



ESCHATOLOGY II. MANICHEAN ESCHATOLOGY

ESCHATOLOGY

ii. Manichean Eschatology

Manichean eschatology, teachings about final things, provided information on what happened during and after the death of a single human being and also on what would happen before and at the end of this world. These two aspects were, however, less discernible than in other religions such as Christianity and Zoroastrianism. Teaching about the transmigration of the soul, peculiar to Manicheism, linked the fates of the unredeemed majority of individuals after death with the judgment at the end of time.

Cosmic eschatology.

For Mani and his community the foundation of cosmic eschatology was expectation of the impending end of the world. He considered himself as having been sent “in this last generation” (Polotsky and Böhlig, p. 179; cf. Stroumsa, 1981, p. 169 and n. 28), and the progressive degeneration of mankind was interpreted by him as an omen of the end. The author of the Coptic homily “Of the great war” (Polotsky, 1934, pp. 7-42) believed that under the dominion of the great king the Manichean church would be led by an apostle who had actually known Mani. A. V. W. Jackson’s contrary hypothesis, that the Manicheans had prophesied Mani’s return at the end of time, remains



unconfirmed; the text that he cited (Middle Pers. S 8) refers, as does its title, *Aryāmān*, to the Second Coming of Christ (Jackson, 1930, p. 182).

The end did not come as Mani and his contemporaries had anticipated. Nevertheless, the later church authorities did not find it necessary to abandon their eschatology; in hymns the anticipated early restoration of the primeval world continued to be as much desired as before (*Mir. Man.* III, text f, p. 868). They had only to adapt church doctrine to the delay of the sacred event. Another sort of accommodation was the chiliastic calculations of one Abū Saʿīd, leader of the Manichean community around 884; he was reported by Moḥammad b. ʿAbd-al-Karīm Šahrastānī to have predicted the end of the “time of mixing” in 1175-76 (Šahrastānī, tr. Gimaret and Monnot, p. 662).

Mani’s eschatological conviction had certainly been based primarily on beliefs about the end of time current in the Elkesaite baptist community (see ALCHASAI) in which he had grown up (Koenen, pp. 287-88). This particular Elkesaite belief may have entered the Cologne Mani Codex (q.v.; Henrichs and Koenen, 1978, p. 87; cf. Koenen, p. 287) in the guise of the “cessation of the garment,” that is, the completion of the chain of true prophets. Based on this assumption, Mani’s prophetic understanding of himself as an equal partner of the paracletes, as promised by Jesus, even perhaps as the paraclete himself (cf. Sundermann, 1988, pp. 102-3, with earlier bibliography), was also eschatological. Islamic authors ascribed to Mani the claim to be the Seal of the Prophets (Puech, 1949, p. 146 n. 248).

Description of the end of the world. The classic formulation of the Manichean apocalypse is to be found in a chapter of the *Šābuhragān* (MacKenzie) and in the aforementioned Coptic homily. The *Šābuhragān* is one of Mani’s earliest writings, and the author of the homily was Koustaïos, one of his followers (Henrichs and Koenen, 1970, pp. 110-11); both works thus represent the teachings of the 3rd century, and, as their contents are very similar, the second must also reflect Mani’s own teaching. Their reports can thus be combined as the fundamental description of eschatological events (cf. Woschitz et al., pp. 211-26).

Mani was the last of the series of prophets, and his life and activity were to serve as the transition to eschatological world events. Suddenly and dreadfully the great war will overcome mankind and plunge the righteous and the unrighteous alike into torment, as well as unloosing persecution on the Manicheans (Polotsky, 1934, pp. 8-10, 13-21). After its end there will follow a



