 1998, and Harry Stroomeer 2003. There are over 500 Tashelhiyt Berber manuscripts and manuscript fragments that can be studied: some 200 in Aix-en-Provence (see Van den Boogert 1995) and over 300 in the library of Leiden University (the Netherlands) (see Van den Boogert, *forthc.*). This field, that combines berberology, historical sciences, islamology and Arabic studies, has been sadly neglected. It can, in my view, only be studied in close interaction with the few traditional scholars from South Morocco still alive.

11 For a full list of Tashelhiyt-English bilingual folktale editions, visit the website Berber Studies of Köppe Verlag in Cologne. For Tashelhiyt-French bilingual editions, see the website of Edisud in Aix-en-Provence.

yadlli iga, ibdl asn ššyul. Bdun dax ššyul nnsn ar tadgg^wat, nkrn filas. Ar bdda skarn yikann.

Ix elayn at tqrb l ddunit, ilal darsn yan ufrux, smn as “Inša'allah”. Yimyr ufrux ad, imun didsn s dar ššyul. Ar dax qqazn x udrar anškk n tiṭṭ n uglzim skix tlkm tdgg^wat. Uk^wan ar ax d ttannayn x tšnbit ann. Ix ddan, yan gisn inna: “Wa Inša'allah! Bħra nqadda a nn filasn nak^wi azkka.” Azkka gllbn d, suseun išnbi yann, ffyn d six (lkmn ax d).

Amzwaru gisn, ix ilkm lbħr, isu t kullu abla imikk; wiss sin ikmml t; wiss kraḍ illy t; wiss kkuḍ inna: “Tid a x tt inn ikka lbħr.”

Uk^wan ar qq^wayn mddn kullutn. Kraygat yan gisn yasi sin mddn x ddu taytt tafasit d tẓlmaṭṭ d yan x ufus. Ar izzigiz, ar t ištta. Ix t ikmml, izayd s wiyyaḍ, arkix išbea.

2.2 Gog and Magog

There is a mountain between us and Gog and Magog. Every day they dig (a hole, a tunnel, through which they want to creep and) come out to us. They make a hole in this mountain as big as the hole of the hoe. But when the (time of the) evening meal has come, they stop their work. When they have gone, they say: “Tomorrow we will finish it and then we will get out to attack the humans.” When they come back the next day, they find the mountain as it was before: their work (of the previous day) has been annihilated. Then they start their work again (and go on) until the afternoon and they quit their work. They always act in this way.

Just before the world turns round (i.e.: on the Day of the Final Judgment), a boy will be born among them, they will call him *Insha'allah*. This boy will grow up and accompany them to (their work). Once again they will dig a hole as big as the eye of a hoe (and go on with that) until the afternoon. Then they can see us through this hole. When they go, one of them will say: “Insha'allah! We have done enough, let us attack them tomorrow.” The next day they come, make the hole wider and come out through it, towards us.

When the first of them reaches the sea, he drinks it all, leaving but a small (quantity of water behind); the second finishes it, the third licks it out and the fourth says: “Once there was a sea here.”

They then catch all the people. Each of the monsters carries two humans, (one) under his right arm, (one) under his left arm, and one in his hand. He walks as he eats him. When he has finished him, he goes on with others, until he has had enough.

2.3 Ddjjal d Yajuj u Majuj

Lbab ad riγ ag gis bdr̥y Ddjjal (a t igan d Bu Tγyult) d Yajuj wa Majuj. Illa γ lh̥adit is inna Nnbi i imddukk^wal nns: “Ha nn Ddjjal ira ad d iffy tigira n zzman. Ig argaz γ šsift nns mi tkks tit̥t nns, tagl nit zund aqqa n waḍil. Iddeu is iga Rbbi. Ikafr̥iyn a igan ljiš nns, d wudayn, d iṛumiyn. Ar it̥thyu, ar inqqa. Ayyur n waḍan d ttlt is ira ag gis ikk ljm̥iē n ddunit. Ar itt̥sudu yat ddabt, ar nn tsrus aḍar nns γ γinna nn iduf izri nns. Ar as ttggan idrarn sksu d uyrum; ayyur n waḍan d ttlt a γ akk^w itt̥slak ddunit.” Assf ann gis izwarn ingadda d usgg^was, wiss sin wussfan ingadda d wayyur n waḍan n ddunit, wiss kraḍ wussfan ingadda d imal ass n ddunit, l̥yayr nnsn zund ussfan n ddunit. Wa nna ids imunn s t iga Rbbi d ukafriy, ašku Rbbi ḥaša ur igi aēiwar. Ar itt̥amr̥ i ignna, ar itt̥ay anzar̥, ar itt̥amr̥ i wakal, ar ism̥yay. Wa nna iss ur yuminn, iga amumn igan amuslm. Walakin lamwal nnsn at t kullu ḍfr̥n. Aγ t idffr̥ lidam ula lh̥ubub. A izri f ixrban, inna ysn: “Ssufyat d lamwal nnun!” Iffy d aynna itt̥imḍaln γ ddunit wur̥ d nnqr̥t, ḍfr̥n t. Iskr ljnt, iskr lēdab. Ar nit tt̥mnidn imddukk^wal nns. Ittyara kra γ gr walln nns. Wa nna t izran, idfr̥ t, ifk as laman. Ur tlli lftnt innran ti n Ddjjal. Iga ašḥar, a iny bnaḍm, iḥyu t id. Kullu s ssihr̥ nns a s a iskar ḍyayann. Ar as itt̥jib Rbbi dduēa nns f ḍyayann mkda a iziyd lēdab nns. Imil iggz d Nnbi i nna γ nn illa ḍyil. Ur yadlli immut, is ittyurf̥ae s ignwan. Ar d iffy Bu Tγyult, iggz d, ar t isiggil aylliγ t yufa, iny t. Ar inqqa ljiš nns γ wudayn d iṛumiyn d wi nna t ḍfaṛnin γ imuslmn, ašku ikafr̥iyn ad gan aylliγ t ḍfaṛn. Wa nna iss ur yuminn γ imuslmn, imsh̥ Saydna Σisa f wudmawn nnsn, ar tn it̥ḥddat s ddaṛajat lli yasn ifka Rbbi γ ljnt.

