https://coth.ui.ac.ir/?lang=en
Journal of Comparative Theology
E-ISSN: 2322-3421
Document Type: Research Paper
Vol. 15, Issue 2, No.32, Autumn & Winter 2024-2025 pp.25-32
Receive: 07/10/2024 Accepted: 04/02/2025

Manichaean Jacob, Seth, and Arhant: A Comparative Textual Analysis of the Transformation of Three Apostles into Angels

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Abstract:
With a comparative textual approach, the present study tries to show how the previous termini technici and concepts have been redefined in Manichaeism, which was able to create celestial angels from certain earthly apostles, prophets, and sages, and why the function of any of the Manichaean figures is not equivalent to the function of their counterparts in other religions. After describing and determining the nature and function of the famous Semitic prophets Jacob and Seth, and the Buddhist sage Arahant, this study tries to find a satisfactory answer to why the Manichaeans considered these originally pre-Manichaean characters as angels. For the first time, the present survey paves the way for the hypothesis and logical speculation that syṭ 'Seth the angel' is the angelic form of šytyl 'Seth the prophet/ apostle' and ʾhryndws 'Arhant the angel' is the angelic form of (ʾ)rhnd/t 'Arhant the sage' and ultimately proves that the Manichaeans used each of these in two different contexts to refer to the two concepts 'messenger, prophet, sage' and 'angel' simultaneously, which are two sides of the same coin.

Keywords: Manichaean Redefinition of Concepts, Jacob, Seth, Arhant, Manichaean Theology, Manichaean Angels.

1. Introduction

A survey of Manichaean texts shows that Mani and his followers had provided a special definition of the word 'angel', which made Manichaean theological terminology completely different from other religions. In this 'definition', or it should be better said 'redefinition', the semantic circle of the word angel was so wide that it included not only the gods (*yzdʾn*, *bʾʾn/ bgʾn*) and angels in the previous traditions, but also prophets, kings, sages, and even the living leaders of Manichaeism. But this principle was not Mani's innovation. The Gnostic texts indicate the fact that the transformation of the status of a historical, earth figure into a heavenly one was rooted in Gnostic teachings before Mani, and the latter applied this attitude only in its broadest form and expanded it greatly (Shokri-Foumeshi, 2024, pp. 75-83).

Although it is distinctly evident that angels are consistently invoked and/or praised alongside certain prophets, messengers, and sages (whether historical or mythological) in Manichaean texts, the rationale behind the presence of some of these figures within the Manichaean angelic assembly remains obscure. Herein, the author of this study endeavor to address the question of why some of these entities are regarded as angels within Manichaeism. First of all, it must be acknowledged that the angelic or non-angelic status of a figure in Manichaeism does not necessarily correlate with their nature in preceding traditions. Indeed, Manichaeism may have considered a mythical, semi-mythical, or even historical figure from another tradition as an angel, regardless of their original standing in those antecedent traditions. Therefore, it was not out of ignorance that Iranian and Chinese Manichaeans regarded certain prophets, messengers, and kings of yore as angels. They invoked such kings, prophets, messengers, and sages, like Frēdōn, Seth, and Ahrendus, alongside archangels Rufael (*rwpʾyl*), Michael (*myxʾyl*), Gabrael (*gbrʾyl*) and Sarael (*srʾyl*) and the great angels like Jacob (*yʾqwb*), Narsus (*nrsws*), and Kaftinus (*k/qftynws*) (Morano, 2004, pp. 221-222), considering them living

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Shokri-Foumeshi , M .(2025). Manichaean Jacob, Seth, and Arhant: A Comparative Textual Analysis of the Transformation of Three Apostles into Angels. *Comparative Theology*, *15*(2), 25-32.

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10.22108/coth.2025.142976.1937

beings, heavenly messengers who could be called upon for protection against the assaults of Ahriman and the forces of evil. In fact, Manichaeans distinguished these figures from others like Enoch, Sam, Shem, Anosh, Buddha, and Zoroaster (Henning, 1934, p. 31), who were considered messengers of the past and had no practical role in the daily struggle of the faithful against malevolent forces and in the salvation of the particles of light, a notion clearly reflected in Manichaean texts. The reason these figures were considered alive is that, within Manichaean doctrine, this group of personalities was essentially viewed in the same light as Jacob, who according to Manichaeism was originally an angel that incarnated as a prophet or religious sage during a specific period (Böhlig, 1978, pp. 124-125, 166). Hence, in Manichaeism, the prophet Seth, the sage Arhant, and the Iranian mythical king *Frēdōn* (*prydwn*) were considered angels (Shokri-Foumeshi, 2024 pp. 167-170).

Manichaean texts show that Manichaeans considered their angels, like gods, as primeval and eternal since all of them had emanated from the Father of Greatness. Therefore, in theological terms, Manichaean angels are comparable not to the Semitic concept of angels but to the Zoroastrian divinities. Manichaean texts affirm that angels, like gods and divinities, were evoked/ created by the Word of the Father of Greatness, as the Middle Persian fragment M43R5 indicates, the angel Jacob was, like all divinities and gods, 'created by word' (*w'c'fryd*; See Shokri-Foumesh, 2015, p. 74-80, Shokri-Foumeshi, 2018, p. 42-44). Mani must have founded the theology of his religious angelic system on Iranian philosophy rather than on Gnostic, Jewish, or Christian grounds.

