



## ĀFURIŠN

**ĀFURIŠN** (Manichean Middle Persian *ʔwryšn*) “blessing, praise,” a technical, literary term for a category of Manichean hymns. The parallel term in Parthian, *āfrīwan* (spelled (ʿ)*frywn*, *frʾywn*, [*frʾlyywn*]), is also used in a general, non-technical sense. Sometimes Middle Persian *ʔtʾyšn* and Parthian *ʔtʾwyšn* (“praising”) are substituted for these terms. An *āfurišn*-hymn is more precisely defined by reference (1) to the divine or human being to whom it is addressed (e.g., *ʔwryšn nryshydz* “Praise-hymn of Narisahyazd,” W. B. Henning, *Ein manichäisches Bet- und Beichtbuch* [APAW 1936, no. 10], pp. 7-8), or (2) to its place in the ritual (e.g., *ʔwryšnyg gʾhrwšn* “Praise-hymns of the Light-Bema,” *ibid.*, lines 388-89). “*Āfurišn*” also occurs on page headings to designate Parthian hymns (e.g., [*ʔawrysn y*]srwšʾhrʾy “[Praise-hymn of] *Srōš-Ahrāy*,” *ibid.*, lines 135ff.). The characteristic features of an *āfurišn* are the praise, veneration, and glorification of the particular subject and sometimes of closely associated figures (e.g., in the Jesus *āfurišn* of *Beichtbuch*, lines 165ff., the Light Maiden and Great Wahman are also mentioned). There follow appeals and supplications to the gods in question or prayers for the well-being of the church community. Because of their clear content and structure, *āfurišn* hymns can often be identified even when their titles are not preserved (e.g., M 36 in *Mir. Man.* II, pp. 323ff.; cf. Henning, *Beichtbuch*, p. 10).

The majority of explicit Middle Persian and Parthian *āfurišnān* occur in the *Beichtbuch*; there one finds hymns to Narisah, *Srōš-Ahrāy*, the Radiant Jesus, the “envoys” (the Church in all its members, from Teacher to Hearer), and Mani. A double page containing a series of *āfurišnān* can be reconstructed



from M 196 299 e, 647, and 2303 (see Boyce, *Cat. Man. Script*). It comprised: Page one (?) with the end of a “Praise-hymn of the envoys,” then the end-title “Completed are the praise-hymns of all sorts” (*prz’pt ’pwryšn hrw ’yng*), then the mid-page heading “The praise hymn of the gods (i.e., guardian angels and divinities) has begun” (*nwyst’pwryšn ý b’(n) ?*). Page two (?) with “Praise-hymn of the Bema” (*(’)pwryšn ýg’ h*). Another similar double page is M 224. One page is a “Praise-hymn of the Light Envoy,” i.e., Mani (*Mir. Man.* II, p. 322). The heading of the unpublished page, which is in Parthian, can be restored as “Praise-hymn of Srōš-Ahrāy” (*(’p)[wryš]n ýg sr[wš’](hr)[’](y)*); thus Henning’s ordering of the two pages should perhaps be reversed. A “Praise hymn of the angels” (*’pwryšn ý prystg’n*) is to be read in S 7 R ii 5 (C. Salemann, “Manichaica III,” *Bulletin de l’Académie impériale de St. Pétersbourg* 1912, p. 4). In Sogdian script is found a “Praise-hymn of the Bema” (*k’yy’p(w)[ryšn]* in K 8).

The arrangement of the *āfurišnān* probably follows certain rules. (See Waldschmidt and Lentz, *Die Stellung Jesu im Manichismus* [APAW 1926, no. 4], p. 7; Henning, however, is more cautious in *Beichtbuch*, p. 8.) It has been suggested that the sequence was determined by the Bema liturgy (M. Boyce, “Manichaeic Literature,” *HO*, Abt. 1, Bd. 4, Abschn. 2, Lief. 1, Leiden, 1968, p. 75).

Parthian *āfrīwan* connected with the names of divinities may correspond to Middle Persian *āfurišnān*. Cf. the following headings: “Praise-hymn of the Father of Greatness” (*bgr’štyqryg ’frywn*, M 8700); “Praise hymn of the sun god” (*[m](yhr)yz(d) ’(fryw)[n]*, M 1830); “Praise-hymn of the Light Maiden” (*[q]nygrw(š)[n] (’)fryw(n)*, M 723 and presumably M 405 a); “Praise-hymn of the tree” (? *d’lwg ’frywn*, M 381). Most of the *āfrīwan* hymns in M 8700 are arranged alphabetically.

One group of Parthian fragments all share the title “Praise-hymn of the great ones” (*wzrg’n ’frywn*, M 70, 231, 772 a, 1915, 2602, 5875). They invoke various gods and have been identified as from one of Mani’s longer psalms, translated from Syriac (Henning in *BSOAS* 11, 1943, p. 217). Henning regarded as part of the same work other fragments called *qšwdg’n ’frywn* (M 71, 75, 261, 529, 544); these are addressed especially to the Father of Greatness and to his Kingdom. (On *qšwdg’n*, cf. *ibid* and W. Sundermann, “Der chinesische Traité Manichéen und der parthische Sermon vom Lichtnous,” forthcoming). They could, however, comprise Mani’s other psalm (Boyce, *op. cit.*, p. 70). The *Wuzurgān Āfrīwan* was translated into Middle Persian and Sogdian (in the latter case, using the Parthian title, texts 14442-44, 14570); and the *Qšūdagān Āfrīwan* also



was rendered in Middle Persian. (The Parthian version is attested in Sogdian script in 15420 and 18060.) The Middle Persian term for Mani's psalms may have been *āfrīn* (rather than *āfurišn*), the word closest to Parthian *āfrīwan*: The canonical book of Mani's "psalms and prayers" is called *a-fu-yin* in Chinese, a term going back to *āfrīn* (Haloun and Henning in *Asia Major* N.S. 3, 1952, p. 208). And Parthian *'frywnsr*, ("director of the hymns") has as equivalent Mid. Pers. *'prynsr*, which gives Chin. *a-fu-yin-sa*. It is also possible that M 209, with the likely reading *'pry(n)l*, belonged to the Middle Persian version of *Wuzurgān Āfrīwan*.

For M. Boyce the *āfurišn/āfrīwan* hymns are always a "long but undivided chant of praise" (op. cit., p. 74). But one may distinguish between the shorter pieces, which invoke a deity and often (especially when alphabetically arranged) are indistinguishable from *mahr/bāšāh* hymns, and the longer Mani-psalms. The latter compare closely with the "hymn cycles," particularly when they were divided into "members" (as in the Sogdian *Wuzurgān Āfrīwan*). Thus a hymn may have been termed a "praise-hymn" from its content and not its form; perhaps Middle Persian distinguished the two categories, while Parthian employed only one designation. M. Boyce has emphasized that the roots of these texts are in Iranian literary tradition (op. cit., p. 75); and the very terminology of *āfurišn*, *āfrīn* and *āfrīwan* could have originated in the Iranian Manichean world. But one may also postulate a link with Christian Syriac *tešbōhtā* literature (attested from the 4th century), especially if *āfrīwan* in Mani's psalms translates a Syriac term.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Given in the text.