period in which the accomplishment of justice will transfigure the world. The great king (Polotsky, 1934, p. 32) will reign, the Manichean church will predominate, and much light will be delivered from this world (Polotsky, 1934, pp. 21-33). Over the course of time, however, the world will relapse into wickedness, and the Antichrist will appear (Polotsky, 1934, p. 34; cf. p. 28). In the *Šābuhragān*, which begins at this point, false prophets are presupposed (MacKenzie, ll. 1-11), and in an Uighur fragment the false Maitreya (Mitrii) is mentioned (von Le Coq, II, p. 5). Of the unholy activities of such false prophets hardly more is mentioned than that they will be able to wreak no permanent harm (Polotsky, 1934, pp. 34-35; MacKenzie, ll. 1-16). Then Jesus the Splendor will appear (Polotsky, 1934, p. 37), the cosmic redeemer of the third evocation; in the *Sāhbuhragān* he is called Xradišahr, god of the world of wisdom, that is, god of the nous. As already represented in the Gospel of Matthew (25:31-46), he will sit in judgment over both the righteous men of the church and other men. Here the account in the *Šāhbuhragān* is more detailed and better preserved than that in the homily (pp. 35-38): Jesus will first separate the righteous elect from sinners, probably the fallen elect; then he will separate the followers of the Manichean church from the children of the world (MacKenzie, ll. 73-120). The righteous must, like the sheep in the Gospel, stand on his right side; the condemned, like the goats, will be banished to his left. The redeemed elect will enter into the joy of the gods (i.e., into the New Paradise), and the condemned will be thrust into hell. All other men will live on this earth under the rule of Christ, in a golden age. Gods, angels, and redeemed men will be together there; evil will have vanished from the world, and men will, if they wish, leave their bodies and travel to heaven. Once more a large quantity of holy light will be freed from this world (Polotsky, 1934, p. 39; MacKenzie, ll. 130-54).

After that the world will end; in the *Šābuhragān* a Zoroastrian term (*frašgird*; MacKenzie, l. 170) is used. Christ will abandon the world, flesh will waste away, and the earth will stand empty. Primal man (Mid. Pers. *ohrmezd bay*) will unveil his face and raise his sons up to him. The sons of the living spirit (Middle Pers. *mehr yazad*) will, with their father, also abandon the place where they came into the world. Then the spheres will plunge down to the earth, and what is called in other sources the “great fire” will destroy the ruins of the world, finally deprived of its function (MacKenzie, pp. 510-13). In the world conflagration the last redeemable parts of the light will be freed. As a Final Statue (*Šāhbuhragān*: “a god in the form of *ohrmezd bay*”; MacKenzie, ll. 298-99) light will ascend to the New Paradise. The fire will, however, punish demons



and sinners, and the gods and the righteous will witness their torment without being able to help them. This event will be the climax of their earthly judgment (MacKenzie, pp. 516-21). Then the Bōlos, the prison prepared for the demons by the great builder at the creation of the world, will fulfill its purpose (cf. Jackson, 1938, pp. 225-34). The deathless demons of the world of darkness will be imprisoned in it forever, male and female separated so that they can produce no more injuries and cannot multiply (Polotsky, 1934, p. 41; MacKenzie, pp. 520-21). The report of the *Šābuhragān* breaks off here. The homily, which retains its original conclusion, provides an additional description of the world of light after the victory over the darkness. A divinity, probably the father of greatness, will unveil his “face” before the beings of light, which will enter into him and reappear visibly in the Eternal Paradise and the New Paradise (Polotsky, 1934, p. 41).

According to Ludwig Koenen’s explanation, both paradises, the original kingdom of light of the father of greatness and the new one of primal man, will exist side by side for eternity, the paradise of the father encircling that of the son, which in turn will encase the Bōlos. This and the final incarceration of the darkness reflect, in Koenen’s view, a circumstance arising after the end of this world that did not exist at the beginning: Primeval dualism will be conquered, but the world of light will preserve a divided character (Koenen, 1986, pp. 306-7).