2. Jacob

2-1. The Transition from Jacob the Prophet

According to the Old Testament (*Gen*. 32; *Num*. 23-24), Jacob (יעקב) is one of the messengers of the Jews, the ancestor of the twelve tribes of Israel, a great figure of the people, and a warrior both earthly and heavenly, who even wrestles with God in a 'struggle' (שרה) and fights with his angels (*Gen*. 32: 28. See also Böhlig, 1978, pp. 165-166 and no. 10). In some Jewish sources, there is also mention of a heavenly counterpart or representation of Jacob in a celestial form (*Gen*. 28. For commentaries, see Orlov, 2017, pp. 61-102, esp. 91-93). This perspective on Jacob paved the way for transforming his character and providing the necessary groundwork for unconventional interpretations in the Christian world, as seen in the Greek *Prayer of Josef* dating from the first century CE, which the Church considered as false as all Gnostic works. In this text, Ἰακὼβ is not only introduced as an ἄγγελος 'angel' who has incarnated in earthly form but also as the πρωτότοκος 'firstborn' among the sons of God, a ἀρχιχιλίαρχός 'chief captain' among them (Smith, 1985, pp. 701-709; Böhlig, 1978, pp. 124-125; Orlov, 2017, p. 91). This approach is also adopted in *The Gospel of the Egyptians*, one of the most famous Gnostic works from the Nag Hammadi Library (*Gosp. Egypt*., III 64: 12-14; IV 1:76-27-75). Here, *ïakwb*/ *ïakwbwc* is not only a στρατηγός 'commander' (Böhlig, 1977, p. 200. See also Pearson, 1981, p. 507) but also appears twice as 'Jacob the Great' in the role of an angel in a context where the name Gabriel is also mentioned (Böhlig & Wisse, 1975, p. 107). Indeed, Jacob is explicitly identified as an angel from the very beginning of the Gnostic literary tradition. Therefore, Böhlig rightly suggests that the 'concept of the angel Jacob' in Manichaeism was inspired by Gnostic works (Pearson, 1981, p. 508). While Jacob is also called upon as an angel in Greek magical texts (Preisendanz 1973-1974, p. 118 (vol. 1, Papyrus IV, line 1377) and 29 (vol. 2, Papyrus VII, line 649); Betz, 1992, p. 136; Ma Xiaohe, 2012, pp. 294-296), all our sources clearly indicate the Semitic origin of this angel (Pearson, 1981, p. 507), a situation that seems to apply to most Manichaean angels as well.

2-2. In Middle Iranian and Uyghur Turkish Texts

In Manichaean Iranian literature, 'Jacob the Great Angel' (*y'qwb wzrg prystg*, in: M43; Müller, 1904, p. 78; Salemann, 1908, p. 12; Boyce, 1975, p. 194, text *dw*: 2) and the 'Commander of the Angels' (*s'r'r y prystg'n*, in: M4b; Müller, 1904, p. 59; Salemann, 1908, p. 7; Boyce, 1975, p. 190, text *dt*: 14) are among the most famous angels of the Eastern Manichaeans. He is described as 'brave' (*nrym'n*) according to the text fragment M4aIIv5-6, a characterization perfectly suited to his martial and warrior-like nature, undoubtedly chosen with complete knowledge of Iranian myths and epics. Based on the unpublished fragment M1218, we now know that the Eastern Manichaeans also had a liturgical chant or melody (*nw'g*) dedicated to Jacob (Shokri-Foumeshi, 2024, pp. 312-313). Regardless of the angel *Taumā*, Jacob's importance in this literature sometimes appears to be much more pronounced than that of other angels, as in the manuscript page M196^{+}, where he is praised above all other angels:

M196^{+}Iv4-6: *pd sr 'w y'kwb wzrg prystg y qyrdg'r* (Reck, 2004, p. 159).

In the beginning, [praise] to Jacob the great angel of the Lord (the Mighty).

In an entreaty/ supplication (*pywhyšn*) preserved in two Middle Persian fragments, M4aII and M4bII, Jacob is mentioned alongside Raphael (*rwp'yl*), Gabriel (*gbr'yl*), Sariel (*sr'yl*), Michael (*myx'yl*), and Barsimos (*brsymws*, in: Müller, 1904, pp. 55-56.; Boyce, 1975, pp. 190-191., text *dt*). In M4bIIv1, he is addressed as 'God Jacob the Angel' (*by y'qwb prystg*).

In addition, the fifth line of the verso side of the Parthian M6598 indicates that Jacob is also mentioned in hymns dedicated to the 'Living Self' (*gryw jywndg*), which were composed in the abecedarian form.

The "power and might" of Jacob have always been at the center of Manichaean attention. Furthermore, as seen in Manichaean literature, his role as the general of the angels and the great celestial commander is emphasized in Turfan texts. In the above-mentioned fragment M4bII, we read:

M4bIIv6-8: *'wr('w')rym pd š'dyy 'w zwr y ('')bz'r*[*] *y'kwb prystg s'r'r y prystg'n* (Müller 1904, p. 56 (S.6); Salemann, 1908, p. 7; Boyce, 1975, p. 191, text *dt*: 14). [*Cf. M597R9-10]

We stand in the joy of the Almighty, the angel Jacob, the commander of the angels.