Ffyn d ḍay ntni, Yajuju wa Majuju, kumḍn i ljm̥iē n ddunit. Illa ma innan unšt n tayniwin ad llan γ t̥yzi, illa ma innan unšt n mddn n ddunit ad llan. Is bahra ggutn, ukan wi nna d ggisn zwarnin swin akk^w aman n lbhr̥, wi nna tn id ḍfaṛnin, afin d gis tilkki, nnan: “Laṭr̥ is nn kkan waman ḍyi.” Ḥšrn nnbi Saydna Σisa, nta d imumnn lli yids munnin. Ilkm tn laz, ar kiγ yuf ix̥f n uzgr, timiḍi imḍqaln n wur̥ i kraygat yan. Idalb Nnbi n Rbbi, Saydna Σisa, ad as ikšf lm̥hayn lli γ illa. Ig as̥n d Rbbi i Yajuj wa Majuj lbla: aγ as̥n tt̥ilint tnqba γ imgg̥raḍ nnsn. Iffu tn d lh̥al, mmutn akk^w. Iggz d ḍay Nnbi Σisa s wakal γ ḍyilli γ tn t̥ḥšrn. Ur d ufin ḥtta unšt n tarr̥dast γ wakal bla iēm̥mr̥ issn. Tužžut nnsn, t̥žža ddunit zund tafkka. Id̥r̥ru d γunšt ann Nnbi Σisa bn Maryama. Išr̥f d Rbbi subḥanahu aylaln zund imgg̥raḍ n iṛēman, ar tn ttasin, ar nn issn ggarn s γilli s as̥n yumr̥ Rbbi. Ig d Rbbi subḥanahu anzar̥, aylliγ d tqama ddunit zund tazlaft iēm̥mr̥n s waman. Tēm̥mr̥ nit s waman. Inna Rbbi i wakal: “Smm̥yi d timar nnm, trart d lbaraka

nnm! Ig d lbaraka ar kiy toda yat tfunast ayt tmazirt kullu. Yat tayatt toda ayt tgm̄mi kullu. Yat tar̄mmant ukan toda l̄jmaet iggutn. Yigut l̄xir bahra. Ar itth̄kam Saydna Σ̄isa, Nnabiyyu l̄lahi, s š̄šre n Nnbi nny Muḥmmad, šalla l̄lahu ealayhi wa-sallama, ašku ur yadlli illi Nnbi bla nttan; nttan a ixtmn lanbiya d lmursalin. Saydna Σ̄isa illa tt yadlli qbl Nnbi nny, is ittyurfæ s ignwan ibqu gisn ard d iffy Ddjjal, Bu Tyyult at t igan. Iggz d s lam̄r n R̄bbi, iny t. Ibqu γ ddunit ntta d imumnn lmiqdar n sin ida eašrin isgg^wasn γ illa l̄xir d nnemat d liman gbala zund zzman n Nnbi Muḥammad šalla l̄lahu ealayhi wa sallama. Fikann aylliγ asn d iga R̄bbi subḥanahu kra rriḥ ijjan ar tn ikkat γ ddu tiwa, ar ittanz r̄ruh n kraygat amumn d kraygat amuslm. Bqun ikafriyn ar ttebadn lašnam. Ittyisiy lislam d liman γ wakal d lqran. Iffy d Iblis, iḍhr̄ d s mddn. Nttan a s tra ddunit a filas tq̄rbl. Ur yadlli ma ittinin: “L̄lah!” γ ddunit. Unšt sul iqama γ ddunit ma ittinin “L̄lah!” ur tri at tq̄rbl. Tigut lfawaḥiš γ mddn d zzna d ttm̄nya d lliwaṭ. Ur ay ittnhu yan lmunkar ula aγ ittam̄r yan s lmeruf. Iyḍb filasn R̄bbi subḥanahu lyaḍab išddan bahra, d γakudann ilm̄ma d ur illi γ ddunit ma yaddran R̄bbi ula Muḥmmad, yam̄r R̄bbi subḥanahu at tfnu ddunit.