As there are lacunae in the account of the termination of the world in the homily, the thirty-ninth Kephalaion (“On the three days and the two deaths”; Polotsky and Böhlig, pp. 102-4) should be consulted for help in interpreting it; this text is paralleled by the Middle Persian Kephalaion “He teaches the three great days” (M 5750). According to the Coptic text, on the second day the “fathers of light, who have been victorious in battle in the new kingdom of light, (will delay) until the father of greatness uncovers his face.” For a certain time after the end of the world the two worlds of light will continue to exist. The dissolution of the beings of the new kingdom of light into the kingdom of light of the father on the third day is described in considerable detail; there they will remain “for all eternity without time.” The end of all transformations will be the time of “peace” and “silence.” From her investigation of numerous other sources Mary Boyce has concluded that “these texts, Coptic and Iranian, establish a Manichaean doctrine of immediate redemption in the New Paradise, followed by ultimate union with the Paradise of the Light” (1954, p. 18). Koenen accepted this interpretation of the goal of eschatology as a



possibility (1990, p. 23 n. 64), but it is still conceivable that Manichean teaching on this question was itself sometimes contradictory.

A meager representation of eschatological circumstances, with several unique or supplementary features, is also to be found in fragment M 35 of the Parthian *Ārdahang wifrās*, from which W. B. Henning has published the description of the great fire on the reverse side (1943-46, pp. 71-72). On the obverse the text is about the kingdom of Christ (called Jesus and not Xradišahr) and provides chronological information and the announcement that under Jesus' reign the last dwellers in the world will leave this earth: “. . . vanishes, and belief is sent down to man. Tenth: Jesus' (yyšw) wounds will be shown to every one of them. Eleventh: The elect (*dēnāvarān*) will decide for themselves to leave their bodies (*izgām*). Twelfth: They will be without sadness, without cold, without heat, and without desire, because, while the angels will col(lect and?) purify the whole world before him, as [. . .] and a royal palace, [when] the ruler comes. And Christ (*mšyh*) will remain with the elect 120 years. And the world will remain empty of inhabitants for 100 years. Tree(s). . . .”

As set forth in the second homily and the *Šābuhragān*, the composite description of the end of the world, with its repeated wars and catastrophes, on the one hand, and the happy times when the great king and Christ will rule, on the other, gives the impression of a compilation of related eschatological motifs, as well as extensive copying from pre-Manichean sources. Koustaïos knew of “many” who had attested to the great war (Polotsky, 1934, p. 8). In one instance even a non-Manichean feature of the sources was repeated: The believers who live at the end of time under the benevolent rule take pity on their ancestors resting in graves, as if there were no wandering of souls but instead a resurrection of bodies (MacKenzie, ll. 144-53; for a Manicheanizing explanation, however, see Polotsky, 1934, p. 32). That belief in the resurrection of the body has indeed become a part of Manichaeism is expressly shaded in a Sogdian text (M 140, v. 5-8). From the text of both the Coptic homily and the Middle Persian *Šābuhragān* the massive influence of Christian apocalyptic is clear. The example of the judgment pericope (Matthew 25:31-46) has already been cited; it was also assimilated in characteristic fashion to the understanding of Manichean docetic christology (Asmussen, p. 86). As Koenen has systematically shown, however, many other New Testament citations and motifs can be identified, from the Revelation of John (Koenen, 1986, pp. 300-301, 303-5) and in one instance from the Gospel of Mark (12:36) in



Manichean reinterpretation: A promise said in the Gospel to have been made by Christ was attributed to primal man by the Manicheans (Koenen, 1986, p. 307). The “synoptic” apocalypse Jesus played an especially large role among these sources (cf. Matthew 24, Mark 13, Luke 21); a small piece of it has now been found in the Manichean Otani fragment 6152, the contents of which can be compared with Mark 13:9-11 and Luke 21:12-14. Of Christian origin also must be such an essential part of the Manichean apocalypse as the rule of Christ at the end of time (cf. Revelation 19-20). That all the relevant passages were incorporated from the canonical Gospels is very improbable.