However, among the Manichaean Sogdian documents, the oldest mention of *y'kwβ βr'y-št'k* 'Jacob the angel' is found in line 17 of the trilingual (Sogdian, Chinese, Turkish) inscription of Qarabalqasun/ Ordu-Baliq in Mongolia (Yoshida, 2010, pp. 530-533). This angel, referred to as *y'kwβ* in Sogdian documents in Sogdian script (See Sims-Williams & Durkin-Meisterernst, 2012, p. 226b) and as *y'kwb* in Manichaean one (Sims-Williams & Durkin-Meisterernst, 2012, p. 226b. Also *y'kwb fryštyy* in M6330R2-3; For other forms, see Table 1), was so beloved among the Sogdians that *y'kwβ fryšty* 'Jacob the angel' (Cf. MPS So18212V9 *y'kwβ βrystk*) is praised

alongside *ʾz-rwʾ* (Zruwān) and *ʾyšwy* (Jesus) in the Sogdian Turfan fragment 81TB65:1 published by Yoshida in 2000. [1]

'Jacob the angel' (*yʾkwβ fryš(t)yẖ*) is also mentioned in Sogdian fragment M5271Iv6 [= T II D 66], in a similar special position where he is praised among all the angels, alongside the 'God Zurwan' (*ʾzrwʾẖ βγyy*), 'Guardians of the Community' (*δyn pʾ(š) yt*), and 'Watchmen of the Kingdom' (*ʾ(x)šʾ(w)n pʾ(š) yt*) (Provasi, 2013, p. 386), just as Sogdian fragment M6330 [= T II D 207] also places him at the beginning of the list of 'Guardians of the Community' (*δyn pʾšyt*) and 'Watchmen of the Kingdom' (*ʾxšʾwn pʾšyt*). Jacob is described as 'radiant' (*spyxt*) in the Parthian M6598V4-5. As some Manichaean manuscript fragments like the Sogdian M6330 state, Jacob was the 'Guardian angel of the (Manichaean) religion and community' among the Eastern Manichaeans (Yoshida, 1990, p. 121, *apud* Colditz, 2000, p. 289).

According to the MP fragment M43R5-7, the Turkic Manichaean ruler, Bilga Khan (*bylgʾqʾn*), has been likened to Jacob in terms of bravery and strength. [2] 'Jacob the great angel' (*yʾqwb wzrg prystg*) is not only very valiant (*ṭhmʾtr*), glorious (*shy(n)*), virtuous (*hwnrʾwynd*), mighty (*nyrwgʾwynd*), warlike (*(ʾ)r(d)yqr*), warrior (*rzmywz*), commander (*sr(h)ng*), and leader (*gwrdʾn ph(lwm)*) (Boyce, 1975, p. 193, text *dw*: 1-2; Klimkeit, 1993, p. 158), but also 'created by the word of God' (*yzd wʾcʾfryd*). Most of Jacob's attributes are reflected in this text (See also Leurini, 2017, pp. 156-157). It is not unlikely that one of the Manichaean Turkish texts of Pelliot chinois 3049 was influenced by this text, where in line 53, the Uighur Khan is referred to as *yakoβ frišti täg alp ärdämlig* 'Jacob the brave and virtuous angel' (Hamilton, 1986, p. 40). [3]

In most prayers and praises written for Turkic Uighur Khans, such as the MP fragment M43, the Sogdian M6330 and the Turkish text Ch/U6618, part of which is quoted below, only Jacob is mentioned by name:

Ch/U6618 [= T II 1398]5-9 (Zieme, 1975, p. 54, ll. 511-515): *ornazun ymä alp küčlüg frištlär uluγlar tükäl ärdämlig yakoβ*[4] *frišti qamγ uluγ frišti-lär küč basut yigädmäk utmaq birzünlär*.

Again, may the angels and the great valiant ones, Jacob, the utterly praiseworthy and radiant angel, (and) all the great angels, bestow strength and aid, (and) grant victory and triumph (Klimkeit, 1993, p. 359). [5]

The evidence suggests that the angel Jacob held a special place of favor among the Uyghur rulers. Could it be that the Turkic Uyghur royal dynasty regarded him as a special angel and guardian of the state, the royal dynasty, and the realm of kingship? This hypothesis may be confirmed by further evidence. It seems that Khan Belga Khan saw himself in the mirror of Jacob.