2.4 Ad-Dajjāl, Gog and Magog

In this chapter I want to discuss the Antichrist, *ad-Dajjāl*, the Donkey-rider, together with Gog and Magog, *Yājūj* and *Mājūj*. In the tradition it is mentioned that the Prophet said to his friends: “*ad-Dajjāl* will appear at the end of time. He is a man from whom one eye has been taken out, which dangles (on his cheek) like a grape. He pretends to be God. His army consists of unbelievers, Jews and Christians. He revives and kills. For one whole month and one third (of a month) he will go through the whole world. He rides a donkey, (whose steps are so large), that it places its feet where its eyes (lit.: eyesight) can only just see (them). Mountains are (the size of) couscous and bread to him. A month and one third (is all the time he needs) to traverse (lit.: deal with) the world.” (His) first day (on earth) equals a year, the second day equals one whole month on earth, the third day equals a week on earth, the rest of them are like (normal) days on earth. The one accompanying him has been made an unbeliever by God, because God is not blind, Oh no! He commands the heavens, He holds the rain (in his power), He commands the earth and causes plants to grow. The one who does not believe (in *ad-Dajjāl*) is a believer and a good Muslim. But all (earthly) goods (of mankind) will follow (*ad-Dajjāl*): oil and grain will follow *ad-Dajjāl*. (*Ad-Dajjāl*) will pass ruins saying to them: “Bring out your possessions!” (Then) gold and silver,

wherever they may be buried in the world, will appear and follow him. He can make paradise, he can make hell. His friends look him in the face. There is something written between his eyes. The one who sees it, follows (*ad-Dajjāl*) and gives him trust. There is no chaos greater than that (created by) *ad-Dajjāl*. He is a sorcerer who can kill a man and bring him back to life. It is with his magic that he is capable of all this. God answers his prayer so that He may increase His punishment. The Prophet will descend from where he was. He is not dead, he was taken up into heaven. When the Donkey-rider appears, (Saydna Isa) descends, seeks him until he finds him and kills him. (Saydna Isa) kills his army (consisting) of Jews, Christians and those Muslims who followed him (i.e. *ad-Dajjāl*), because they are unbelievers when they follow (*ad-Dajjāl*). Those among the Muslims who don't believe in (*ad-Dajjāl*), Saydna Isa will rub over their faces and will elevate them to the ranks God designated them in paradise.

Yājūj and *Mājūj* will come out too, and expand over the whole world. Some people say they are the height of palm trees, others say that they are (like) men. They are very numerous, the first ones who descend will drink the whole ocean. Those who follow them, will only find damp soil (and) say: "This is an indication that there was (once) water here!" They seized the prophet Saydna Isa and his believers with him. They get hungry until he (Saydna Isa) finds the head of a bull weighing one hundred *mithqāls* of gold, for everyone. The prophet of God, Saydna Isa, will ask (God) to take away the sufferings in which he finds himself. (Then) God strikes *Yājūj* and *Mājūj* with sickness: they get (numerous) holes in their necks. The next day they all die. Then the prophet Isa will descend again to earth, to the place where they seize them. They will not find (a span) of one hand of land which is not filled with the corpses (of *Yājūj* and *Mājūj*). Their odour, like the stench of carrion, pervades the world. The catastrophe pains the prophet Isa ben Maryam. God – praised is He – sends birds like necks of camels, they carry (*Yājūj* and *Mājūj*) away, they deposit them at a place ordered by God. (Then) God – praised is He – causes it to rain until the world is like a plate filled with water. (The world) is filled with water. (Then) God will say to the world: "Make your harvest grow, return to your blessing (*baraka*)!" The blessing will be such that one cow will be sufficient for a whole village. One goat will be sufficient for a whole family. One pomegranate will be sufficient for a whole village. It will grow abundantly. Saydna Isa, the prophet of God, will rule by the law of our Prophet Muḥammad (peace be upon him), because there has never been a prophet like him. He is the

seal of prophets and messengers. Saydna Isa lived before our Prophet, but he was taken to heaven where he remains until *ad-Dajjāl*, the Donkey-rider, appears. (Saydna Isa) descends by the order of God and kills him (i.e. *ad-Dajjāl*). He and the believers stay in the world for forty years in prosperity, well-being and faith very much like at the time of the Prophet Muḥammad (peace be upon him). (They will remain) like this until God – praised is He – causes an odorous wind to blow touching them under their armpits, (a wind) that takes the souls of every believer and of every Muslim. The unbelievers stay behind, worshipping their idols. Islam and faith are taken away from the earth, together with the Quran. (Then) Satan will come out and appear to people; around him the world will turn. There is no one in the world (left) who says: “O God!” As long as there still is someone who says: “O God!” the world will not turn. (At the end of time) there will be much obscenity among people as well as adultery, killing and pederasty. No one will prohibit forbidden actions, no one will encourage good ones. God – praised is He – will be furious towards them and (as) there is no one (left) in the world to invoke God or Muḥammad, God – praised is He – will give orders to let the world end.

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