For the judgment pericope, Jes Asmussen has demonstrated dependence upon the Diatessaron or another, similar, harmonizing text that no longer survives (pp. 86-87). The millennial kingdom of Christ is also an established part of such apocryphal writings as the Gospel of Elias and the oracle of Hystaspes, which was interpreted in a Christian sense by Lactantius (Koenen, 1986, p. 310). In the latter text “the great king of heaven” is glossed as Christ. In the Manichean version he duplicates the Christ figure. Koenen supposed convincingly that it was in Jewish Christian (Elkesaite) circles that this literature was cultivated and that Mani was entrusted with it (Koenen, 1986, pp. 310-14, 332). On the role of the Antichrist one must turn especially to the Apocalypse of Elias (*La Bible*, pp. 1803-24).

Koenen also recognized, however, an indirect influence of the Egyptian apocalypse on Manichean teaching about the end of time. The most convincing example is the previously unexplained duration of the world fire of 1,468 years, that is, a Sothis period of 1,461 years plus a “year week” of seven years (Koenen, 1986, pp. 314, 321-26).

That there was also an Iranian (Zoroastrian) contribution to Manichean apocalyptic seems probable, but it is difficult to demonstrate. The examples cited by Koenen (1986, pp. 308, 236-30) are not compelling proof, as he himself recognized. One characteristic eschatological motif that Manichean and Zoroastrian eschatology shared was the “great war” (Middle Pers. *ardīg wuzurg* in the *Bahman Yašt* [q.v.], *wuzurg kārēzār* in *Ayādgār i Jāmāspīg* [q.v.]). Geo Widengren was of the opinion that this motif originated in Zoroastrian tradition (1983, pp. 117, 126 and n. 25, 130, 150). If it is acknowledged that the framework of cosmological events in Manichean teaching reflects Zoroastrian cosmology, however, then Manichean eschatology must also be viewed in this framework: the inception of the world in the conflict of an original dualism and the termination of the world as a middle stage in the “mixing” that occurs



between the primeval and the final separation of the dualistic principles. What is emphasized in both cosmologies, though naturally in different ways, is the idea of eschatology as a return of cosmogonic conditions. In the Zoroastrian tradition it is exemplified in the continuous reduction in nourishment for the last man, which reverses the opposite development in the lives of Mašyag and Mašyānag. In Manichean apocalyptic an entirely different idea is embodied: The living spirit, the five sons of the living spirit, the five sons of primal man, and the “Column of Glory” leave their posts in the world and return to the kingdom of light. These parallels are not exact, and in any event the origin of the Zoroastrian teaching remains doubtful (cf. Lommel, pp. 206-7): Gnostic parallels can also be cited for it (Stroumsa, p. 172).

What is not discernible in the description of Manichean eschatology presented here is a borrowing of the Zoroastrian teaching of the lapse of the world in 12,000 years. This schema is traceable, however, in a Chinese Manichean work compiled in 731 (Haloun and Henning). There it is said that Mani was born in the year 527 of the twelfth constellation, that is, the last millennium, according to the *bo si po pi* calendar, a Persian calendar (p. 197); 527 was the year of Mani’s birth in the Seleucid era. The incorporation of this date into the Zoroastrian millennial schema must reflect a Zoroastrian model, but it must also have come from a time when Mani’s expectation of the immediate end of the world had already receded far into the distance. This detail is an instance of late adaptation to a Zoroastrian model. The schema of 12,000 years is also attested in the tradition reported by Šahrastānī, the above-mentioned chiliastic speculation of Abu Sa’īd: “The duration of the mixing is 12,000 years, according to his doctrine” (tr. Gimaret and Monnot, p. 662). In this representation the last days are variably reckoned as part of the twelfth millennium of the world.

The essential differences between Zoroastrian and Manichean cosmic expectations of the end are the consummation of the earthly world in Mani’s teaching and the Zoroastrian expectation of a final redemption of all souls, which was not included in Mani’s own teaching. The profound opposition between Zoroastrian and Manichean eschatology over the estimation of the material world could not be better demonstrated than by their respective understanding of the concept of *frašegird*, which the Manicheans borrowed from the Zoroastrians. In Zoroastrian teaching it meant the final irradiation of the world (the “final miracle”; Lommel, p. 210), in the teaching of Mani the destruction of the world (Woschitz et al., p. 221).