2-3. In Chinese Documents

The oldest Manichaean text that mentions Jacob (耶俱孚 *Yejufu*) (**i̯a ki̯u pʻi̯u*, in: Ma Xiaohe, 2015a, p. 249; Kósa, 2018 [2019], p. 54) [6] is the 摩尼教下部赞 *Monijiao xiabu zan* (Abb. *H*). Similar to Manichaean Iranian texts, Jacob also holds a prominent position among the angels in Manichaean Chinese texts, as we find in this text as follows:

H215c–d (Cf. Tsui Chi, 1943, p. 194):

頭首大將耶俱孚，

常具甲仗摧逆黨。

Yejufu (Jacob), the commander, the great general, always fierce, leader of the rebellion. Clad in armor and armed for battle, he crushed the rebellious parties (Kósa, 2018 [2019], p. 54). [7]

If 'the rebellious parties' in this text refers to the same Enochic 'watchers and guardians' (egrḗgoroi), the same as mentioned in Mani's *Book of Giants*, as the rebellion of two hundred demons (*dwsd dywʾn*; See M5750Vi12-Vii2-6) and their descent from heaven to earth is echoed (See 1Keph. 38, p. 93: 23ff.; Polotsky & Böhlig, 1934-1940, p. 93; Gardner, 1995, p. 98), it is possible that Jacob was also among the warrior angels in this book alongside the four great archangels. This possibility certainly does not include the Jewish *Book of Giants* of Qumran.

In the newly discovered Xiapu documents in Fujian, southeastern China, belonging to the followers of 'Momoni (Mār Mani 'Lord Mani'), the Apostle of light', [8] during the reign of Jiayou (1056-1063 CE) in the Northern Song dynasty, greetings were also sent to 耶俱孚將 *Yejufu jiang* 'Jacob the general' (See the detailed study of Ma Xiaohe, 2012, pp. 285–308). Although a part of 摩尼光佛 *Moni guangfo* = Mani the Buddha of Light (abbreviated as *MG*), after praising the angels Raphael, Michael, Gabriel, Sarael, Arsus, Marsus, Narsus, and Nastikus (in the exact order as in the Manichaean Middle Persian text M196+Ir, presents), Jacob (耶俱孚) as an 'envoy of Light' (明使 *ming shi* [LMC: *mi̯wɐng ʂi*]) and a 'great general' (大將 *dajiang*). [9] However, the manuscript W11064 refers to him as a 耶俱孚弗里悉德 (*yejufu fulixide*), which undoubtedly is transcribed either the Middle Persian *yʾkwb frystg* or Parthian *yʾkwb fryštg* 'Jacob the angel' (Wang, 2018, p. 123). [10]

In the 請護法文 *Qing hufa wen* 'Invocation of the Guardians of the Dharma', [11] which is a part of the Manichaean Chinese text XQK (See Lin, 2012, pp. 102−135) or in the 乐山堂神记 *Leshantang shenji* 'Holy Book of the Leshan Hall' (Yang, 2011, p. 138; Ma Xiaohe, 2015a, pp. 244-245), his name appears exactly as it was mentioned in the Manichaean Chinese text *H* (Ma Xiaohe, 2015b, p. 472; see above). Since the Sogdians served as intermediaries for the transmission of Iranian culture to China, the Sogdian fricative [β] in *yʾkwβ* is represented in the Chinese form of Jacob as [fu] (Ma Xiaohe, 2015a, 249; Ma Xiaohe, 2012, pp. 285-286. See also Kósa, 2015, p. 19 no. 39; Kósa, 2016, p. 156; Kósa, 2018 [2019], p. 54; Yoshida, 2017, p. 252 no. 17; Wang, 2018, p. 125). In Manichaean Chinese documents, the name of this angel is also written as 俱孚 (Jufu [MC *kɨu pi̯u]) in abbreviated or corrupted form (Ma Xiaohe, 2015a, p. 249; Yoshida, 2017, p. 252 no. 17; Kósa, 2018 [2019], p. 54). In the entirely Chinese community, Jacob, like his high-ranking counterparts in Semitic and Iranian traditions, was honored with titles such as 耶俱孚大將 (Yejufu dajiang) 'Jacob, the Great General', 耶俱孚元帥 (*Yejufu yuanshuai*, sometimes abbreviated as 俱孚元帥 *Jufu yuanshuai*) 'Jacob, the Marshal', and even under the title *Jufu shengzun* 俱孚聖尊 'Jacob the Holy One' (Ma Xiaohe, 2015a, p. 249; Ma Xiaohe, 2012, pp. 285-286. See also Kósa, 2015, p. 19 no. 39; Kósa, 2016, p. 156; Wang, 2018, p. 125).

Table 1: The Name Jacob in Manichaean and Non-Manichaean Sources

Heb.	יַעֲקֹב			
Gr. [12]	Ἰακὼβ			
Copt [13]	ïakwb	ïakwbwc		
MP	yʾqwb	yʾqwp	yʾkwb	yʾkwp
Pth.	yʾkwb	yʾqʾwb [17]	yʾkwβ [19]	
Sogd.	yʾkwb [14]	yʾkwβ [18]		
Turk.	Yakoβ [15]			
Chin.	耶俱孚 Yejufu [16]	俱孚 jufu		

2-4. Some Non-Angelic Jacobs

The connection between the angel Jacob and the chapter "Account [. . .] Regarding His Soul [= about Mani himself] as Given to Jacob" of Mani's *Book of the Mysteries* (*Sifr al-Asrār*; MP *rʾzʾn*) recorded by Ibn al-Nadim in *Al-Fihrist* (Flügel, 1962, pp. 72-73) is a subject of discussion. M. Tardieu identifies this Jacob as the angel Jacob and speculates that Mani may have incorporated some of the reflections on the angel Jacob found in the Gnostic works like the *Prayer of Josef* into one his own mythological persona. In other words, in his view, Mani here saw himself in correspondence with the angel Jacob (Tardieu, 2008, pp. 38-39, § 3). However, there are at least two reasons why one cannot confidently accept this interpretation: first, no text provides evidence for such a connection, and second, this hypothesis itself is built on assumptions.

