



AKŌMAN

AKŌMAN, “Evil Mind,” a term personified as a demon in Zoroastrianism. It is apparently not yet wholly personified in the Gāthās. In two of its four occurrences there the term applies to human attitudes: *dragvā . . . ahyā šyaothanāiš akāṭ ā šyas mananḥō*, “since the deceitful man lives by his actions, stemming from evil mind” (Y. 47.5); and: *yə θwat mazdā asruštīm aḡəmčā manō yazāi apā*, “I [Zarathuštra] who, through worship, shall turn away disobedience and evil mind from Thee [Ahura Mazdā]” (Y. 33.4). *Aḡəm manō* is thus put on a level with disobedience. In the other two passages, the term appears in connection with the *daēvas*: *hyaṭ vərənātā ačīštəm manō*, “since they chose the worst mind” (Y. 30.6, with the term put in the superlative); *aṭ yūš daēvā vīspāḥō akāṭ mananḥō stā ciθrəm*, “but, ye gods, all of you are the offspring stemming from evil mind” (Y. 32.3). Here obviously the term is well on its way to personification. The process is seen completed in the Younger Avesta. In Yasht 19.46 *Aḡəm Manō* is an auxiliary of *Angra Mainyu*, who throws him (together with *Aēšma*, *Aži Dahāka*, and *Spityura*) into battle against *Vohu Manō* (with *Aša Vahišta*, and *Ātar*) for the possession of *Xvarənah*.

In Vendidad 19.4 Zarathuštra, in the course of his own battle against *Angra Mainyu*, is asked ninety-nine cruel, invidious questions by *Aḡəm Manō*. (A similar episode, recalling Oedipus and the Sphinx, occurs in Yasht 5.81 between *Yoišta Fryananam* and the sorcerer *Axtya*.) Zarathuštra is not overcome. In the final battle (Yt. 19.96), *Aḡəm Manō* will be vanquished by *Vohu Manō*.



In Pahlavi sources Akōman comes from darkness and is among the first (along with Mithōxt, Varan, the Foul Spirit, Indra, etc.) to be created by Ahriman. His special collaborator is Anaštīh “non-peace.” Varan “concupiscence” is his friend. His special function is to give vile thoughts and discord to creatures. He is sent by Ahriman to poison Zarathuštra’s thoughts, but Vohuman prevents this and chases Akōman away, which causes Zarathuštra to smile. Sorrow is the sign of Akōman as joy is that of Vohuman. In the final battle, Akōman will be conquered by Vohuman.

See also [Akvān-e Dīv](#).

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