Special features of the Manichean expectation of the end. Despite its strongly eclectic character, Manichean teaching about the final things is nevertheless a unique synthesis of motifs from Near Eastern apocalyptic within the framework of a Zoroastrian schema of three eras, later even of the twelve-millennium schema. It gives the impression of a continuous development through every change and recapitulation, a development in which the power of the light increases.

The special significance of this doctrine, however, rests on the conviction that the victory of light is ultimately an imperfect one, for a certain part of it, trapped in souls, imprisoned in the world, cannot be released because it has been irredeemably corrupted by wickedness. It will be enclosed in the Bōlos with the powers of darkness and so condemned to eternal damnation (Puech, p. 85 and n. 356). The fate of these souls is also called the “second death,” an image borrowed from the Revelation of John (20:14, 21:8; Polotsky and Böhlig, p. 104). In itself the idea of the unredeemability of the damned is nothing unusual. In the Manichean view, however, it takes on unique weight because the light in the cosmos is the suffering part of the substance of God Himself. This Manichean rejection of universal redemption at the end of time had the scandalous implication that God Himself is and will remain imperfect; Augustine threw this implication in the teeth of the Manicheans (*Contra Secundinum* 20; cf. Böhlig, p. 27; Adam, p. 92: par. 7 of the great Latin abjuration formula). It appears, furthermore, that in Manichean teaching it later developed into one of the few dogmatic controversies to divide the community. For example, Alexander of Lycopolis (ca. 300) ascribed to the Manicheans the “total” (*akribós*) separation of godly power from the darkness at the end of the world (ed. Brinkmann, p. 8; ed. Villey, p. 61). Mani’s own view, so far as it has been preserved in the *Šābuhragān*, was upheld by only a minority of the community, while the majority accepted the final complete redemption of the light. In the 10th-century *Fehrest* (Ebn al-Nadīm, ed. Flügel, p. 331) the minority is called *al-māsīa*, who maintained that “a piece of the light remains in the darkness” (Böhlig and Asmussen, p. 149). The Shi‘ite theologian Misma‘ b. ‘Abd-al-Malek Misma‘ī ascribed the same teaching to the Meqlāsīya faction (Monnot, p. 169), which is not, however, confirmed in the *Fehrest*. The importance of this teaching was minimized in the Parthian text M 2 (II): At the end of the world the gods “will not be distressed because of the bit of light that is mixed with the darkness and cannot be separated from it; sorrow is not appropriate” (*Mir. Man.* III, p. 851).



In the conception of the inevitable imperfection of God can be seen the sharpest expression of Manichean dualism, by which it is also distinguished from Zoroastrian dualism. At the same time it emphasizes that the final condition of existence is in no way a return to the creation. Evil has not been exterminated but has been rendered powerless; good must suffer a permanent loss before it can return to the condition of original unity with the world of light of the father of greatness.

Individual eschatology.

Representations of the fate of the dead are traceable to a dualistic Manichean teaching in which the material body of the dead is subject to destruction and only the soul is redeemable, as a spark of godly light. From Manichean anthropology, on the other hand, it appears that the body will also be granted a particular, though ruinous spirituality. These ideas might suggest a separate judgment for body and soul. Nevertheless, it appears that no doctrine on the fate of the body itself was actually set forth; only the portion of the light that remained in it, along with the man's soul, was actually discussed. As a result, it is not really known what the Manicheans did with the corpses of their dead. The evidence of an accidentally preserved Manichean epitaph from the area of Split in former Yugoslavia, which includes the name of the Manichean maiden Bassa (Decret, p. 158), is difficult to assess. Chinese witnesses ascribed to the Manicheans naked burial of the remains (cf. Chavannes and Pelliot, pp. 338, 355-56). It must be concluded that this rather parsimonious treatment of the human body of man reflected the belief that it had become worthless (cf. Pokora).