Furthermore, there is no need to analyze the Jacob (*yʾqwβ*) appeared in the Middle Persian M788R4 as anything other than a historical figure in the story of the crucifixion of Jesus (MP *dʾrgyrdyyẖ*; Pth. *dʾrwbdgyft*; see Morano, 1998; Morano, 2000) with no apparent link to the angel Jacob. In the same story, when Pilate (*pylʾtys*), the Roman governor of Galilee (*glylʾẖ*), asks Jesus, "Are you truly the king in the house of Jacob (*kdg yʾkwb*) and among the sons of Israel (*twxm srʾyl*)?" (M132aR6-8, in: Boyce, 1975, p. 130, text *byc*: 1), it is clear that the house of Jacob refers to the lineage of the prophet Jacob.

Therefore, the term Jacob (*yʾkwb*) in Manichaean texts collectively refers to four distinct characters: 1. Jacob the prophet, or the descendants of Jacob; 2. the angel Jacob; 3. Jacob, a historical figure in the crucifixion story of Jesus; and 4. the name Jacob found in the chapter in Mani's *Book of the Mysteries*, according to Ibn al-Nadim's account.

3. Seth

Seth (שת /*št*/ in Hebrew), who is the son of Adam and one of the prominent figures in Gnostic tradition, is referred to as *syṯ* (with a probable pronunciation of *Sīt*) in some Manichaean texts (Pearson, 1986, p. 161; Betz, 1992, p. 333). In addition to its appearance in M13Ir4 (Morano, 2004, p. 222) and the manuscript M196+Iv11 (Reck, 2004, p. 159), where he is praised alongside Ahrendus, Jacob, Kftinus, and Barsimus, the name Seth also appears in the Middle Persian fragment M6664 (Leurini, 2017, pp. 167-168), next to Barsimus and *htyʾ* (V3-5). However, the name Seth, aside from the form *syṯ*, is also recorded as *šytyl* in some Turfan fragments (*KPT* 77 (in: M1859A3(1545); Henning, 1943, p. 58 [121] in: M101bV9(153); Durkin-Meisterernst, 2004, p. 321a). This aligns with *cythyl* in the *Kephalaia* (1Keph. 1, p. 12: 10) and *Šāthel* in Ibn al-Nadim's *Fihrist* (Abulqasemi, 2011, p. 50), a form that is also witnessed in Gnostic texts and Mandaean documents (Shokri-Foumeshi, 2024, p. 168). The existence of these two variations in Turfan texts likely indicates that Manichaeans drew from two Gnostic literatures simultaneously, one Hebrew and the other Syriac (with a Greek origin). Eastern Manichaeans were undoubtedly aware of Seth's position as one of the approved prophets in their tradition, much like their African counterparts who mentioned his name alongside Buddha and Zoroaster in a *logion* of Mani in the *Kephalaia* (see reference above). Therefore, the manuscript page Sogdian M5264[= T II D 66]Ir1-2 (Morano, 2017, p. 175), which refers to Mani as 'Seth, the After-Buddha' (*šyṯyl pšʾbwtyy*), and possibly the unpublished and damaged fragment M1071R2, where the name *š(yty)l* 'Seth' appears alongside *bwty* 'Buddha', strongly suggest that Seth was considered one of the approved messengers in Eastern Manichaeism. However, the variation *syṯ* in our texts likely stems from sources that originally had a Greek origin since the Hebrew word *št* in Manichaean Turfan texts is also written as *syṯ*, using the letter [s]. If this assumption holds, it can be expected that Eastern Manichaeans incorporated Gnostic texts that mirrored the reinterpretation of Seth, similar to what happened with Jacob, as discussed in section Two above. Jacob (Ἰακὼβ) in the Gnostic text of the *Prayer of Josef* is basically an angel incarnated in an earthly form. Therefore, in my opinion, Seth is comparable to Ahrendus (see below, part Four) in having two forms of his name. Just as from the original Sanskrit *arhant*, there was the form *rhnd* to refer to the pious, monks, and the *electi* and the form *ʾhryndws* (with the Greek suffix) to call the angel Ahrendus, the name Seth was also used in two forms: *šytyl* to call 'Seth the prophet' and *syṯ* in addressing 'Seth the angel'. In other words, the typology of the texts has convinced the author of this study that *syṯ* is the angelic form of the name *šytyl* 'Seth'. Eastern Manichaeans, who consistently mentioned *syṯ* alongside the name *ʾhryndws* (Ahrendus), invoked him alongside other angels in their magical texts (such as M781+Iv5 ff. and M1202R1 ff.).

4. Arhant

The well-known Buddhist term *Arhant* (Skt. *Arhant*; Pali: *Arhat*; see Sims-Williams, 2000, p. 560) has been used in Manichaean sources in two forms and with two different meanings:

First, it is used in the sense of 'saint, holy one, monk' (Schaeder, 1936, p. 95), with evidence such as:

1a) Sogdian (in Manichaean script) as *rhnd*.

1b) Sogdian (in Sogdian script) as *rxʾnt*.

1c) Turkish as *ʾʾrx(ʾ)nt* (Zieme, 1996, pp. 27, 34-36, *apud* Colditz, 2018, pp. 56-58, 188).

Second, the Indian proper noun *Arhant* or *Arhat* is used, with evidence such as:

2a) Coptic as *aurentyc* (Aurentēs).

2b) Middle Persian as *ʾhryndws* (with a possible transcription as Ahrendŭs).

2c) Turkish as *Ạhrinṭws*.

2d) Chinese as *阿訶隣都思 (ʔɑ-xɑ-li̯ĕn-tuo-si / *Ahelindusi).

The first form, which appears only in eastern Manichaean texts, is used to address monks, church leaders and patrons. In

the Sogdian manuscript fragment in Manichaean script M5264[= T II D 66], which was published by E. Morano, Mani is addressed as the ʿdisciple of Zarathustraʾ (Ir3: *zrwškyy jwxškyy*) and the ʿBuddha Śākyamuni's Arhantʾ (Ir4: *pwwtš'kmn rhnd*; Morano, 2017, pp. 174-176). In the Manichaean Sogdian manuscript page in Sogdian script So18248[=TM393]Iv15, published by W. B. Henning many years ago, this term is seen in plural form as *rx'ntty* ʿarhantsʾ (alongside *pwt'yšty* ʿBuddhasʾ; Henning, 1944, p. 138). Note that in neither of these two cases is the heart conversion process seen (see below). In Manichaean Turkish documents (e.g., in HtPek 34a), these ʿarhantsʾ are mentioned as *arhantlar* (Huili, 1991, pp. 98-101). The term written as 羅漢 (*la-xan*) in Chinese is a shortened form of the same 阿羅漢 (*ʔa-la-xan*) ʿarhantʾ (For a detailed study, see Ma Xiaohe & Shokri-Foumeshi, 2020, pp. 183 ff.).

The second form of the term, which always appears with a nominal suffix *-ws*, is found in both Eastern Manichaean texts and Western Manichaean writings, referring to the famous Buddhist figure Arhant and / or Arhat (Sims-Williams, 2000, p. 560). Throughout Middle Iranian texts published to date, the form *'hryndws* has been mentioned three times, consistently with a change from [*rh*] to [*hr*]. These occurrences are: (1) in M13Ir1; (2) in the Persian Middle Persian manuscript M196+Iv10; (3) in the highly damaged fragment M4833A2. In these contexts, *Ahrendus* corresponds to the Coptic *Aurentēs*, as mentioned in the *Kephalaia* I (1Keph. 1, p. 12: 15, 17. See also Gnoli, 1991, pp. 359-361; Sims-Williams, 2000, pp. 560-563). Here, *Aurentēs* is listed among the prophets and messengers, including figures such as Adam, Seth, Anosh, Enoch, Zoroaster, Buddha, and Jesus (Gardner, 1995, p. 18, Coptic page 12, line 15). However, in Manichaean Eastern sources like M13I and M196+, *Ahrendus* is evoked alongside other angelic beings such as Sarendus, Jacob, Kaftinus, Barsimus, and Nuxael. The form of the name *'hryndws* (with a possible transcription as *Ahrendŭs*) indicates that it and other similar terms were borrowed from one or several Western traditions, which might have influenced writings in the Near East. Notably, *'hryndws* (with the Greek suffix *-ws*) is the angelic form of the name Arhant (*rhnd*) the Buddhist sage. Thus, similar to the case of Seth, we encounter two original and angelic forms in the texts. It is intriguing to note that these two characters usually coexist.

It was through Middle Western Iranian texts that this character found its way into Manichaean Turkish writings. In a Manichaean Turkish hymn (*Pothi-book*, D 259, 18; In the "Great Hymn to Mani", on the fragmentary leaf D 259, 18. Clark, 1982, p. 178 (l. 432), 190 (l. 432), 208 (on 432); See also Tongerloo, 1991, p. 372; Sims-Williams, 2000, p. 561), *Aḥrinṭws* is mentioned alongside *Sit*, exactly in the form and arrangement found in the Middle Persian manuscript page M196+. Contrary to I. Colditz's assumption (Colditz, 2018, p. 188), there was no misunderstanding for the Turkish Manichaeans because they, like their Iranian co-religionists, recognized the same distinction between *Aḥrinṭws* and *arhant* as between *šytyl* and *syt*.

In Manichaean Chinese texts from the Xiapu, *阿訶隣都思 **Ahelindusi* is mentioned five times alongside figures like Sarandos, Narsus, Nastikus, Raphael, Michael, Gabriel, and Sarael (for example, in *MG* 11:7-12:1; 18:1-3, *XQK* 9:5-7; 22:1-2, and *W* 8:4-7). The Chinese form of this term and the arrangement of these characters in the Xiapu texts indicate that these texts were adapted from Middle Iranian documents.