Ebn al-Nadīm (q.v.), in his *Fehrest* (completed in 377/987), left the clearest, though not an exhaustive, report on the fate of the soul after death. He described the destinies of three categories of the dead, which in Manichean sources were also called the “three ways”: of the Manichean elect, the Manichean followers, and the children of the world remaining in sin (ed. Flügel, I, p. 335; tr. Dodge, II, pp. 795-96; cf. Colpe, 1961, pp. 100-101; cf. also Augustinus, *Contra Faustum* 20.21, apud Jackson, 1930, p. 178). At the moment that the soul of the elect departs from the corpse primal man sends him “a god of light in the form of the wise guide (*al-ḥakīm al-hādī*),” accompanied by three other gods, each carrying the victory trophy, the raiment, and the diadem, crown, and garland of light, respectively. Accompanying them is a virgin, who resembles his soul. Many devils also appear before him, but the gods drive them away and lead the soul safely to the column of glory, to the moon, to



primal man, to the mother of life (who is enthroned in the sun), and to the paradise of light. As for his body, a *massa damnata*, the elements of the light still present in it are released before it is flung into hell.

The fate of the damned, the unreformed child of this world, is equally clear. He is seized by the devil, who shows him terrifying figures (*al-ahwāl*). The gods require that he confess his sins, and in the period of “rebirth” (*taraddod*) he must wander through the world until its end. His destiny thus coincides with the cosmic eschatological events already described: He will be thrust into hell (*jahannam*), that is, enclosed with the demons of darkness in the Bōlos.

That the in-between manifold fates of the simple believers, the hearers, were the most difficult to describe Mani was himself aware; in his *Eikon* he renounced to depict the ways which their souls would have to go after death (Polotsky and Böhlig I, pp. 235-36). According to the description in the *Fehrest*, the transmigrating soul of the believer will be subjected to a kind of milder punishment. He sees the terrifying figures as if in a dream (*fī manām*), and he will be swallowed up in filth and mire until his “light and spirit” assume the raiment of a righteous person, that is, the body of a member of the elect ascending to the world of light.

The value of this Arabic report for Manichaean tradition lies in the fact, first recognized by Prosper Alfaric, that it seems to represent in summary form the description of the fate of the dead given in three chapters of the *Šābuhragān* (pp. 50-51). On the other hand, Carsten Colpe thought, with good reason, that Ebn al-Nadīm’s version goes back to a Syrian (not a Middle Persian) text (pp. 114-15). Description of the tripartite fate of the dead in Parthian fragments M 333 and M334a was also explained in an instructive parable (Colditz).

Similar in contents is the Uighur fragment T II D 175.2, as Wilhelm Bang has shown (pp. 236-38; von Le Coq, III, p. 31). It simultaneously completes and adds precision to the information of the *Fehrest*. The appearance of the god of the majesty of the law (*nom quti*), that is, the light nous, and of the three accompanying gods before the soul of the righteous is described. The light nous sends the soul to the judge of dead souls, where it is gloriously vindicated. On the reverse of the document, indeed, there are the words of the soul of a redeemed believer. It thus follows that the wise guide mentioned in the *Fehrest* was understood as the light nous. A Coptic hymn about the ascension of the soul of the righteous has recently turned up among the Kellis fragments (J. Gardner in *Orientalia* 62, 1993, pp. 42-44, 53-58). After the



shedding of the body the soul of the dead must still appear before a judge about whom it is known from other sources that his throne is in space (e.g., Parthian M 6032; Sundermann, 1981, p. 115: *d'dbr r'stygr* "righteous judge" or "truth-causing judge"). Immediately thereafter it ascends to the new paradise or descends to rebirth. Reception by the gods and demons and having to answer before the judge are, according to this text, the two main events that await man after death. Both are also described in the still unpublished Kephalaion 141 "How the soul leaves the body," to which H. J. Polotsky has referred (Schmidt and Polotsky, pp. 72-73). There the "wise guide" is called "redeemer," "savior," and *morphé* (form) of the "master"; the souls receive the regalia of their triumph from the "judge of truth." A special feature of this text is that "the new" and "the old man" (in St. Paul's terms) are separated and come before the judge one after the other. For the "old man" of the elect there can be only one fate: temporal and eternal damnation.