Regarding this matter, an important point remains: the Sogdian fragment M500n(1)V6, which surfaced a decade ago in the Berlin Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities (Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften, BBAW) and was subsequently published by Morano (2011, p. 105), indicates that Mani himself mentioned *rhnd* (here referred to as ʿArhantsʾ; Morano, 2011, p. 104) in his *Book of Giants*. In fact, the Coptic *Kephalaia* and this new evidence emphasize the crucial fact that this Buddhist figure (rather than *'hryndws*) entered Mani's faith in his time, unrelated to the later Buddhist influences on the Eastern Manichaean community. The presence of this figure in both Eastern and Western Manichaean sources implies that Mani was familiar with the Theravada / Hinayana school of Buddhism as well. Manichaeans invoked *Ahrendus* in liturgical and magical texts because he could come to the aid the Manichaean community against the forces of evil.

Postscript I: S'ryndws

In M196+Iv10, before mentioning the angels Seth and Barsimus, and after listing the angels of Jacob, (Arsus, Mersus,) Narsus, Nastikus, and Kafthinus, another character named *S'ryndws* (Sārendŭs) is also mentioned (Reck, 2004, p. 159). Immediately before Ahrendus, his name is reconstructed in the fragmentary M4833, and in M4833A2. So, he is only mentioned twice throughout the texts published so far in Iranian sources. Sārendŭs is also mentioned in three newly found Chinese Manichaean documents (*MG* 12:1; *MG* 18:3; *XQK* 9:7; W o8o48:7; *XQK* 22:2). In these texts, whose reading work is at the beginning of the way, he is praised alongside the well-known angels of Turfan Middle Iranian texts of Turfan, such as Raphael, Michael, Gabriel, Sarael, Narsus, Nastikus, and Ahrendus, and like the Middle Persian M196+ here is also immediately before Ahrendus (a- he-lin-du-ṣi 阿訶隣都思) that Sārendŭs 娑隣度師 sɑ-liən-d'uo-ṣi/ suo-lin-du-ṣi) appears (Lin, 2014, p. 189). C. Reck, who published the manuscript page M196+, implicitly hints at the possibility of equating Sārendŭs with Ahrendus. According to her, Sārendŭs might be a *lautmalerische Abwandlung* (onomatopoeic modification/ variation) of the form of Ahrendus, in other words, the latter is a magical form of the former name (Reck, 2004, p. 161). The problem with this viewpoint is, however, that in M196+Ir10 the conjunction *'wd* ʿandʾ appears between the names Ahrandus and Sārendŭs. So, due to a lack of documents, we cannot conclusively determine at this moment whether Sārendŭs is another character of the same Ahrendus, but whatever it may be, the author of this study would assume that both Iranian and Chinese Manichaeans viewed him as an independent character, assigning him a status and rank similar to that of Ahrandus.

Postscript II: An Inference about Identical Angelic Elements

For years, some researchers have pointed to the existence of similar or quasi-similar elements in Manichaeism on one hand and the Abrahamic religions on the other (Olsson, 1988, pp. 273-282, esp. p. 275). Although the research of these scholars may not be firmly based on religious criteria, it has paved the way for further investigations. What is relevant to our study is the fact that none of these angels in Manichaeism literally have an equivalent function to their counterparts in any religion. In fact, it is natural for Mani to have drawn upon and adapted from existing intellectual systems and frameworks. But

necessarily there is no need for a Manichaean element to correspond with a similar element in Abrahamic religions because each of these religions has conceived a specific system and function for each of these elements, which should be distinct from the roles of their counterparts, even if they all trace their origins to a common source. In other words, just as the Manichaean elements do not truly fulfill the roles assigned to their counterparts in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, they also do not need to correspond with each other. This fact is also true for the three characters Jacob, Seth, and Arhant studied here. In short, although these major archangels are considered part of the inner circle of Manichaean archangels, they are neither in line with Zoroastrian archangels nor do they fulfill the same roles as archangels like Gabriel, Michael, Israfil, and Azrael in Abrahamic religions. These elements coexist with each other only in terms of assessment and are not subject to direct comparison; These do not exactly match together. The assessment and comparison of these elements with one another require separate and in-depth research.

5. Conclusions and Final Remarks

The present article has tried to clarify how the 'Manichaean attitude' led to the 'redefinition of previous *termini technici* and concepts', which could transform an earthly prophet into a heavenly angel. This paper also demonstrated that the function of none of the Manichaean angels mentioned in magical or liturgical texts is equivalent to the functions of their counterparts in Iranian or Semitic theologies, such as Gnostic, Jewish, Christian, and Zoroastrian traditions. It is clear that Mani should naturally interfere with previous systems to be enabled to establish a 'new' religion. Undoubtedly, Mani's angelology and Manichaean angelic components constituted an independent network and system that could not fit into any of the Iranian or Semitic angelic frameworks.

Although our knowledge about Manichaean angels is very limited due to a scarcity of documents, this article has attempted to identify the characteristics of some of these and show how they, who were not originally angels in the previous non-Manichaean traditions, entered the Manichaean pantheon. The study reveals that the Manichaean *terminus technicus* 'angel' was used not only for angels and the divine beings and gods but also encompassed some approved messengers and wise beings such as Jacob, Seth and Arhant the Buddhist sage. In fact, the author of this study endeavored to answer the important question of why the aforementioned messengers have been counted as Manichaean angels. Manichaean texts indicate that Manichaeans considered them along with *Taumā*, Mani's Twin, as well as the archangels Raphael, Gabriel, Michael, and Sariel, as living characters, heavenly envoys who could always come to the aid of the faithful against the attacks of the forces of evil. In fact, Manichaeans did this because they regarded them differently from figures like Enoch, Seth, Shem, Anush, Buddha, and Zoroaster, who were considered as messengers of the past and practically had no role in the daily struggle of the pious against the forces of evil or the salvation of light elements. This group of characters, from a Manichaean perspective, were essentially angels who had incarnated at a specific point in time. This explanation answers the question of why these individuals were considered as living beings. Based on Manichaean magical and liturgical texts, the author of this study have proposed the theory for the first time that *syṭ* took the angelic form of *šytyl* (Seth, the Prophet), and *ʾhryndws* the angelic form of *ʾrhnd/t* (Arhant, the sage).

Abbreviations

Chin. Chinese
Copt. Coptic
Gen. *Genesis* (in Old Testament)
Gosp. Egypt. *The Gospel of the Egyptians*, Böhlig/ Wisse, 1975.
Gr. Greek
H (*Hymnscroll*) 摩尼教下部讚 Monijiao xiabu zan [*Mo ni chiao hsia pu tsan*] The Lower (Second?) Section of the Manichaean Hymns, Ms. S.2659, British Library, trnsl. by Daoming (8th c.?), ed. by Tsui Chi, 1943; Lin, 1997.
Heb. Hebrew
1*Keph.* Introduction + chapts. 1-95 (pp. 1-244), in: Polotsky & Böhlig, 1934-1940; chapts. 95-122 (pp. 244-291), in: Böhlig, 1966 and Gardner, 1995.
KPT Sundermann 1973.
(L)MC (Late) Middle Chinese
MG 摩尼光佛 *Moni guangfo* Mani the Buddha of Light, ed. by Lin 2014; Yang & Bao, 2015
MP Middle Persian
Pth. Parthian
Sogd. Sogdian
Turk. Turkish
W 貞明開正文科 *Zhenming kaizheng wenke* Eternal Light New Year Celebration Manual (another version of Pingnan fangce (abb. as F), ed. by Wang, 2018.
XQK 興福祖慶誕科 *Xingfuzu qingdan ke* Ritual Manual for the Celebration of the Birthday of Ancestor of Promoting Well-being, ed. by Ji, 2013.

Notes

1. Yoshida, 2000, p. 11, text A, ll. 74-77 [=BezA78]: (74) *ʾz-rwʾ βγʾnw ʾxšyδ-y MN ʾδry ʾʾstny (p)[nc mz-yxyʾk]* (75) *ʾz-ʾwnʾy xwβw ʾyšwy* ... (77) *… yʾkwβ fryšty ° mγwnw δyn pʾšytw* ….
2. Müller, 1904, pp. 78-79; Boyce, 1975, pp. 193-194, text *dw*. Also in the inscription of Qarabalqasun, see Yoshida, 2010, pp. 530-533.
3. His trnsl. as "vaillant et vertueux comme l'ange Jacob" (*ibid.*); *apud* Kósa, 2018 [2019], p. 52, and no. 49. Klimkeit, 1993, p. 372.
4. Zieme, 1975, p. 54, on l. 7 (513), as *yngui* '?'. Modified by Yoshida, 2000, p. 74 no. 77:1; *apud* Kósa, 2018 [2019], p. 52 no. 50.
5. Without translation of *yakoβ*.
6. In Tsui Chi, 1943, p. 194, as *Yeh Chü Fu*.
7. Cf. Tsui Chi, 1943, p. 194.
8. 昧嘮摩尼弗哩悉特噓訖 *muât-lâmuâ-ńi, pi̯uət-lji-si̯ĕt-dʾək *luo-*si̯ɛn* = from WMIr. *mrʾ mʾny*, *prystgrwšn*.
9. For the text, but without trnsl. see Kósa, 2018 [2019], p. 62. Cf. *Hymnscroll* (abb. *H*) 215c–d.
10. For more information, see Kósa, 2018 [2019], pp. 54-56.
11. Cf. M196+Iv2-4: *pʾsbʾnʾn wʾxšygʾn yg dyn ʾrdʾyẖ*.
12. Attested in Non-Manichaean Sources
13. Attested in Non-Manichaean Sources
14. In: M727cV4.
15. No attestation in Durkin-Meisterernst, 2004, p. 372a.
16. Yoshida, 1986, §95.
17. In: Yoshida, 2000, p. 11, text A, l. 77 (BezA77).
18. Zieme, 1975, p. 54. See Yoshida, 2000, p. 74 no. 77:1; *apud* Kósa, 2018 [2019], p. 52 no. 50.
19. Yoshida, 1986, §95 as *i̯a-ki̯u-pʾi̯u* with reference to *H* 1275a27.

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