Polotsky, who investigated the different versions of these eschatological events, came to the conclusion that those in which both reception by the gods and the judgement of the dead appear are confluations. He considered Ebn al-Nadīm's report an example including only reception by the gods. Verses 303-96 of a Chinese hymn scroll (Waldschmidt and Lentz, p. 123; Schmidt-Glitzner, pp. 62-63) are supposed to be an example including only the judgement of the dead; actually, however, this Chinese text is only an abbreviated version of the supposed "conflated variants." "The Buddhas, the holy, and the wise" (Schmidt-Glitzner, pp. 62-63) who guide the souls of the dead are mentioned throughout. Colpe's view must thus be accepted unconditionally: Both the reception by the gods and the judgment of the dead are essential features of the myth, and the latter feature was simply left out of the *Fehrest* and other versions (p. 106).

In different representations of eschatological events different details of an underlying myth thus receive different emphasis, and the "wise guide" of the *Fehrest* takes on different meanings. He can be interpreted as the "spiritual twin," as an apostle of the light, Jesus or Man inclusive; as the light nous; and above all as the "light figure" of man, "whom the elect and the catachumens accept when they renounce the world" (Polotsky and Böhlig, p. 36). The light figure is an emanation of the light nous, and all other beings who receive the soul can also be interpreted as his creatures, so that it is finally this godhead who confronts the dead individually.

Manichean eschatology has in common with the gnostic system the



fundamental idea that only human souls can be redeemed. They descend into the world as particles of the sacred light; their ascent into the paradise of light after death is thus a return home. To this extent individual Manichean eschatology is far from the Zoroastrian conception and stamped with the gnostic view. What distinguishes it from the gnostic system is an optimistic, apparently Zoroastrian interpretation of the cosmos through which the souls hasten on their return home. To the gnostics this passage presents the greatest danger; in every sphere of heaven the ruling archon threatens the souls. The archons must be driven away by means of magic formulas and names, and death rituals are supposed to help the souls on their journey. The Manicheans were also aware of the demons at the zodiac and in the lower seven heavens, but these demons were subject to the power of the living spirit and his sons, and if they rebelled they were plunged to earth. Not only did they not threaten the ascent of the souls; there was also a secure route for the righteous soul from the column of glory past the moon and sun to the paradise of the new kingdom of light. Perhaps this special feature of Manichean eschatology should be interpreted as a rapprochement of the gnostic and Zoroastrian conceptions of the other world.

One noteworthy borrowing from Zoroastrian conceptions is the belief in a virgin who, resembling the soul of the righteous, appears in the train of accompanying beings at his death (cf. Jackson, 1930, pp. 178-79; Widengren, pp. 67-69). Closely connected is another special feature of Manichean eschatology, which it also shares with Zoroastrianism: The activities of man are more than temporal events. They become personal and enduring beings, and they are subject to the final judgment, as is the soul of man. As they are also part of the man who performs them, comparable to a part of the soul, the redemption of the believer also means the final reunion of his redeemed soul with his redeemed deeds, just as in Zoroastrian teaching the soul of man is linked immediately after death with the *dēn* of his acts. The ninetieth Kephalaion deals with this topic (Polotsky and Böhlig, pp. 223-28).

Jackson called attention to a further example of probable Zoroastrian influence on Manichean eschatology: the weighing of the souls of the dead in the scale of judgment, as described in the Turkish fragment T II D 178 (von Le Coq, II, p. 12; cf. Jackson, 1923, pp. 20-22). Jackson himself emphasized, however, that this image is not limited to Zoroastrianism. It also had a place in Mandaean teaching (Rudolph, p. 176), so that a Zoroastrian origin is not entirely certain.



The teaching of the wandering of the soul as to some extent the link between individual and cosmic eschatology is among the special Manichean conceptions (see METEMPSYCHOSIS).

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